



26.10.07
FRIDAY

Terrorism in Britain and the Choice for Policy Makers: Gülen's Ideas

by *Asaf Hussain*

Panel:
Civility and Non-Violence
in Gülen's Thought and
Practice

Venue:
B202,
Brunei Gallery, SOAS

26.10.07 Panels	Parallel Session 1	Parallel Session 2
9:30-11:30		
13:00-15:00		Presentation 07
15:10-17:00		

Western policies are focused on fighting terrorist groups rather than terrorist ideology and its roots causes. This paper tries to identify those root causes and the means of eradicating terrorist ideology.

A common misunderstanding is that Islam is prone to violence and extremism, if not itself the cause of terrorism. This misconception is based on ignorance of the many Muslim groups and faith-based movements that work towards peace and better relations in the world because of Islam, not despite it. The Gülen movement is one of the most successful and famous of those faith-based movements. Policy-makers need to become familiar with such movements, their motivations, methods and arguments. The extremist/terrorist ideology must be rebutted; however, of the many interpretations of Islam circulating in the world the most radical ones dominate the media and therefore the attention of younger Muslims. Media and policy-makers have not paid enough attention to the authentic interpretations of Islam embraced by the majority – the interpretations of mainstream Muslim thinkers like Fethullah Gülen. Gülen's teachings and principles and the movement's activities and projects can help inform and shape state policies. This paper explains how the views of thinkers like Gülen can be translated into policy terms to defeat terrorism.

Asaf Hussain

a.hussain@gulenconference.org.uk

Asaf Hussain: an academic from the University of Leicester. He teaches modules on Islamic civilisation. He has been writing and publishing books on Islamic fundamentalism since the early 1980s, and in the course of his research visited many fundamentalist groups in the Middle East and South Asia. Currently he is engaged in writing three studies on 'Islamic civilisation', 'Islamic fundamentalism in Britain' and 'Islamic fundamentalism in Pakistan'.