



# News Release

September 25, 2007

## **NOTED AUTHOR AYAAN HIRSI ALI RECEIVES HER GREEN CARD** *Becomes Permanent Resident During Special DC Ceremony*

Washington, DC – During a small, private ceremony held in his Washington D.C. office, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Director Emilio Gonzalez presented Ms. Ayaan Hirsi Ali with her green card (Alien Registration Card) yesterday afternoon.

An outspoken defender of women’s rights in Islamic societies, Ms. Hirsi Ali was born in Mogadishu, Somalia. She escaped an arranged marriage by immigrating to the Netherlands in 1992, and served as a member of the Dutch parliament from 2003 to 2006. While in parliament, she worked on furthering the integration of non-Western immigrants into Dutch society, and on defending the rights of women in Dutch Muslim society.

“Ayaan Hirsi Ali is a courageous woman who in exercising her right to free speech from outside of the United States put her very life in jeopardy,” said Director Gonzalez. “Today, we welcome her to the United States as a permanent resident. We welcome her to the protection provided by the U.S. Constitution and encourage her to continue speaking out regarding those issues she feels passionate about.”

In a brief statement, Ms. Hirsi Ali said, She was “overwhelmed with emotions and filled with great pride and gratitude to be counted as one of the many immigrants to the United States from around the world who came before me seeking freedom, refuge and the right to speak out without fear of persecution.”

Ms. Hirsi Ali has authored numerous books and essays to include *Infidel*, her autobiography, and *The Caged Virgin; An Emancipation Proclamation for Women and Islam*. She’s currently working on another book, *Shortcut to Enlightenment*, an imagined philosophical fantasy about a visit by Muhammad to the New York Public Library in which he examines the ideas of various Enlightenment philosophers and compares them to the state of Islam today.

