



Challenging Apostasy and Blasphemy in Muslim Societies

Los Angeles, September 9, 2022 Muslims for Progressive Values invites you to our forum "Addressing Apostasy and Blasphemy Laws in Muslim Societies" on September 14, 2022 at Rayburn, Capital Hill in Washington D.C. The event will open with remarks from Ambassador Tom McDonald (MPV Board of Trustees), followed by a keynote message (via video) by Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, Rashad Hussain, and Congresswoman Cindy Axne (D-IA 3rd District).

The practice of criminalizing the religious beliefs of others through apostasy and blasphemy legislation violates the fundamental teachings of Islam as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which enshrines the right to freedom of religion, belief, and thought to all individuals. Clearly, this issue is transnational as we've witnessed in the recent stabbing of Salman Rushdie, who has long been a victim of apostasy and blasphemy legislation and accusations. While he is one of the more prominent victims, there are many more unnamed victims across the Muslim world, namely progressive, feminist, and LGBTQI+ Muslims, who suffer from violence associated with these accusations.

The importance of combatting this legislation, particularly in the context of Muslim societies, is perfectly summed up by MPV's founder Ani Zonneveld who stated, "What is consistent in much of the Muslim world and Muslim communities in the West, is the oppression of thought, of the right to think freely, and to express it, whether intellectually or artistically, an oppression that is conveniently disguised in the name of Islam."

The two-hour public forum begins at 9:30 AM EST, and live streamed, will be moderated by Ani Zonneveld, Founder and President of Muslims for Progressive Values. The panelists include human rights activists Hisham Muhaimi (Komuniti Muslim Universal, Malaysia), Muhammad Raza (Pakistan) and Ashah Mwanga (Alliance of Inclusive Muslims-Africa, Uganda).

Date: September 14, 2022

Time: 9:30 AM to 11:30 AM EST

Location: Rayburn HOB 2060, Capitol Hill, Washington DC + virtual

To register, please click [here](#) or <https://bit.ly/3xMnzIX>

For more information, including a concept note, an outline of the program, and a list of speakers, please visit our [event page](#).



We invite you to visit our [Freedom of Religion and Believe page](#) for a comprehensive overview of MPV's work in this field.

About Muslims for Progressive Values:

Muslims for Progressive Values is a U.S.-based non-profit organization founded in 2007. Its mission is to advocate for social justice, women's rights, LGBTQI inclusion, freedom of expression, and freedom of and from religious beliefs. <https://www.mpvusa.org/>