



The Fifth Bi-Annual Meeting of the Elijah Board of World Religious Leaders, Oxford (UK), March 2012

On the final day of the meeting, leaders were asked to reflect on what had been accomplished. They were asked to consider three questions:

- 1. What does Interreligious Friendship mean to you?***
- 2. How do you practise Interreligious Friendship?***
- 3. What messages and practices of Interreligious Friendship can you take back from this meeting to your community?***

Some chose to respond independently to each question while others integrated their answers.

Imam Ilyasi



What does interreligious friendship mean to me?

Interreligious friendship means to the Elijah Interfaith Institute, it brings us the religious leaders of different faiths to come on the common platform and speak our heart out in the gathering of faith leaders around the globe and across the other cultures. Interreligious friendship means to me the friendship between Rabbi Alon and my father which later on I look forward the touch of friendship, peace and brotherhood with him going on and on the path of peace and love and the message of commonality between the Abrahamic faiths. Journey doesn't stop here and it is just the beginning. We all have to work hard to achieve success and success means to me interreligious friendship.

How can I practice it?

As we had a session of practical applications in the moderated interfaith discussions, I found it very useful and made a practical approach in front of our moderators. In India there is an Islamic school of thought in Maharashtra state. It is one of the big schools of thought, with 10,000 to 12,000 students, which produces about 3,000 students every year to become an Imam. Now comes the practical application in light, where we can bring over 5 Rabbis at the time of the graduation ceremony of the students at the Madrasah (School of thought) to give a platform for the Rabbis to speak a message of peace and also to speak about the importance of togetherness of



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the Abrahamic faith and give examples from the Hadith which can actually let the students know the commonalities between the Abrahamic faiths. Next stop will invite the speakers from other faiths, too.

What can I bring back to my community?

The Imam organization deals with the welfare of the Imams in India and it has a representative body of half a million Imams in India. I bring back the message of love, peace and brotherhood to the Imams who are the representatives of the organizations and also the representatives of Islam. In Islam it's clearly mentioned to respect other faiths and live in peace and harmony with the people from other faiths.