

AMMWECC President Anila Ali Delivers Historic Keynote at Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee Israel Independence Event

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, May 7, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In a moving and historic keynote address at the Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee's Israel Independence Day celebration, [Anila Ali](#), President of the American Muslim & Multifaith Women's Empowerment Council (AMMWECC), delivered a powerful call for Abrahamic unity, interfaith justice, and the moral courage needed to confront antisemitism and extremism in today's world.

Ali, a Pakistani-American Muslim leader and lifelong advocate for coexistence, opened her remarks with moral clarity:

"I stand before you as a Muslim American Pakistani who refuses to hate Jews."



Anila Ali Speaks to the Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee (Credit: JFed Sarasota-Manatee Social Media)

Drawing from her own life, Ali shared the story of visiting Israel both before and after the Hamas terror attacks of October 7th, 2023. She led Muslim delegations to bear witness to the horrors, meet survivors, and extend solidarity with grieving Jewish and Muslim families alike. "This is not a battle between Islam and Judaism," she said. "This is a battle between good and evil."

Ali described standing at the March for Israel rally in Washington, D.C., proclaiming "Am Yisrael Chai" and receiving death threats, harassment, and excommunication from extremist factions. But like the lone German resister August Landmesser — whom she referenced in her speech — she chose conscience over conformity.

She reminded the audience that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was the first

interfaith leader, and cited the Charter of Medina, which united Muslims, Jews, and others under a framework of mutual respect and shared responsibility.

“The Prophet lived side by side with Jews and Christians. That message of coexistence has been distorted by Islamists—and we must reclaim it.”

One of the most powerful moments in her address came when she recalled her partnership with Dr. Gwen Hecht, a Jewish American leader who traveled with Ali to Tharparkar, Pakistan, to build schools for underserved children.



The program for the Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee, marked Israel's Independence Day

“In that desert village, the elders greeted Dr. Gwen with open arms. They said, ‘You are our sister, a child of Musa (peace be upon him), and of the People of the Book.’ That is the power of true faith-based allyship,” Ali said. “It was the Muslims of the Thar desert—not the elites—who showed moral clarity and compassion after October 7th.”

Ali’s work with organizations like Sharaka and the Combat Antisemitism Movement was highlighted, including the historic delegations of Muslim leaders, imams, and South Asian journalists to Israel and the March of the Living, where Muslim participants led prayers at Auschwitz in solidarity with the Jewish people.

She called attention to the shared roots of Pakistan and Israel, both born in the late 1940s, and appealed for the expansion of regional peace efforts:

“Just as we celebrated the Abraham Accords between Arabs and Israelis, we now stand ready to celebrate the Abraham Accords for Asia. And today, we urge President Trump to include South Asian Muslim nations like Pakistan and Bangladesh in this expanding circle of peace.”

Watch local news coverage of the event: [WTSP News Video](#)

In closing, Ali reminded the audience why she continues to fight:

“Muslims must fight antisemitism. Jews must fight Islamophobia. Together, we must fight hate. Because in an ocean of hate, we were the oasis of humanity. In the fog of war, we were the clarity of compassion.”

Her keynote was more than a speech—it was a testament to the power of bridge-building, moral

courage, and shared faith in healing a fractured world.

For more on AMMWEC programs, watch a recent [briefing](#) here.

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