

A historic meeting in the UAE: Rabbi Cherki and senior Muslim leaders build bridges between Judaism and Islam

The respected Rabbi Oury Cherki was invited to visit the United Arab Emirates following the publication of his "Open Letter to Islam"

DUBAI, UAE, February 19, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- (Dubai, February 18, 2024) The respected Rabbi Oury Cherki was invited to visit the United Arab Emirates following the publication of his "[Open Letter to Islam](#)," sent to Muslim religious leaders to build a bridge between the faiths.

After his rabbinical open letter made waves around the world, Rabbi Oury Cherki was invited for a first-of-a-kind visit to the Emirates, where he met

with senior leaders led by H.E. Dr. Ali Rashid Al Nuaimi, Chairman of the Defense Affairs, Interior & Foreign Affairs Committee at the UAE Federal National Council.

Among other participants in this critical meeting between Rabbi Cherki and Dr. Al-Nuaimi was Sheikh Muhammad Talib al-Shahi, Director of the Preaching Department at the General Authority for Islamic Affairs and Endowments, Vice Chairman of the Sharia Committee of the Zakat Fund. During the meeting, Dr. Al-Nuaimi stated that the Islamist's view, that defines Israel as "Dar al-Islam" -- territory for which Muslims are obligated to wage religious war to reconquer - is "a lie, fabricated only in the past 100 years."

Al-Nuaimi added to this by saying: "Stop trying to justify your existence; you are an established fact, and Jews are part of the Middle East."

Rabbi Cherki stated: "Dr. Al-Nuaimi's words constitute a historic beginning toward building a bridge of faith between Judaism and Islam. The most central religious claim of Islam against



Dr. Ali Rashid Al Nuaimi Rabbi Oury Cherki and Rabbi Eyal Vered

Israel is that of “Dar Al-Islam,” according to which Muslims are obligated to use force to conquer the land that had previously been under Muslim control. Judaism’s main issue with Islam is, of course, that extremist Islamist views do not recognize the legitimacy of Judaism’s connection to the Land of Israel and therefore attack Israel because of it being “Dar al-Islam,” as it were. Islam’s distancing itself from this claim, as Dr. Nuaimi has done, and the recognition of Israel as a legitimate state will solve most of the acute problems between Islam and Judaism and will build between them a bridge of faith.

At the meeting, Rabbi Cherki raised the issue of the need for the Islamic world to recognize that the Jews are a nation and not a religion – a topic of great consequence in Islamist claims against Israel’s existence. To his surprise, Al-Nuaimi replied that this is not a problem, Israel is legitimate regardless, and the Jews are free to define themselves as they see fit.

Rabbi Cherki also raised the topic of the closing of ijtiḥād – the mechanism of oral law in Islam, which ended centuries ago – and Al Nuaimi replied that the closing of ijtiḥād was a big mistake. This topic is particularly important for inter-religious understanding, as re-opening ijtiḥād will also allow for the re-interpretation of many hard verses in the Quran.

The Emirati representatives at the meeting expressed an interest in learning in greater detail the meaning of “The Bridge of Faith,” the Rabbi’s open letter to Islam, and asked to receive a copy of the 12-century Jewish manuscript mentioned in the letter. Al-Nuaimi summarized: “In Islam, there are good ones, and there are bad ones; we are the good ones.”

During the course of his visit, Rabbi Oury Cherki met with additional senior leaders in Dubai and Abu-Dhabi, including Sheikh Al-Mansuri, who founded a Holocaust Museum in the UAE, the former Bahraini Ambassador to the United States (herself a Bahraini Jew), the former American Ambassador to Oman, the Jewish businessman Eli Epstein, who was involved in signing the Abraham Accords, and more.

Tom Wegner
Update Marketing Media LTD
[email us here](#)

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