

**THE TANDEM PROJECT**  
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**UNITED NATIONS, HUMAN RIGHTS,  
FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF**

*The Tandem Project is a UN NGO in Special Consultative Status with the  
Economic and Social Council of the United Nations*

*Separation of Religion or Belief and State*

*Invitation to*

**AL AKHAWAYN UNIVERSITY & ISLAMIC EDUCATIONAL,  
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (ISESCO)**

**TANDEM FORUM**

**ACADEMIC DISCOURSE ON HUMAN RIGHTS  
AND FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF**

*Program on Human Rights and Freedom of Religion or Belief for Study, Research  
and Engagement from Multidisciplinary Perspectives at Al Akhawayn University*

**To: Al Akhawayn University: School of Humanities & Social Sciences; Islamic Educational,  
Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO)**

You are invited to participate in a Round Table Discussion – *Program on Human Rights and Freedom of Religion or Belief for Study, Research and Engagement from Multidisciplinary Perspectives at Al Akhawayn University*.

**TANDEM FORUMS: build global awareness** of international human rights law on freedom of religion or belief **at local levels** as a follow-up to Universal Periodic Reviews. Organizations and individuals in this invitation have not been approached or asked for an endorsement. In the future they will be approached to **assess interest**, exchange information and consider local **partnerships** within and between countries as **best practice models** for international human rights law on freedom of religion or belief.

PROPOSAL FOR DISCUSSION

- *There can be no adequate understanding of the most important issues we face when disciplines are cloistered from one another and operate on their own premises. It would be far more effective to bring together people working on questions of religion, politics, history, economics, anthropology, sociology, literature, art, religion and philosophy to engage in comparative analysis of common problems. As the curriculum is restructured, fields of inquiry and methods of investigation will be transformed.* - Mark C. Taylor, Chairman of the Religion Department, Columbia University, New York.

## ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

The Al Akhawayn University School of Humanities & Social Sciences, and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) Science and Cultural & Communications Directorates.

Agenda: (1) Proposal for Discussion, (2) Strategies and Obstacles to a multi-disciplinary approach to human rights and freedom of religion or belief at Al Akhawayn University, (3) Morocco Universal Periodic Review, (4) Response to the draft plan of action for the Second Phase Human Rights Education proposed by the U.N. Human Rights Council in September 2010 (A/HRC/15/28).

### **Draft plan of action for the second phase (2010-2014) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (A/HRC/15/28): U.N. Human Rights Council**

#### **(b) Teaching and learning processes and tools**

**27. Introducing or improving human rights education in the higher education system requires adopting a holistic approach to teaching and learning, by integrating programme objectives and content, resources, methodologies, assessment and evaluation; by looking beyond the classroom and the higher-education institution to society; and by building partnerships between different members of the academic community and beyond.**

**(v) Develop multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary human rights academic programmes. 20**

<sup>20</sup> **Multidisciplinary programmes would include the study, research and engagement with human rights from different disciplinary perspectives, such as philosophy, sociology, languages, international and domestic law, etc. Interdisciplinary programmes would entail the crossing of boundaries between disciplines and the pooling of approaches and methodologies to study, research and engage with human rights with a new integrated perspective.**

The Questionnaire is a checklist for inclusive and genuine dialogue on human rights and freedom of religion or belief to prepare Tandem Forums for Places of Worship, Academic Discourse, Schools, Women and Civil Society. It is helpful but not necessary to complete the Questionnaire to attend the 2<sup>nd</sup> Minneapolis-St. Paul Area Forum for Places of Worship.

#### **OPEN QUESTIONNAIRE**

Thank you for taking a few minutes to reply.

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## BACKGROUND

### **Al Akhawayn University School of Humanities & Social Sciences**

<http://www.aui.ma/VPAA/shss/shss-index.htm>

The School of Humanities and Social Sciences is designed to provide a strong Liberal Arts component for all AUI students through courses in Communications, Composition, Literature, History, Islamic Civilization, Arabic Language, and Social and Political Sciences. These courses represent most of those taught in the [University Common Core](#).

The School of Humanities and Social Sciences has as a mission to provide innovative professional degree programs in applied social sciences with an emphasis on interdisciplinary technical and analytical skills, as well as practical learning. These include, at the undergraduate level: [Communications Studies](#), [Human Resource Development](#) and [International Studies](#). At the graduate level, the School offers a [Master's program in International Studies and Diplomacy](#). In addition to these degree programs, the School offers a number of Minors including [Women and Development](#), which was the first of its kind in Morocco. The School of Humanities and Social Sciences offers a number of special programs, including an [Intensive Summer Program in Arabic Language and North African Studies](#).

The School of Humanities and Social Sciences also has a mandate to encourage dialogue and a convergence of cultures in an academic atmosphere characterized by universalism and liberty. It provides a forum for the discussion of issues arising from globalization and increasing economic and social interdependence.

We hope you will visit us often to find out how our programs and activities are developing and growing as we continue to contribute to the development of education in the Social Sciences and the Liberal Arts in Morocco.

### **Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO)**

<http://www.isesco.org.ma/>

The Governments of the Member States,

- Believing that Islam, a religion of peace and tolerance, represents a way of life and a spiritual, human, moral, cultural and civilizational force which made, and is still making, constructive contribution towards the shaping of the Islamic World and the development of human civilization;
- Responding to the expectations of the Member States and the hopes of the Islamic Ummah in achieving cooperation, solidarity, progress and prosperity within the framework of joint Islamic action;
- In anticipation of the challenges faced by the Member States in the educational, scientific, cultural and communication fields, and being aware of the importance of such fields in achieving development, progress and prosperity, without neglecting the Ummah's glorious heritage;
- Being aware of the close bonds which unite the peoples of the Islamic World through the unity of civilization and the shared spiritual, moral and cultural values, and seeking to encourage civilizational interaction and promote these shared civilizational, cultural and intellectual bonds;

- Activating the principles of solidarity, mutual assistance and equality to reinforce cooperation among the Member States and thereby promote education, science, culture and communication through all appropriate means;

Lay down the present Charter :

## **General Principles**

### **Article 1 : Name and definition**

a) Name : The Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. It is hereinafter referred to as ISESCO.

b) Definition : ISESCO is a specialized international organization working within the framework of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, specializing in the fields of education, science, culture and communication.

### **Article 2 : Headquarters**

ISESCO shall have its headquarters in Rabat, capital city of the Kingdom of Morocco. The Organization may, under a General Conference resolution and upon a proposal from the Executive Council of ISESCO, establish in any other country, centres, offices or institutions which are subsidiary to it or are under its supervision.

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**The Tandem Project** a non-governmental organization (NGO) founded in 1986 to build understanding, tolerance, and respect for diversity of religion or belief, and to prevent discrimination in matters relating to freedom of religion or belief. The Tandem Project has sponsored multiple conferences, curricula, reference material and programs on Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights- Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion – and the 1981 United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief.