GISC 3rd Annual Retreat in Cape Town - South Africa

Strengthening Global Unity Among Imams and Scholars

The Global Imams & Scholars Council (GISC) successfully held its 3rd Annual Retreat on 28–29 October 2025 in Cape Town, South Africa, graciously hosted by the United Ulama Council of South Africa (UUCSA). The gathering brought together representatives from member councils and Imams and scholars from across the globe, including:

- **Australia: Australian National Imams Council (ANIC)**
- **Canada: Canadian Council of Imams (CCI)**
- **South Africa: United Ulama Council of South Africa (UUCSA)**
- **United Kingdom: British Board of Scholars and Imams (BBSI)**
- **United States of America: North American Imams Fellowship (NAIF)**

Many observers from other regions also participated in this important gathering.

The retreat focused on strengthening unity and collaboration among Imams and scholarly bodies in countries where Muslims are minorities, enhancing mutual support, and developing practical initiatives to serve their respective communities. Meaningful discussions centred on shared challenges and opportunities, the preservation of Islamic identity, and collective advocacy for the Muslim Ummah.

A new leadership team was elected to guide the next phase of GISC's journey:

- **President – Imam Dr Abdulhakim Mohamed, USA**
- **Vice President – Imam Yusuf Patel, South Africa**
- **Secretary-General – Imam Shadi Alsuleiman, Australia**
- **Treasurer – Imam Majidih Essa, Australia**

The retreat adopted several key outcomes:

- Establishing a global Code of Ethics for Imams to strengthen professionalism and integrity.
- Hosting three global virtual scholarly meetings in 2026.

• Planning an international GISC Conference in partnership with like-minded organisations.

• Promoting youth engagement, Muslim women's participation in dawah, and continued advocacy for the Palestinian cause.

• Expanding membership to include additional councils and regions.

The Global Imams & Scholars Council (GISC) serves as a platform that unites Muslim scholars and Imams Councils from countries where Muslims are minorities. It is grounded in the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah and adheres to the mainstream understanding of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama'a. Its mission is to foster cooperation, strengthen unity, and empower scholars to fulfil their role as inheritors of prophetic knowledge.

Among GISC's core objectives are:

• Uniting and connecting Imams Councils in Muslim-minority countries worldwide.

• Preserving the integrity and authenticity of Islam in minority contexts.

• Addressing contemporary challenges and developing unified solutions.

• Serving as an inspiring and credible voice for Muslims globally.

• Educating and guiding communities on religious and spiritual matters.

• Encouraging collaboration and sharing knowledge, experiences, and resources.

• Empowering, educating, and developing Imams and scholars globally.

Heartfelt appreciation was extended to the hosting member, UUCSA, and the Muslim community leaders of Cape Town for their generous hospitality, warmth, and dedication in making this retreat a success.

Special gratitude was also expressed to the outgoing Chair, Imam Abdullah Hassan (UK), for his tireless efforts, dedication, and leadership since the inception of the Global Imams & Scholars Council (GISC). His vision and commitment have been instrumental in building a unified global network of Imams and scholars devoted to serving Islam and strengthening the Muslim Ummah.

The retreat concluded with prayers of gratitude and a renewed commitment to uphold unity, knowledge, and service, ensuring that the GISC continues to be a guiding light for Imams and scholars around the world.

Global Imams and Scholars Council (GISC)
7 November 2025