

Preface

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

The Holy Qur'an relates the first human being was God's *Khalifah* (vice-regent) on earth (7:11; 2:29-34) into whom God blew His own Spirit (32:7-9; 15:28-34; 38:72). It also shows that all human beings are equal in respect of their origin and creation (4:1; 6:98; 49:13). These sacred passages have led the overwhelming majority of Muslims over the centuries to respect all human beings and to strive for friendly mutual coexistence with all peoples. Nothing on earth is more important than to continue this legacy and that all humanity should live harmoniously and peacefully together.

This excellent volume of essays by scholars and practitioners of Islam, edited by Dr. Qamar-ul Huda, critically analyzes the intellectual heritage of Islam with the practical challenges of peacemaking, conflict resolution, mediation, and reconciliation in Islam. In a time when religious extremist groups and zealous secularists pose serious threats to societies, these essays insightfully examine developing civil society, cultivating an ethos of pluralism, broadening political and economic systems, tapping into religious leaders for peace-building activities, encouraging critical thinking skills in educational institutions, and investing in human capital as the strongest steps toward peace-building efforts in Muslim communities.

This book also highlights real initiatives in Islamic peacemaking that are occurring in all Muslim communities every day and throughout the world. These peace-building activities include activities by high-ranking religious scholars, as exemplified in *The Amman Message* and the *A Common Word* initiatives, and profound work by regional and local-level imams, teachers, lawyers, activists, religious educators, and others in civil society. The recommendations in this volume to develop institutional capacity to prevent violent conflict from emerging and promote sustainable peace, promote economic and human development, synchronize peace-building resources, and cultivate a culture of peace-building are all extremely important steps that need to be taken in our times. *The Crescent and Dove: Peace and*

Conflict Resolution in Islam is thus a much-needed comprehensive, informative, practical-minded and well-intentioned work that could well lead to some real and important developments for world peace and harmony in the future, *Deo Volente*.

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