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PRESS RELEASE

GLOBAL MUSLIM LEADER OPENS SCANDINAVIA'S LARGEST MOSQUE

Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said the new mosque will be a House of Peace

The world Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad officially inaugurated the Baitul Nasr mosque in Oslo on Friday, 30 September 2011. The mosque is Scandinavia's largest and has a capacity of 4,500 worshippers. Visible from a great distance, the mosque has already established itself as a national landmark and a symbol of peace.

The mosque was officially inaugurated by Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad during his Friday Sermon, which was broadcast worldwide on MTA International. The opening of the mosque also received a lot of media attention and was covered extensively by Norway's national broadcaster, the 'NRK' amongst others.

During his address, His Holiness said that various media organisations had conducted interviews with him during the past week. He said each had asked him what the purpose of the mosque was and what his feelings towards it were. He said that to all he had replied that the mosque was a place where peace in society would be fostered through the worship of the One God.

Later in the day, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat in Norway hosted a formal reception to mark the opening of the mosque. Over 120 dignitaries from all sectors of Norwegian society attended the event. The guests were welcomed by the President of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat in Norway, Zartasht Munir Khan, who informed that the mosque had been funded completely by Ahmadi Muslims. He said that thousands had contributed towards this project including a person who sold his house and a person who sold his car to raise funds.

The country's Defence Minister, Grete Faremo, attended the event on behalf of the Norwegian Government and also presented a message on behalf of Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg. In her comments she said:

“Religion has always played an important role in Norway. The new Norway also has a central role for religion. So we must open all our doors and invite all others as we are seeing here today. This is not my place of worship but irrespective of this I still feel real warmth here.”

The highlight of the evening reception was the keynote address given by Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad. During his address he spoke about the relationship between Ahmadi Muslims and local Norwegian citizens. He said:

“It is very heartening to see that regardless of differences of colour and race, you are all collectively working towards the progress of the nation. All of you, who are our guests, have come here today due to your relationship with various members of the Ahmadiyya community and so you have responded to the love shown by Ahmadi Muslims with love itself.”

His Holiness also used the occasion to speak of the terrorist attack that took place in Norway earlier this year. He said:

“I would like to speak of that horrific tragedy that occurred here in Norway just a few weeks ago, on 22 July 2011. From the perspective of our community, every Norwegian Ahmadi Muslim, from whichever country they originate, feels the utmost pain and grief in their hearts over this horrifying incident.

As we reflect on the abhorrent tragedy, let it be clear that it is not only the Ahmadis here in Norway who have felt this devastation and grief, but in fact all Ahmadi Muslims throughout the world feel your loss and share in your grief. I have already sent my condolences to the Norwegian Government; however I would like to take this opportunity to once again express the heartfelt condolences of myself and every Ahmadi Muslim throughout the world, to the families of the victims, to your Government and indeed to the entire Norwegian nation.”

His Holiness concluded by saying:

“Rest assured that every Ahmadi Muslim who enters this mosque will have a true and deep love for mankind and will also fully comply with the laws of this nation. Rest assured that every Ahmadi Muslim who enters this mosque will be at the forefront of trying to eliminate cruelties wherever they occur and will be ever ready to make every sacrifice needed to achieve this goal.”

End of release

Further Information: Abid Khan press@ahmadiyya.org.uk