



Decisions and recommendations of AMJA's fifth annual convention

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

Decisions and recommendations of the Fifth Conference of the Assembly of Muslim Jurists in America (AMJA)

Manama, Bahrain 14 – 17 Dhul-Qadah 1428 | November 24 – 27, 2007

All praise is due to Allah, and may peace and blessing be upon the Messenger of Allah, his family, companions and true followers. To proceed:

In the period between the 14th – 17th of the month of Dhul-Qa`dah 1428 (November 24 – 27, 2007), in the capital city of the Kingdom of Bahrain, the activities of the Assembly of Muslim Jurists in America were in progress with the official presence of Bahraini royalty at the opening session.

Comprehensive and detailed discussions took place over the course of four consecutive days on topics submitted by the honorable members and expert consultants of AMJA. These topics centered on issues affecting Muslims in the American milieu in particular, as well as those which affect expatriate Muslims in general, in terms of which trades, jobs and professions are permissible and which ones are prohibited. The Assembly has reached the following decisions:

I: Working with the media

Introduction:

The media is considered an essential method of conveying information, ideas and attitudes between successive generations. It participates in the formation of social concepts, the shaping of culture and the protection of mores. Indeed, it contributes to the direction of general opinion and decision-making in all aspects of life.

The media is one way of spreading the basic message of Islam and this is an obligation on Muslims in general and on preachers in particular, at all times and in all places.

The ruling on the media in principle, and in terms of its abstract definition, is that it is permissible. Thereafter the five categorical rulings (obligation, recommendation, permissibility, disapproval and prohibition) would apply to it, depending on the information presented, the methods employed, the resulting influences, and the outcomes of actions practiced.

This ruling shall be applied with the following restrictions:

1. Verification of information must be made before publication and rumors must be avoided.
2. Honesty and subject relevance should be maintained in conveying information.
3. Islamic etiquette and standards of behavior must be respected in the presentation of the information.
4. People's privacy must be respected; nothing should be published without the permission of the concerned party, unless there is some public benefit that would take precedence over that.
5. It is not permissible to publish any information—even if it is true or permission has been granted—if doing so would result in harm as defined by Shari`ah.
6. Information must be broadcast via lawful means (in accordance with Shari`ah) and prohibited means must be avoided.
7. Any work with institutions known to be enemies of Islam must absolutely be avoided if such work would involve supporting their injustice and aggression.
8. Any work with institutions whose main focus is on anything prohibited in Shari`ah must be absolutely avoided, such as magazines or channels specialized in spreading sin and vice.
9. Women must maintain the Islamic code of behavior, including full covering (hijab), avoidance of proscribed seclusion (khilwa) and not traveling without an eligible male relative as a chaperone (mahram) or in safe company. Her work should be in a field that agrees with her innate disposition (fitra) and the nature of her being, and she must follow all other rules of etiquette in Shari`ah.

That said, the conference has postponed consideration of certain issues related to the permissibility of various types of media pending further research and examination, and these will be presented to AMJA at future conferences.

II: Working in the field of information technology

Information technology is a contemporary innovation which has made a great contribution to human civilization and has made life easier.

The basic principle of work in this field is that it is a communal obligation (fard kifayah), unless it would lead to anything prohibited in Shari`ah or bring harm to others.

It is permissible to provide this service when necessary, even if it will be used in both permissible and prohibited activities, since the work one is being paid for is not prohibited in and of itself.

III: Working for credit card companies

Credit cards are of the utmost importance in this day and age, because they take the place of hard currency, making it unnecessary to carry cash or to store it. As such, they have become a necessity and it is almost impossible to do without them, especially outside the lands of Islam.

Credit cards are of two types:

1. Debit cards covered by the holder's cash balance in return for which the issuer is entitled to take a fixed fee; this compensation is legitimate in Shari`ah, because the charge for using it is deducted from the holder's balance. As such, it is permissible to use these cards. Likewise, it is permissible to manufacture them, to work for companies issuing them or to be involved in marketing them.
2. Credit cards not covered by the holder's cash balance. These are of three types:
 - A credit card issued in exchange for a fixed fee: This is a means of making purchases with borrowed money, with a specific plan for repayment, without any extra charge for late payment. These cards are issued by Islamic financial institutions; they do not exist at any other institutions as far as we know outside the lands of Islam. These are permissible in Shari`ah, so it is permissible to use them. It is likewise permissible to manufacture them, to issue them, to work for companies that issue them and to market them.
 - Interest-based credit cards: These are a means for making purchases with borrowed money and there is interest charged on the loan. These are prohibited in Shari`ah and, as such, it is not permissible to manufacture them, to issue them, to work for companies that issue them or to market them.
 - Cards that grant the holder a specified grace period within which no interest will be charged. If one is late in paying, however, after the term has expired, interest will be charged. This is not permissible because the contract contains an invalid condition. As such, it is not permissible to manufacture them, to issue them, to work for companies that issue them or to market them.

Exemption is made for those with special needs to deal with the third type, under condition of dire necessity (mas'is al-hâjah: that which would make a person's life extremely difficult), pervasive affliction (ʿumoom al-balwâ: that the prohibited thing is so widespread that it is difficult for an accountable person to avoid it) and complete lack of alternatives. One would be obliged to repay the amount in full before the grace period expires and, therefore, before interest would be charged. One must also be able to assert, with confidence, that he/she will more than likely be capable of doing that.

Concerning work in the field of manufacturing, issuing or marketing cards that do not meet the requirements of Shari`ah, the ruling would remain as is: prohibition. That is because the license to use something in cases of exigent need or dire necessity would not apply to work in manufacturing or marketing, unless [the worker himself is] in a case of exigent need.

IV: Working for insurance companies

1. Insurance is one of the afflictions of the age on which modern fatwa scholars have already spoken, whether in their role as individual scholars or on the level of official fatwa councils and assemblies. There are many difference types of insurance; some of which are permissible and some of which are prohibited, while some are subject to scholarly differences of opinion (ijtihad). The ruling on working for insurance companies varies according to the judgment on the insurance policy itself. Whichever of these contracts is valid, it would be permissible to work for their institutions and whichever contracts are invalid, it would not be permissible to work for them or to assist them with said contracts.
2. The basic principle regarding insurance is that it is a system based on providing a helpful service, solidarity (mutual responsibility), and charitable assistance. With this meaning and in this context, it is one of the essential Islamic values, when it is restricted in its organization and contracts, as well as the investment of its funds, to the rules of Shari`ah. In fact, it would not be an exaggeration to say that

providing it in this context and in light of recent developments has become a general communal obligation (fard kifayah).

3. Systems of insurance and their contracts in this day and age fall into three basic categories: commercial insurance contracts and social or mutual insurance contracts, each being subject to its own verdict.
 4. The basic principle regarding commercial insurance contracts, regulated by commercial insurance laws and practiced by commercial insurance providers (such that the company is a real partner in the contract and is obliged to pay should the damage insured against actually occur, in return for fixed premiums paid by the insured throughout the period of insurance), is that it is an invalid contract due to the presence of uncertainty (gharar), unknown elements (jahâlah) and other causes of invalidity. The basic principle is that no commercial insurance is permissible, except when required by law or resorted to under conditions of general necessity (hâjât `ammah) when this takes the place of exigent need (daroorah). Working in the field of marketing these contracts or providing any assistance for them is not permissible, except in cases of exigent need or general necessity when it takes its place. Whoever is forced by need to resort to work in this field must also have the intention to leave this line of work as soon as he is able to do so.
 5. Then there is social insurance, which is not intended for profit, but rather is meant to provide social protection or health coverage to recipients. It is—usually—arranged by governments or public companies and institutions by deducting a portion of the employee's salary, either with a contribution from the insured or without, over the course of his employment. This is legitimate in Shari`ah and, as such, it is permissible to accept it and to work for institutions involved in it, whether by establishing it or by marketing it, because it is essentially based on a legitimate concept. This must be accompanied by avoidance of any illegitimate activities involved in its application, such as interest-based investments and the like.
 6. Islamic insurance (which resembles mutual or cooperative insurance in many of its characteristics) is based on charitable donations, cooperation and mutual benefit. The role of the company is merely that of agent (managing the insurance process) and entrepreneur (financing the funds). This is a legitimate contract and, as such, it is permissible to use it and to work for any of its institutions, as long as one abides by the remaining Islamic restrictions in terms of investing insurance funds.
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V: Working for tax services

Exemption is made to work for tax services, whether inside the lands of Islam or without, as long as one has the intention to be lenient, to strive to spread justice and to minimize oppression in these facilities, seeking to find therein the spirit of Shari`ah and the principles of justice. However, it would be recommended to change this line of work should a suitable alternative present itself.

VI: Working in the field of accounting

1. Working in the field of accounting is legitimate in Shari`ah because the accountant's job is technical. It is based on legitimate employment skills and the basic principle regarding things is permissibility—there is no prohibition without evidence from Shari`ah — unless this work is for institutions that engage in prohibited activities, such as selling alcohol or pork products. That would not be permissible unless one finds exigent need as defined by the established rules of Shari`ah: this need must be judged

according to its extent, steps must be taken to end it, and one must maintain the intention of changing this line of work as soon as possible.

2. If, however, both lawful and prohibited are combined in the work an accountant is assigned to process, then, if the lawful is predominant, exemption would be made to do this when necessary, but one must get rid of a percentage of the money earned in proportion to the amount of the work that was prohibited. Still, there remains a doubtful aspect to this type of job that would call for the employee to search for other work which is not doubtful. If activities of a prohibited nature predominate, however, the basic principle would be avoidance, in order to stay away from participating in anything prohibited or assisting in it. That said, exigent needs must be considered, as long as they are judged according to their extent and steps are taken to bring the condition to an end.
 3. There is nothing wrong with an accountant working (as a freelance employee), when his role is confined to processing financial decisions, without direct participation in them, for he merely serves to convey a realistic picture. There are no exceptions to this rule, save for institutions whose main activities revolve around prohibited matters.
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VII: Working at interest-based financial institutions

1. The basic principle on working for interest-based financial institutions is that it is unlawful, due to the curse of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) on the one who devours interest, the one who pays it, the one who writes [the contract] and both witnesses, and his saying, "They are all alike." However, exigent needs are to be considered, as long as they are judged according to their extent and steps are taken to bring the condition to an end.
 2. Fiqh councils have granted license for anyone who does not find lawful employment to work in places where lawful and prohibited are mixed, as long as one does not deal with prohibited acts directly and that one exerts his every effort to search for another job free of doubtful matters. AMJA does not see anything to prevent this ruling from being applied on employment in interest-based financial institutions. Exemption is therefore granted to work in fields that are not directly related to interest, in writing the contracts, witnessing them or providing any direct or intentional assistance for any of that.
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VIII: Working in courts of law

1. Allah sent His Messengers and revealed His Books for people to stand forth with justice. The way to do this is to judge by His Laws, to stand up for pure justice and to renounce all the vain desires and human arrangements that go against it. Therefore, it is not lawful to seek judgment from man-made courts of law, unless there is a complete lack of Islamic alternatives which would have the power to restore people's rights and eliminate injustice, and as long as one's demands before the court are lawful and one does not make anything lawful unless it agrees with Shari`ah. If judgment is pronounced in a person's favor, without due right, he/she must not take it, because a judge's verdict does not make the prohibited lawful, nor the lawful prohibited; the judge's role is merely to reveal, not to create.
2. It is incumbent upon Muslim communities to try to solve their disputes by compromising within the limits of Shari`ah judgment and by seeking out ways that are legal in their countries of residence which would enable them to judge by Islamic Law, especially in terms of personal status laws.
3. Working in the field of legal representation is lawful if the attorney is convinced of the justice and Islamic legitimacy of what he is being asked to represent.

IX: Working in the field of engineering

1. It is not permissible for Muslim owners of design and construction companies to design or build structures in which sin is practiced, for example: gambling markets and halls, liquor shops and places of worship in which shirk (idolatry) is practiced. Likewise, it is not permissible for them to accept projects containing anything of the sort, unless one has a non-Muslim partner who can handle these jobs, in both funding and administration, and be independent of the results, both in terms of penalty and profit. Any insignificant and uncommon aspect of this can be forgiven, if it was not possible to get a non-Muslim to handle it.
2. If the structure was initially built for lawful use, but was tainted by a slight amount of unlawful things in consequence, this could be forgiven, due to the pervasive nature of the affliction and the dire necessity, considering how limited purely legitimate opportunities in this profession are in these countries.
3. There is nothing wrong with working for design or construction companies when the lawful and the prohibited are mixed in their activities, on condition that the employee avoid direct involvement in the prohibited activities, like designing or building bars, casinos, places of idol worship and the like.
4. Should the employee in these companies be assigned to design or build any structure that would be used for prohibited purposes and he cannot avoid that and he does not find alternative employment, there would be exemption for him to proceed when necessary, as long as this assignment is of an uncommon and exceptional nature. If such prohibited assignments are numerous and he is unable to avoid them, it would be incumbent on him to search for alternative employment that would be purer in terms of income and more pleasing to Allah. He must also get rid of any unlawful money earned during this transitional phase.

X: Working as a real estate agent

1. The basic principle regarding employment as a real estate agent is that it is permissible, as long as the activities surrounding the agent (in terms of drawing up contracts) are lawful. It is not permissible, neither for real estate companies nor for individuals, to get involved in the sale of any property if the agent is either certain or feels it is most likely that said property will not be used except for forbidden purposes.
 2. If an employee in one of these companies is assigned the task of handing a sale, if he is certain or has strong reason to assume that it will be used for prohibited purposes, if he does not find any way to avoid conducting the sale, and if the company's activities are predominately permissible, there would be exemption for him to do proceed with the sale when necessary due to the uncommon nature of this transaction among the company's activities, although he should still take care to avoid anything prohibited or to minimize it to the extent of his ability.
 3. It is permissible for both real estate agencies and individual salespeople to draw up the sale contract even if the buyer's money was obtained through interest-based financing. There is nothing wrong with writing down how the buyer obtained the money, but it would not be permissible for the agent to help make the process of interest-based financing easier, whether by providing referrals to companies or by preparing examples of different financing methods, etc.
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XI: Working as a taxi driver

1. It is not permissible for the driver to agree to transport anything prohibited such as alcohol, pork products, etc., due to the hadith that has been narrated concerning alcohol: that the one who carries (transports) it is cursed. This is also due to the generally agreed upon stance in Shari`ah that if Allah Almighty forbids something, He also forbids direct or intentional assistance in its circulation.
 2. If an agreement has already been made to transport the passenger, then anything forbidden that he is transporting or carrying on his person can be forgiven because the agreement was not originally made on that basis. Rather, it was made to transport the passenger which is lawful in itself, as long as the passenger did not make his prohibited intention known.
 3. It is disliked for a taxi driver to linger in places where sin and vice are rampant. This disapproval becomes stronger at times in which more people can be found hanging out in these areas because that would make him deal with these kinds of people. There are enough alternatives to this for a person to make a living.
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XII: Working at supermarkets and restaurants

1. It is not permissible for a Muslim to work at any grocery store or restaurant where prohibited items are sold if this work would entail direct involvement with them, for example, serving alcohol or pork products, whether in terms of preparation or otherwise. Cases of exigent need should be taken into account, as long as they are judged according to their extent and steps are taken to bring the situation to an end. One must also detest this employment with one's heart, be determined to leave it as soon as possible and make a serious effort to find a lawful alternative.
 2. There is nothing wrong with working as a security guard, a janitor, etc. in these stores and restaurants, however, since such jobs do not require direct involvement in anything prohibited in terms of selling, transporting, preparing or serving.
 3. It is disliked for a Muslim to work washing the dishes or drinking vessels used for prohibited activities, due to the indirect assistance that would provide for the sinful action.
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XIII: On various business ventures

- **Opening an official branch of a shop that sells food stuffs including anything prohibited:**

1. It is not permissible for a Muslim to initiate a request to open an official branch of a shop that sells food stuffs, when those products contain prohibited foods or beverages, unless his request is limited to selling only the permissible products.
2. If the organization of these companies prevents the granting of distribution rights for some of its products and not others, and one could delegate the handling of these prohibited products to a non-Muslim partner in whose religion these products are not forbidden, then it does not appear that there would be any reason to prevent that as long as this non-Muslim deals with these items independently, both in terms of funding and administration and any resulting penalties or earnings. There must also be a concrete separation between the two types in order to prevent confusion and conflict.
3. Whoever has already entered into a contract to operate an official branch of a store in which most

of the products are permissible, but which also involves selling prohibited food and drink, there does not seem to be any reason not to continue the contract, as long as he abides by the following restrictions:

1. The activities of this establishment must not involve the sale of alcohol, even in small amounts.
2. One must exert every effort to get the parent company to grant permission for him to be exempt from the sale of these prohibited items.
3. He must minimize the sale and promotion of these prohibited items as much as possible.
4. Non-Muslims should be appointed to handle any direct involvement in preparation and sales.
5. He must isolate any prohibited earnings resulting from the sale and give it away to any charitable cause.

- **Automated teller machines:**

1. It is permissible to rent space for automated teller machines (ATMs) because the most preponderant use of these machines is to get money by direct withdrawal from a person's account.
2. It is permissible for a merchant to accept payment for his merchandise from customers via credit card because the price was earned in a legitimate way.

- **Working in jewelry stores:**

It is permissible for a Muslim to invest in or work at a store that sells jewelry on condition that delivery of goods and receipt of payment occur on the spot for any types of transactions that would require such. Also, the jewelry must not contain any idols or symbols of other religions or beliefs contrary to Islam.

- **Working in a convenience store at a gas station**

It is not permissible for a Muslim, who invests or works in any of these stores, located at gas stations or elsewhere, to handle sales of lottery tickets or similar types of prohibited items as are sold at such locations. In terms of the gas station owner renting the associated store to someone whose merchandise is for the most part permissible, though some prohibited items may be involved, there does not appear to be any reason in Shari`ah to prevent this because the contract was made for a lawful purpose and any subsequent guilt would fall upon the renter alone.

- Working in check cashing and receiving a salary

It has been decided to delay consideration of this issue, pending further study and contemplation.

XIV: Recommendations of the Session for Interfaith Dialogue

Those in attendance at the meetings discussed recommendations proceeding from AMJA's fourth training course, which focused on meeting with representatives of various religions (interfaith dialogue). They confirmed that the idea of debating and reaching out to other religions is a deeply-rooted part of Islamic heritage, with reference to fourth century meetings between al-Qadi Abi Bakr al-Baqalani and people of various faiths and their discussions in an atmosphere far from the hurling of accusations and the relay of objections that has predominated most debates in this day and age. The conference members examined these recommendations, revised some of the wording, and have resolved to present them in the form of the following decision:

1. Interfaith dialogue, or meetings with representatives of other religions, is a general term, with a variety

of meanings, some of which are lawful and some of which are prohibited:

2. If what is meant by it is to call others to the worship of Allah Most High, to place the evidence before His servants, to clarify the truth to those seeking guidance and to defend Islam against the assault of the stubborn and aggressive, this is a praiseworthy endeavor and an acceptable good deed.
3. If what is meant by it is merely to announce the truth to nations ignorant of it and in circles in which it is denied, in order to remove the desolation in their hearts and to break down the barrier of aversion within their souls, enabling them to decide for themselves what they want thereafter, that in itself would be a praiseworthy endeavor and an acceptable good deed.
4. If what is meant by it is an attempt to bring about a peaceful co-existence amongst people of different faiths, sparing lives, calming unrest, enabling people thereby to move freely about the land, in peace and security, empowering thereby the cause of truth so that the message might be spread and leaving no excuse for those who disagree, far from an atmosphere of tension, enmity and controversy, this too would be a legitimate intention and a praiseworthy goal.
5. If what is meant by this is to come to a way of achieving the worldly welfare common to all humanity, especially for those who inhabit the same region or who have been brought together by common bonds making such cooperation necessary, there would be nothing wrong with that, nor would there be any blame on the people involved. Allah has made the earth to be shared between all of His servants: the good and the bad, Muslims and non-Muslims, the virtuous and the wicked. Allah Almighty has said, {And the earth He has put for the creatures.}[Ar-Rahman 55: 10] He has also said, {To each—these as well as those—We bestow from the Bounties of your Lord. And the Bounties of your Lord can never be forbidden.} [Al-Isra' 17: 20]. Indeed, this is the basis for community development and the stability of civilization.
6. If what is meant by this is a syncretism of faiths, a blending of religions and an attempt to create a common sphere of belief that would transform the characteristics of the creed and could even lead to publishing the Qur'an with the books of other religions in one volume, this would be an affront to all religions. In fact, it is religious and cultural fraud that surpasses in seriousness and damage the commercial fraud criminalized by the organizations and laws of so many different cultures and civilizations.
7. The basic principle in interfaith meetings is that they are a scholarly endeavor and a talent in the art of making da`wah. It is based on knowledge of Shari`ah and should be accompanied by the ability to speak in public and an awareness of the customs, people and system of the country. It is no place for the common Muslim or even those with a moderate amount of knowledge. Anyone who presides over this field must have sufficient knowledge to protect him from getting confused by misconceptions, enough faith to protect him from the lure of temptation, and debate skills that would enable him to assert the honor of the truth, to defend it and to repel the misconceptions of his adversaries.
8. It is necessary to affirm that the message of Islam represents the essence of all of the messages of the prophets in their original, complete and final form, and that it is addressed to the whole of humanity, including the followers of prophets sent before the Final Prophet and Messenger, Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace).
9. The general rule when it comes to debating the People of the Book is that it be done in (a way) that is better, except with such of them as do wrong [29:46], and that the goal be to make the truth clear and obvious, to guide all of creation and to eliminate the misconception. Also, it should not be contaminated by inflammatory speech or an air of superiority, whether in the content of the speech or its method of delivery. Indeed, the people of Islam are the most knowledgeable of the truth and the most merciful of people to Allah's creatures.
10. The rule when conveying the message is to be clear and for the speaker to have insight. He should make sure of issues that are agreed upon amongst Muslims and begin with them. He should also present the evidence for issues of contention and not apologize for them. He should begin by

establishing the principles before getting into secondary issues and connect the particulars of any case to the general aspects; and of course, he must have a good intention in all of this.

11. The debater should not narrow anything broad. Whoever has taken an opinion on a subject should overlook it even if he is convinced that his is the more correct opinion, for the field of debate is wider than the field of juristic opinion.
12. Kindness and justice are the basis for dealing with both Muslims and non-Muslims, and among them, the People of the Book have a special place. Examples of this can be found in Shari`ah—that their slaughtered meat is permissible for us and that their women are permissible for Muslim men to marry—two privileges other religions do not share.
13. The kindness and justice a Muslim is ordered to show in his dealings with non-Muslims does not imply belief in their religions, nor does it require the Muslim to deny his belief that Islam abrogates the religions that came before it and that whosoever does not accept Islam will not attain salvation in the Hereafter.
14. There is nothing wrong with holding interfaith meetings in mosques or in other places of worship, as long as the sanctity of the mosque is respected and those praying therein are not disturbed. This is based on the correct opinion of scholars that it is permissible for non-Muslims to enter any mosque except the Holy Mosque in Mecca. There is nothing wrong, if the time for the prayer has arrived, for Muslims to pray in the places of worship belonging to other religions, as long as they avoid facing statues. They may also grant permission for non-Muslims to pray in their mosques as long as that does not become a regular practice. There is evidence for this in the rules and objectives of Shari`ah.
15. Whoever of the non-Muslims would like to join the Muslims in their prayer should not be prevented from doing so, if it seems that this would have the advantage of inclining their hearts. This is true on condition that they form a separate row, or at least that they remain at the end of one, so as not to break the continuity of the line. This in no way compromises the agreement that true Islamic faith is a condition for the validity of all good deeds and for their acceptance.
16. There is nothing wrong with the mutual exchange of gifts between Muslims and non-Muslims that may take place in some of these meetings, for this is a general part of the kindness and just treatment we are ordered to show in our dealings with both Muslims and non-Muslims, as long as this does not deprive anyone of their rights, push anyone to do wrong or constitute support of falsehood.
17. There is nothing wrong with any communal prayer that occurs at the commencement or conclusion of these sessions, as long as it does not involve calling upon anything beside Allah or contain idolatrous phrasing, based on evidence related from some of the Companions and Followers of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) that permission was granted for non-Muslims to attend the prayer of seeking rain. The participants in these discussions should agree on certain ground rules, including not infringing on participants' particular beliefs and convictions.
18. Of those shared activities permeating these meetings, some will fall into the category of acts of worship while others will be more along the lines of customs. It is not lawful to participate in any that fit into the category of worship, because this would fall somewhere in the range of innovation in worship and association in worship. There is nothing wrong with participating in anything belonging to the category of customs, if need be, in order to incline the hearts and to repair the general situation.
19. There is nothing wrong with drawing up treaties of alliance at these meetings and similar events in order to aid participants and others who are suffering under oppression, or to cooperate in general good deeds which would be of common benefit to the whole of humanity. Evidence for this can be found in the Treaty of al-Fudoul and the Cooperation and Non-Aggression Pact with the Jews in Madina.
20. Leaders of Muslim communities must show interest in interfaith dialogue and in training those active in da`wah who have shown competence in this capacity. They should be open to other communities and take advantage of these meetings to assert their social and civil rights or to seek any other benefits that might be gained for their community.

