

Fostering Fraternity through Exchange of University Faculty and Students in the Muslim World

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The Muslim World today comprises of about 1.6 billion people (about 23.4% of world population) living in the parts of the world. Of these about 62 percent live in Asia-Pacific region, about 20 percent in the Middle East-North African region, about 15 percent in Sub-Saharan Africa, about three percent in Europe and about 0.3 percent in Americas¹. Though entire Muslim World is united in observing the cardinal principles of Islam, the individual nations and various regions have their own cultural identities.

In order to bring various Islamic nations closer to each other and to foster fraternity amongst them, there is a need to initiate exchange of faculty and students amongst the universities in the Muslim world. In this regard following programs could be initiated:

Visits by Leading Academics:

Under this program, delegations of leading educationists, academics and university professors may undertake visits of various Muslim countries on reciprocal basis with the objective of exchanging their experiences; develop understanding about each other's society, culture and systems of education, as well as to develop strategies to help the *Ummah* rid the evils of illiteracy and lack of education.

Visits by Talented Students:

Under this program, the delegations of most talented and leading university students can visit various Islamic countries on reciprocal basis for short term durations in order to understand each other's educational and cultural systems and familiarize themselves with leading educational institutions.

Promotion of Books:

At present there is a very little avenue open for availability of books published in various Islamic countries. There is need to arrange book exhibitions, inviting publishers from various Islamic countries to participate in them. This would benefit the academics and students of the Muslim world a great deal.

Seminars and Conferences:

Then, there is need to organize seminars and conferences on themes like female education, media education, gender inequalities, child labor, drug abuse etc. These events would provide a platform to the engines of civil society in the Muslim World to reinforce and re-strengthen their efforts aimed at eradication of such evils from their social fabrics, in addition to familiarize them with the problems being faced by various Islamic countries.

These activities would foster fraternity amongst the university faculties and students throughout the Muslim World, paving way towards higher degree of unity and understanding in the Muslim *Ummah*.

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