



**The Closing Statement of
The 12th Annual Conference of the Council**

In the Name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful

All praise is due to God, Lord of the Worlds. May the peace and blessings of God be upon the best of God's creatures, Muhammad and his purified progeny.

In light of the holy verse, "Certainly you have in the Messenger of Allah an excellent exemplar for him who hopes in Allah and the latter day and remembers Allah much" [Holy Quran 33:21], the twelfth annual conference for the Council of Shia Muslim Scholars in North America was convened. Under the title "**Muslims and their Civilized Role in the West,**" the conference was held in the city of Dearborn, Michigan, USA, on September 22–23, 2012 CE (corresponding to the fifth and sixth days of Dhu al-Qa'dah, 1433 AH).

The participants included a group of religious scholars, preachers, and university professors from the United States and Canada, as well as a number of legal and political experts. The attendees studied and discussed the methods and mechanisms by which Muslims can reinforce their positions and roles, following the example of other successful and thriving communities in Western countries which all lie under the roof of a single nation. Most prominent among these methods and mechanisms are the concerns and requests for direction which believers make clear to the Council regarding participation in elections and the like. Moreover, the discussions also included that which accompanies this role, specifically the hostilities and challenges in the face of Islam and its holy figures every now and then. The conference participants concluded with a number of the following decisions and recommendations:

First. Surveys conducted by credible research centers still show that Muslim communities in Western countries, in general, exceed their Western counterparts in terms of security, coexistence, and integration. This reveals the extent to which these communities are committed to the traditions of their imams (peace be upon them) as well as the rulings and direction of their religious jurists. Indeed, the aforementioned confirm the necessity of maintaining one's religious identity and noble traditions, alongside putting responsible citizenship and integration into action. At the same time, Muslim communities in the West must continue to aspire for better roles and positions in all fields in order to excel across the board.

Second. Participation in the political life of a community, within a single nation, is a natural right which a citizen exercises within the scope of citizenship and integration. Both at the level of management and service, and whether voting or running, the Council encourages all qualified Muslims to exercise their national right, so long as the experts confirm the importance, benefits, and sometimes even the necessity of participating as a means to achieve further distinction, prosperity, and excellence.

Third. Furthermore, the Council advises, with strong emphasis, the necessity of an overall, complete education and awareness campaign regarding the political participation process. This will help have voting results remain in the interest of the voters, serving their education, moral standing, and interests—instead of merely voting without noteworthy benefits. In turn, this will contribute to laying the suitable groundwork for our upcoming generations, as greater and more significant roles await them.

Fourth. The Council emphasizes the need to bolster religious dialogue at the level of religious scholars and experts. This is one of the most significant means of mutual influence, allowing others to get to know us as we get to know them.

Fifth. The Council highlights the significance of the media's role, once again, and the necessity of having Islamic centers come to the forefront, through qualified and credible individuals, to discuss with others about Islam and the civilized role of Muslims. For, indeed, this role has been confirmed by modern Western studies which indicate that the Muslim community in the West is at the forefront of other communities in terms of peaceful coexistence and positive integration.

Sixth. The Council reiterates and emphasizes what it highlighted in the general statement regarding the offensive film which slanders the Holy Prophet of Islam (peace be upon him and his family). The Council condemns and denounces this heinous act which has caused conflict and sedition, resulting in some of what the Council warned and cautioned about. Moreover, the Council urges concerned individuals to work on and help out with achieving the recommendation regarding a comprehensive international conference to study and get to know this unique and exceptional personality among the many prophets and messengers.

Seventh. With thanks and appreciation extended to the Crescent Committee which exercised its work proficiently during this past year, the members of the Crescent Committee for the upcoming year have been elected and are their Excellences: Sayyid Muhammad Rizvi (Toronto), Shaykh Abed al-Mun'im Charara (Windsor), Shaykh Muhammad Riza Bagheri (Montreal), Shaykh Mohamad al-Ali Al-Halabi (Miami), and Sayyid Nabi Raza Abedi (San Francisco).

Eighth. As one of the stages in developing the Council's work, the Council agreed to update the order and protocols of the Council's work, starting from amending the constitution to modifying the Council's structure and some of its protocols, under the supervision and care of the respected Board of Trustees. These changes are more appropriate considering what is typically in practice with similar councils and will allow for greater benefit as well as more precision in accomplishing the Council's objectives.

The Council extends its heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to the grand jurists who gave richness to the theme of the conference through their religious rulings, guidance, and advice. The Council also asks God Almighty to hasten the reappearance of our master, the Guardian of This Age (peace be upon him), such that light, knowledge, peace, security, and justice may reign over the entire globe.

In addition, the Council would like to thank all those who attended the conference and gave richness to it through their valuable contributions, as well as all the brothers who put forth great efforts in preparing for and holding this conference. We ask God Almighty for success and support, for He is sufficient for us, and He is an excellent trustee.

The Board of Trustees of the Council
Dhu al-Qa'dah 6, 1433 AH
September 23, 2012 CE