



An Initiative of Search for Common Ground  
and the Consensus Building Institute

[www.USMuslimEngagement.org](http://www.USMuslimEngagement.org)

### Endorsements of

#### ***Changing Course: A New Direction for U.S. Relations with the Muslim World*** **Report of the Leadership Group on U.S.-Muslim Engagement**

**Howard Berman, U.S. Representative (D-CA); Chair, House Committee on Foreign Affairs**

"This study explores in depth one of the central global challenges of our time: developing harmonious relations between Muslim-majority countries and the West. It offers thoughtful, creative, and multi-faceted proposals for meeting that challenge. Congress should give those proposals the fullest possible consideration."

**Richard G. Lugar, U.S. Senator (R-IN); Ranking Minority Member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations**

"This report offers a thoughtful analysis of the current state of America's relations with the Muslim world and constructive recommendations on how we can approach this pressing concern in a bipartisan framework."

**General Anthony C. Zinni, USMC (ret.)**

"This is an exceptional and important report that is a must read for all those Americans involved in policy development, operational planning, and understanding of this critical part of our global society."

**Leon E. Panetta, former White House Chief of Staff and U.S. Representative; Member, Iraq Study Group**

"This report gives the next administration specific action items to immediately improve U.S. relations with the Muslim world and greatly increase U.S. and global security. It is a strong complement to the report of the Iraq Study Group."

**David Abshire, President and CEO, Center for the Study of the Presidency**

"I heartily endorse *Changing Course: A New Direction for U.S. Relations with the Muslim World*. The substance of the report, and the extraordinary process by which it was produced, reflects the kind of leadership the country needs at this challenging time. This report conveys the unique wisdom generated when civil dialogue is conducted across political parties and various disciplines. It is a blueprint for action that the whole country can embrace."

**Dan Glickman, Chairman and CEO, Motion Picture Association of America**

"*Changing Course: A New Direction for U.S. Relations with the Muslim World* is a thorough and thoughtful treatment of this com-

plex issue. It offers useful insight to policy-makers and private citizens, including those in the entertainment and media arenas, on how we all can contribute to better relations with Muslims around the world. The better we understand each other, the more hope there is for positive change.”

**Rev. Dr. Michael Kinnamon, General Secretary, National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.**

“The U.S.-Muslim Engagement Project report, *Changing Course: A New Direction for U.S. Relations with the Muslim World*, offers thoughtful, timely and practical suggestions for bridging the divides that have separated us from our Muslim brothers and sisters in the U.S. and around the world. It is incumbent upon those responsible for U.S. foreign policy – as well as decision makers in business and industry, academia and the philanthropic community – to address this critical issue of relations with the Muslim world. It is especially important for people of faith to see the face of God in one another, to honor differences across lines of faith and culture, and to seek common ground in the quest for peace with justice. This report helps provide a framework wherein mutual respect and understanding are possible, and I commend its wide distribution and careful consideration.”

**Imam Faheem Shuaibe, Resident Imam of Masjidul Waritheen; Director, Mohammed School, Oakland, CA**

“I am deeply encouraged by the work of the U.S.-Muslim Engagement Project. I wholeheartedly agree with its assessment and concur with its premises and objective. Furthermore, I fully endorse its decided approach of coordinated action tailored to particular countries and regions. The Pro-

ject's recognition of the fact that it is a tiny minority of Muslims that engage in extremist tactics and the geo-political role, real or perceived, played by the U.S. is essential to the improvement of U.S-Muslim Relations. I am certain that this project will go far in making the world a safer place for all.”

**Rabbi David Ellenson, President of Hebrew Union College**

“The report of the U.S.-Muslim Engagement Project provides important insights and recommendations on one of the crucial issues of the day. It is a great resource for people of all faiths and its call for greater understanding, cooperation, and respect is entirely consistent with fundamental Jewish approaches for making peace in the world. The report has many constructive suggestions on how to ameliorate conflicts that contribute to divisions between the U.S. and the larger Muslim world, and among Muslims and Jews in particular.”

**Rev. Dr. James A. Forbes, Jr., President, Healing of the Nations Foundation**

“The U.S.-Muslim Engagement Project report offers practical steps toward the geopolitical maturity required in our age of globalization. Muslims are fellow citizens and our neighbors in the U.S. and there are Muslims around the world who have chosen dialogue and mutual understanding as their preferred path to peace and justice. In an age of violent extremism as a minority expression in various faith traditions, it is in our self-interest to build the majority coalition who believe in global partnership. The benefit of the ‘change of course’ commended by the report is not only the prospect of improved security, but the promise of spiritual and cultural enrichment which is the fruit of mutual respect, and the willing-

ness to hear the heartbeats of fellow human beings who drink from other wells of wisdom.”

**Rabbi David Saperstein, Director, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism**

“Engaging the Muslim world in constructive relations is indispensable to the success of American foreign policy. This report’s bipartisan approach – filled with bold, detailed policy and operational recommendations – provides vital direction not only to the American government, but also to our democratic allies. Even NGOs, including faith groups, will find rich guidance for their own engagement efforts.”

**The Rev. Dr. Richard L. Hamm, Executive Administrator, Christian Churches Together in the U.S.A.**

“I personally endorse the report of the Leadership Group on U.S.-Muslim Engagement with enthusiasm and hope. The report moves beyond one-dimensional, politicized understandings of the challenges that confront the United States in its relationships with Muslim peoples and nations. I believe the recommendations offered in the report are clear eyed, practical, and principled. Jesus commended those who seek to nurture peace with justice, and that is exactly what this report aims to do. As Americans, we must move past the demonization of those who have legitimate interests that may differ somewhat from our own. We must also recognize that in our stewardship of American power (financial, political, cultural and moral), we must seek to be a more consistent and dependable global partner. This report helps us see the way forward to that end and toward the goal of both security and justice.”

**Rabbi Burton L. Visotzky, Appleman Professor of Midrash and Interreligious Studies, Jewish Theological Seminary**

“I heartily endorse the USME report on ‘Changing Course.’ The security of our nation depends on a new relationship with our Muslim neighbors. The next administration must undertake in earnest the work of ‘repairing the world’ (*Tikkun Olam*). This report charts a practical path for the U.S. and other countries to ‘love your neighbor as yourself.’”

**Nancy K. Kaufman, Executive Director, Jewish Community Relations Council**

“Religion has too often been used for advancing radical ideology and as an excuse for acting in ways that desecrate God’s name. We must reach out to all faith groups, and particularly to the Muslim world, if we are ever to find peaceful solutions to the conflicts that exist in the world today. *Changing Course: A New Direction for U.S. Relations with the Muslim World* is an important blueprint on how we might change the present negative trajectory we are on in the world today.”

**Wendy Chamberlin, President, Middle East Institute**

“Anyone who is concerned about American relations with the Muslim world should read this book and then pass it to someone else to read. The message is clear: America’s strength in the world will come from our show of respect and understanding.”

**Dr. Jack Kornfield, Author and Psychologist**

“A brilliant, visionary report... offering profound and practical direction to ensure our security and repair our relations with the Muslim world. It is hard to overestimate the value of these suggestions – they could change the whole world for the better.”

## Statements from Members of the Leadership Group on U.S.-Muslim Engagement

**Madeleine Albright, former U.S. Secretary of State; Principal, The Albright Group LLC**

“Few challenges matter more than reducing distrust and misunderstanding between the United States and people living in Muslim majority states. This timely report is a groundbreaking, stereotype-shattering and thought-provoking contribution to that essential cause.”

**Richard Armitage, former U.S. Deputy Secretary of State; President, Armitage International**

“The United States needs to make a significant shift in our relations with Muslim countries, relying more on diplomacy and helping to lay the foundation for democratic development. I enthusiastically support the Report of the Leadership Group on U.S.-Muslim Engagement because it provides a clear, strong statement on how to achieve that shift. It is critically important for the next President and our business, faith and philanthropic leaders to act on its recommendations.”

**Steve Bartlett, President and Chief Financial Officer, Financial Services Roundtable; former U.S. Representative; former Mayor of Dallas, Texas**

“There is no issue more important to our safety, and that of our children and grandchildren, than how the U.S. handles its relationship with the larger Muslim world. We are not yet on the right course. This report of the Leadership Group on U.S.-Muslim Engagement can put us there.”

**Red Cavaney, President and Chief Executive Officer, American Petroleum Institute**

“With the desire for change evidenced everywhere in our nation today, this precedent-setting report speaks directly to that yearning, and provides hope anew and valuable insights for the creation of a more positive and mutually constructive relationship between the U.S. and the Muslim world.”

**Daniel Christman, Lt. General (ret.), U.S. Army; Senior Vice President for International Affairs, U.S. Chamber of Commerce**

“No issue is more important to twenty-first century U.S. national security policy than realigning our relations with the Muslim world. The solution must be multi-faceted, holistic, and tightly integrated. *Changing Course: A New Direction for U.S. Relations with the Muslim World* charts a sensible approach toward attaining this vital objective.”

**Stephen Covey, Co-Founder and Vice Chairman, FranklinCovey; writer, speaker, and academic**

“This report speaks to America’s security and to our higher purpose in our relations with the Muslim world. It’s what I call a third-alternative approach – finding creative new solutions to our differences using the power of effective dialogue.”

**Thomas Dine, Principal, The Dine Group; former Executive Director, American Israel Public Affairs Committee**

“It is late in the day, but never too late, for American policy makers to alter their mind-

set about Islam and the Muslim communities, and to try to act on the common ground that exists between the peoples and government of the United States and global Muslim societies. *Changing Course: A New Direction for U.S. Relations with the Muslim World* is a basic primer for policy makers of the next American administration.”

**Stephen Heintz, President, Rockefeller Brothers Fund**

“Improving relations with the global Muslim community must be an urgent priority for the next U.S. administration. In this report, a remarkably diverse group of Americans presents a comprehensive strategy that can strengthen our national security while also working to improve conditions for Muslims across the globe. This is a blueprint for a safer, better world.”

**Shamil Idriss, Chairman of the Board, Soliya**

“*Changing Course: A New Direction for U.S. Relations with the Muslim World* presents practical and achievable steps for the next administration to successfully manage the most pressing foreign policy issue of our time. Its analysis and recommendations reflect the consensus of as remarkably diverse a collection of American bipartisan experts – and leaders with real constituencies – as has ever been pulled together on this matter. As such it should be an invaluable resource regardless of who occupies the Oval Office come January.”

**Daisy Khan, Executive Director, American Society for Muslim Advancement**

“This collaborative initiative represents a perfect example of Americans joining together across party lines, religious divides, and ideological perspectives for the com-

mon good, to find creative and out-of-the-box solutions to our current impasse on Muslim world-West relations. What politicians cannot do, concerned American citizens have, and this comprehensive and important report is another demonstration of how America’s robust and thriving civil society holds an indispensable voice in shaping not only our country’s future, but our engagement with the world at large.”

**Richard Land, President, The Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, Southern Baptist Convention; Member, U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom**

“This initiative is a serious, comprehensive, bipartisan effort that seeks to address a critical and dangerous problem: The world Muslim community misunderstands Americans and Americans misunderstand them. This initiative lays out a detailed and comprehensive plan to vastly decrease that misunderstanding through a multi-faceted approach that will build constructive bridges of mutual understanding between Americans and the Muslim world.”

**Robert Jay Lifton, Lecturer on Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School; author of *Superpower Syndrome***

“*Changing Course: A New Direction for U.S. Relations with the Muslim World* provides an essential baseline for a desperately needed change in American policy toward the Islamic world. Close attention to it should be given by both presidential candidates and by all concerned with American international policy.”

**Bishop Denis Madden, Auxiliary Bishop of Baltimore; former Associate Secretary General, Catholic Near East Welfare Association**

“This project launches a challenging, reasonable and hopeful approach to the building of peace through better relations with Muslims. It is consistent with the commitment of Pope Benedict XVI to ‘interreligious and intercultural dialogue between Christians and Muslims’ as ‘a vital necessity, on which in large measure our future depends.’ The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops also supports an interreligious declaration that ‘the way forward requires that we listen and learn from each other.’ In this way we walk together and support one another on our shared pilgrimage toward the peace that God desires for the world.”

**John Marks, President, Search for Common Ground**

“Building bridges between the United States and the Muslim world is important work and it is complex work. We have taken an important step forward. I’m proud that Search for Common Ground has played a convening role for a group of international leaders, to help them achieve consensus on a set of recommendations for policy makers and the next administration.”

**Susan Collin Marks, Senior Vice President, Search for Common Ground**

“Now more than ever it is critical that we find ways to bridge our differences and remember our common humanity. This report provides a road map for policy makers, and all of us, to do just that. It is the high road, and we should take it, right now.”

**Ingrid Mattson, President, The Islamic Society of North America; Professor of Islamic Studies, Director of Islamic Chaplaincy, and Director, Duncan Black Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, Hartford Seminary**

“It is a sign of great hope that the Leadership Group, despite having substantial differences over policies and politics, was able to come together to develop this report. This was made possible by a shared belief that the vital interests of the American people need not, and must not, conflict with core American values affirming the dignity of all people and their right to freedom and self-determination. This is a message that the mainstream majority in the Muslim world will surely welcome, and it will help them in their desire to improve relations between their people and the United States.”

**Dalia Mogahed, Executive Director, Gallup Center for Muslim Studies; co-author with John Esposito of *Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think***

“Never before has there been so much need for or so much consensus on a different way forward in our relationship with Muslims around the world. The recommendations of this report should be an integral part of the next president’s first 100 days.”

**S. Abdallah Schleifer, Distinguished Professor of Journalism, American University in Cairo; former Washington Bureau Chief, Al Arabiya news channel; former NBC News Cairo bureau chief**

“‘Change’ is in the air. Both Presidential candidates call for it. Well, here it is: *Changing Course: A New Direction for U.S. Relations with the Muslim World* – the result of

a judicious exchange of views by an extraordinarily diverse group of Americans, who share the conviction that a dramatic change in our relationship with the Muslim world is of critical importance.”

**William Ury, Co-Founder, Program on Negotiation, Harvard University; co-author, *Getting to Yes***

“The biggest opportunity we have to make America safer is to create a healthy and respectful relationship with the Muslim world. This report, produced by a wide spectrum of American opinion leaders, offers a powerful and practical approach that is common ground and common sense!”

**Vin Weber, Managing Partner, Clark and Weinstock; Chairman, National Endowment for Democracy; former U.S. Representative**

“I am very pleased to be associated with the Leadership Group of the U.S.-Muslim Engagement Project and its report. The report provides clearheaded ideas and analysis that the American public and bipartisan leaders can get behind in working to improve US-Muslim relations. The process by which this group reached consensus is a good model for dialogue for the tough issues the country faces.”

**Ahmed Younis, Senior Analyst, Gallup Center for Muslim Studies; former National Director, Muslim Public Affairs Committee**

“It is not rare that a group of Americans come together to find sustainable solutions to America’s greatest challenges. This effort represents a decision made by a uniquely diverse group of American leaders at a fork in the road of our nation’s future – to engage with the global Muslim community and rise above hate, violence, racism and fear. As Hamilton encouraged in the 1<sup>st</sup> Federalist – we choose reflection and choice for all over fear and force against some – and through that choice we protect America’s future.”

**Dov Zakheim, Booz Allen Hamilton; former U.S. Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)**

“This report represents a major effort to outline an effective way of addressing one of America’s most significant policy challenges. It deserves to be read carefully by all who are engaged with – and care about – our relations with the Muslim world.”