GIVING TUESDAY DONATION APPEAL, 2026

Dear Members, Friends and Supporters of *The Salaam Network*,

I hope this finds you well in this blessed season of Thanksgiving. I am writing to you on behalf of *The Salaam Network* (TSN) to ask respectfully for your donations on GIVING TUESDAY which falls this year on December 1, 2026.

Since this year is the tenth anniversary of the founding of TSN in 2016, it seems appropriate to recall the circumstances which had led to its emergence. The reality of Islamophobia which is all around us is known to anyone who reads or watches the news. There is also no doubt that the suspicion, mistrust, fear and hatred with which Muslims have been viewed by many Americans has deepened with every act of actual or perceived terror associated with Islam.

However, when Mr. Trump, the front-runner in the 2016 Presidential election proclaimed that *"Islam hates us"* and got the resounding support of thousands of voters, a significant number of persons in our community committed to building bridges of understanding amongst the different individuals and groups living in Louisville, felt that it was no longer a viable option to remain silent in the face of the alarming escalation of negative rhetoric and actions in places across the country aimed not only at Muslims but also at other vulnerable minorities which included Indigenous Peoples, People of Color, LGBTQI Persons, Immigrants and Refugees.

The brainstorming which took place in the summer of 2016, led to the birth of TSN whose mission or motto *was "Striving to Make Our Beloved Community Whole."* The word *"Salaam"* is an Arabic word ("*Shalom"* in Hebrew) most often translated as "Peace," but it also refers to wholeness, safety, well-being, and tranquility.

Between 2016 and 2026, TSN has presented more than 160 programs (in-person and virtual), free of cost, at a variety of venues. Due to the scholarly merit and integrity of its programs, it has become a leading education network in Louisville. In 2021, it received the Accreditation of the **Better Business Bureau which gave TSN a Five-Year Award in recognition of its service to the community in a ceremony held on November 12, 2026**. Its message to TSN: "*Congratulations! Celebrating Five years as a BBB Charity Seal Holder. Thank you for your leadership*."

Additionally, TSN has won the GUIDESTAR SILVER TRANSPARENCY AWARD (2021), and **the TOP-RATED Award from GREATNONPROFITS.org for seven consecutive years** (2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026). The details of the programs which have been presented by TSN between 2016 -2026, may be seen on the TSN website: https://www.salaamnetwork.org

During the time of the coronavirus pandemic when in-person programs could not be held, TSN undertook new educational initiatives conducted via zoom meetings. The most important amongst them was the setting up of a monthly Interfaith Group for the Study of Important Books related to Islam, interaction amongst Abrahamic religions, and other subjects of

contemporary significance. The monthly meetings of this Group - commonly referred to as the "Interfaith Study Group" (ISF) - which began in September 2020 continue to date.

TSN's Educational Project on the History of Palestinians, Zionism, and the Gaza Genocide: Due to the worsening relations between Israelis and Palestinians since October 7, 2023, the ISF began an intensive educational project focusing on the history of Palestine in early 2024. For more than two years, members of the ISF engaged in a critical-historical review of some of the most outstanding writings in this field of study. These included the classic works entitled "*The Hundred Years War on Palestine* (*A History of Settler Colonialism and Resistance, 19017- 2017*)," by Dr. Rashid Khalidi, one of the most eminent historians of the Middle East, the encyclopedic "*Lobbying for Zionism on Both Sides of the Atlantic,"* by Dr. Ilan Pappe, the most widely-read Israeli-born historian, and the masterpiece "*Gaza: An Inquest into Its Martyrdom*," by Dr. Norman Finkelstein, the world's best-known expert on Gaza.

What we have learnt from these books has been life-transforming for us. However, until the mid-term elections on November 3, 2026, we did not know about the level of knowledge and awareness of what has been happening in Palestine-Israel which is now possessed by millions of Americans. **This is most encouraging for everyone who believes that education and justice-centered advocacy can lead to the transformation of society**. I am attaching a compilation to briefly introduce the 8 outstanding Muslims who have recently been elected/reelected to the U. S. Congress. **They are all strong protagonists of Palestinian rights**. **A much longer compilation briefly introducing both newly elected/reelected Muslims and non-Muslims across the nation who have also spoken up for justice for Palestinians is in process and will be shared with you soon.**

Thank you if you have supported TSN this past year, perhaps during the recent Give for Good campaign. Giving Tuesday is another opportunity for us to appeal to those who would may want to make a year-end donation to support our work. Since TSN is a registered 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization, your donations are tax-exempt and receipts will be sent to you promptly.
Thanking you for your time and attention,

Riffat Hassan,

Executive Director