R[a]ising hate in time of COVID-19 - The experience of young people

Ms Hajar Al-Kaddo,
The Muslim Youth perspective
7TH SUMMER SCHOOL ON HUMAN RIGHTS
“Challenges for Human Rights in the time of Covid-19”
7-10 July 2020 - WEBINAR
MUslim youth in the time of COVID

- Challenging time as many were in lockdown during major Muslim events
  - Ramadan
    - Rhetoric - “The holy month of Ramadan seems to have led to a wave of conspiracy theories around Muslims — with claims that the virus has spread around this time now that the Islamic festivities are at their peak”.
  - Hajj
- Many spent Ramadan taking part in voluntary work – feeding communities, working at COVID-19 care and call centres.
  - Muslim communities still ‘came together’ virtually and within an socially distance way help those in need.
ISLAMOPHOBIC INCIDENTS AND RHETORIC

The COVID-19 Pandemic exacerbated an already serious context of increasing levels in Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hatred.

- Online media and online hate speech
  - Leading to youth exclusion and issues around mental health
  - Detrimental to young people and their livelihoods
  - Organisations and individuals being ostracized due to this rhetoric
- Increase in conspiracy theories and meme culture
- Muslim women’s dress being targeted (face masks and niqab)

“Muslims are a bigger threat than any disease like the coronavirus ever will be…. ” (AMHWG Report)
Trump Suspends Travel From Europe for 30 Days

U.K. Is Not Included in Travel Restrictions

- President Trump announced he was suspending travel from Europe for 30 days in order to contain the coronavirus, starting on Friday.
- The address was Mr. Trump’s most public acknowledgment of the severity of the crisis. Here’s the latest.
Austria announced its first death from the coronavirus. The country currently has 302 confirmed cases, according to the health ministry.
Will Mandatory Face Masks End the Burqa Bans?

As face coverings become the rule in public spaces, attitudes about head scarves may change.

Women in Paris after their release from a police station in 2011, when a ban on full-face coverings went into effect in France. Credit: Fournier/Reuters

By Lou Stoppard
May 19, 2020

Requiring face masks to fight COVID-19 while upholding niqab bans shows irony lost on leaders

By Marco Perolini

Last updated: 25/05/2020
More recently on the 26th of June
COMBATTING CHALLENGES

- Acknowledge the problem of anti-Muslim hatred and Islamophobia.
  - Demoralising for Muslim Youth and Muslim communities
  - This can also be exhausting and be the cause of mental health challenges

- Reporting of Islamophobic media, messaging and content is essential
  - Recording of Islamophobic incidents will further detail the extent of the problem
  - E.g.: reporting of Islamophobic statements by politicians on online media.

- More open discussions within Muslim communities and all communities,
  - for example collective interfaith actions and discussions.
  - Joining platforms and reading studies
    - Anti-Muslim Group working group #stopcovidislamophobia/online
NATIONAL LEVEL ACTIONS

Ireland

- Islamic Cultural centre of Ireland
  - Spreading positive messaging
  - Youth gatherings online – ICCI Youth 30 days online meet-ups with young people

- Dublin City Interfaith Forum
  - Interfaith online spiritual gatherings
  - DCIF and DCIF Youth Board were also key to raising awareness and education during the time of COVID.
  - Safe Haven training programme now an online tool for recognising and responding to hate crime in Ireland.
NATIONAL LEVEL ACTIONS

United Kingdom

#RamadanAtHome campaign

- Muslim Council of Britain tools for Ramadan, Mosques, and for Students during COVID-19
- Guidance in several languages – applicable to all communities.

- Virtual Ramadan gatherings and ‘iftars’ around topics such as environmentalism, mindfulness,
EU LEVEL ACTIONS

- Campaign - Outbreak of Generosity (@of_outbreak)
  - A youth led European campaign by @femyso
  - Encouraging youth to show support & generosity to their communities in response to the COVID-19 outbreak!
  - Supported by
    - European Students’ Union (ESU),
    - European Roma Grassroots Organisations (ERGO) network,
    - European Network Against Racism (ENAR)
    - World Student Christian Federation (WSCF).

- FEMYSO’s online Ramadan series
- Webinars on - combating mental health challenges
Meanwhile during the increased Islamophobic rhetoric, Muslim Youth worked tirelessly towards staying focused on what really matters in the time of crisis and beyond.