



17th November 2005

Press Release

Britain's Islamic roots unearthed!

London City Hall will become a beacon of unity as the 12th national Islam Awareness Week is launched on Monday 21st November with the theme, '**Past and Present: One thousand years of Islam and Britain**'. *"We need to remember the positive spirit that embraced the nation, and especially the capital, after London won the Olympic bid. It is with such optimism and hope that we will defeat terrorism,"* asserted Shafeeq Sadiq, National Coordinator of Islam Awareness Week. He added, *"amid all the negativity, our past actually shows a rich history of coexistence between Islam and the British Isles. We can choose to make the future...let's learn from the past and make it bright."*

Ken Livingstone will launch the Week with a powerful message of 'One London'. Other important dignitaries speaking at the launch include: **Professor Nabil Matar**, author and leading historian on British and Muslim History, and **Sir Iqbal Sacranie**, Secretary General of the Muslim Council of Britain. **Dr Munir Ahmed**, President of the Islamic Society of Britain, will emphasise that young Muslims can reach into the British-Islamic history to develop a rooted sense of being British today.

Throughout the country there will be a colourful array of activities to mark Islam Awareness Week and bring to the fore a narrative that is not often explored - that Islam has deep roots in the history of this country that have now been forgotten. Specially-commissioned booklets will take this message to schools, libraries and homes across the country. *"For over a thousand years of Islam and Britain, one has given shape to the other, whether we call this the Islamic legacy of Britain or the British heritage of Islam!"* said Mr Sadiq.

[Ends]

Notes to Editors

1. Islam Awareness Week runs from 21st - 27th November this year. This year's launch will be on Monday 21st November, in the City Hall, London.
2. For media enquiries please contact the Press Officer on **07092 359 611**, email: **admin@iaw.org.uk**.

3. The Press Office will be happy to assist in developing local angles and putting you in touch with local groups participating in the project or any enquiries about covering these events.
4. Islam Awareness Week was initiated by the Islamic Society of Britain in 1994. The Islamic Society of Britain is an affiliate of The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB).
5. For further details please visit the IAW website **www.iaw.org.uk**.