



EUROPEAN MUSLIMS CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

ABDUR RASHID SIDDIQUI *

Vice-Chairman, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, Leicestershire, UK
<abdurashidsiddiqui@gmail.com>

A B S T R A C T

There are more than 20 million Muslims living in Western Europe. Their encounter with the host culture poses unique challenges ranging from security apprehensions due to the tragic events of 9/11 and subsequent terrorist attacks in London and Madrid, rising hostility of the right wing groups all over Europe and misconceptions about *Sharī‘ah*, *ḥijāb* and *jihād*. In order to tackle these challenges the basic source of guidance has to be the Qur’ān. According to the Qur’ānic narratives, all of Allah’s Messengers/ Prophets (peace be on them) emphasised that they are the Messengers from Allah, sincere and trustworthy. The author has chosen to analyse four keywords: *Rasūl* (Messenger), *Nāṣiḥ* (Sincere Advisor), *Amīn* (Trustworthy) and *Ṣabr* (Patience) used in this context to describe the examples set by the Prophets (peace be on them), to remind Muslims that they can only succeed in preserving their values and culture by actively engaging in disseminating the message of Islam with *nāṣiḥah* (sincerity), *ḥikmah* (wisdom) and *ṣabr* (patience). The author sees, establishment of European Muslim Council, to be a positive step in the right direction, necessary to meet the need of a Muslim leadership abreast of the challenges as well as the methodology to meet them by sincerely presenting Islam beyond partisan, nationalistic or sectarian tendencies, and thus hopefully be successful by securing Allah’s help.

* Abdur Rashid Siddiqui gained honours degree in Economics & Politics as well as a law degree from the University of Bombay. After completing postgraduate studies he worked, from 1966 until his retirement in 1997, at the University of Leicester. He has been one of the earliest members of the UK Islamic Mission, and a founder member of the Islamic Society of Britain and the Chairman of its *Shūrā* Council; presently he is the Vice chair of the Board of Trustees of the Islamic Foundation and a director