



A Way Forward for Canada and the Muslim World: Reflections and Policy Options

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Since December 2001, the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development has been engaged in an on-going dialogue with Canadian and international experts to explore Canada's relations with Muslim communities across the world. The CCFPD initiated these discussions to promote intellectual exchange and generate policy advice from Canadian and international academic experts, writers, journalists, non-governmental organizations, and students, in an on-going discussion involving the Minister of Foreign Affairs (the Honourable Bill Graham, M.P.), and other government policy makers. The synthesis report that follows captures the conclusions and policy advice to date from this dialogue. Further details (including some papers and video interviews of participants) are available at the CCFPD website, located at www.cfp-pec.gc.ca.

Your comments are most welcome.

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Introduction

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 have generated a wide-reaching debate about the causes of conflict in the 21st century, the consequences of global inequality and alienation, and the role of Western foreign policy in the Middle East and elsewhere. Reflecting this, the idea of a dialogue among cultures has become even more prominent in foreign policy discussions. Over the past year,

the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development has initiated on-going discussions with Canadian and international experts, government policy makers, and others to explore Canada's engagement with Muslim communities across the world.¹

This report is a synthesis of a diversity of views.² It is not a consensus report, nor does it attempt to reflect the opinions of all participants. Discussions focussed on the

¹ This report is a synthesis of analyses and recommendations collected from four policy discussions: "Clash of Civilizations Roundtable" (in partnership with McGill Institute for the Study of Canada, McGill University), Montreal, December 10, 2001; "Thinkers' Retreat: Clash of Civilizations?" (Ottawa, May 2-4, 2002); "Thinkers' Retreat on Canada and the Muslim World" (Ottawa, September 20, 2002); and "Dialogue with Canada and the Muslim World: A Discussion with Karen Armstrong" (Ottawa, October 1, 2002). Though Chatham House rules were employed for most of these discussions, where possible, participants have been quoted from online interviews and discussion papers prepared for the dialogue. Event summaries, and online video interviews of some participants, are available on the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development website (www.cfp-pec.gc.ca). The 17 participants of CCFPD's 2002 Graduate Student Seminar ("Can Democracy and Open Societies Overcome the Causes of Conflict in a Divided World?") also presented papers that contributed to this discussion.

² A list of participants is included at the end of this document.