

YAHYA SERGIO YAHE PALLAVICINI

An Italian citizen, Yahya Sergio Yahe Pallavicini was born a Muslim to a Japanese mother and an Italian father in 1965. He works in Rome and Milan, where he lives with his wife and son, Muhammed Umberto.

2010

- Vice-President and Imam of CO.RE.IS (Comunità Religiosa Islamica) Italiana.
- Adviser to the Ministry of the Interior in the Council for Italian Islam.
- President of ISESCO (Islamic Organization for Education, Science and Culture) Council for Education and Culture in the West.
- Global Expert of UNAOC (United Nations Alliance of Civilizations) (www.unaoc.org)
- Counsellor for relations with the Vatican and Italy, Catholic-Muslim Forum. He is one of the 138 international Muslim scholars and intellectuals who signed the document 'A Common Word between Us and You' (www.acommonword.com).
- Member of ECRL, European Council of Religious Leaders (www.rfp-europe.eu)
- Founding member of the International Committee of Imams, Rabbis and Christians for Peace presented at UNESCO in Paris (www.hommesdeparole.org).
- Founding member of CEDAR (European Muslim Professionals Network) (www.thecedarnetwork.com).

Italy

In 1997 Yahya Pallavicini was made a member of the National Committee for Intercultural Education of the Ministry for Education, Universities and Research and, in the same year he also became a member of the Committee for the Heritage and Memory of the Culture of the Mediterranean, promoted by the Ministry for Cultural and Environmental Assets.

As vice-president of CO.RE.IS. (Comunità Religiosa Islamica) Italiana, he has met the king of Morocco, Hassan II, the president of the Republic of Senegal, Abdoulaye Wade, and the Sephardic chief rabbi of Israel, Eliyahu Bakshi-Doron. He is the Imam of the al-Wahid Mosque of Milan in Via Meda, where he coordinates the training of ministers of religion by preparing doctrinal sermons in Italian. In 2000 he became a member of the board of the governors of the Islamic Cultural Centre of Italy at the Rome Mosque.

In 2004 he was received at the Quirinal by the president of the Italian Republic, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, and subsequently by the president of the Senate, Marcello Pera, as a member of the delegation of Italian Muslims who were signatories of the 'Manifesto contro il terrorismo e per la vita' (Manifesto against terrorism and for life).

The minister of the interior, Giuseppe Pisanu, appointed him as a member of the Council for Italian Islam at the Ministry of the Interior, where he worked together with the minister Giuliano Amato on drawing up the 'Carta dei Valori della Cittadinanza e dell'Integrazione' (Charter on the Values and Significance of Citizenship and Integration) and, since 2010, with the minister Roberto Maroni.

In December 2008 the mayor of Milan, Letizia Moratti, presented Imam Yahya Pallavicini with a certificate of civic merit and, in 2010, he was asked to be a member of the group of Muslim leaders who periodically hold discussions with the Milan City Council.

Since 2009 he has been the theological adviser to an ethical committee for the halal certification of Italian products promoted by the Milan Chamber of Commerce and officially recognized in an agreement signed at the Farnesina (the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs) in Rome between the

minister of foreign affairs, Franco Frattini and the ministers of economic development, agricultural, food and forestry policies, and health. He was invited by the president of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, to a meeting in Brussels of the religious leaders of Europe regarding the theme of ethics and the economy.

International

ISESCO, the Islamic Organization for Education, Science and Culture, appointed him to the board of governors of the Higher Council for Education in the West and the EIC (European Islamic Conference), the first Islamic NGO recognized by the European Union, and conferred on him the function of ambassador for relations with the Vatican and then made him responsible for international relations. In 1998 he was invited by the Muslim World League to join the delegation of Italian Muslims in the pilgrimage to Mecca.

In 2005 he attended the First World Congress of Rabbis and Imams for Peace, which took place in Brussels under the auspices of HM the king of Belgium, Albert II, and HM the king of Morocco, Mohammed VI. In August of the same year, on the invitation of the Council of Muftis of Russia, he was received in Kazan by the president of the Republic of Tatarstan as a member of a delegation of Muslims of the European Union. In 2008 the Council of Europe invited him to chair a session of a meeting of ministers of culture in Baku, capital of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Since 2006 he has kept abreast of the development of transatlantic relations by participating in a programme of cultural exchanges of the U.S. Department of State for European Muslim leaders, concerning himself with policies on integration and prevention of radicalization in Washington (Migration Policy Institute), Rome (International Organization for Migration), Berlin (Konrad Adenauer Stiftung), Vienna (OSCE), Davos (World Economic Forum), Pontignano (British Council) and Doha (Doha Debates for BBC World News). As a result of these experiences, he was invited to London by the then British prime minister, Tony Blair, he visited Jerusalem as the Muslim member of the interreligious project organized by the American Jewish Committee and he attended the Congress of the Imams of Europe in Vienna. He met **Pope Benedict XVI** in an audience at the conclusion of the First Catholic-Muslim Forum held in the Vatican involving a delegation of 138 international Muslim scholars, clerics and intellectuals and one organized by the Papal Council for Interreligious Dialogue.

In 2009, Georgetown University in Washington D.C. included him among the five hundred most influential Muslims in the world — in the category of the institutional representatives — in a book published by the Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre and the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Centre for Muslim-Christian Understanding.

In 2010, the OIC — the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the most important institution of the Islamic world, with 57 member states — invited him to read a paper on the challenges and opportunities facing Muslim minorities in Europe. The following year he attended the Islamic International Conference of the Ulema of the Umma (scholars of the Muslim community) organized by the OIC in Dakar.

University Courses Taught

ISPI, Milan (Institute of Research on International Politics);

Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome, Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies of Religions and Cultures;

SIOI, Rome (Società Italiana per l'Organizzazione Internazionale);

Università della Svizzera Italiana, Lugano, Master Course in Intercultural Communication;

University of Pisa, Faculty of Arts and Philosophy, Master Course in Public Communication and Politics;
University of Bologna, Master Course in Religious Pluralism;
University of Turin, Faculty of Political Science, Faculty of Languages;
University of Venice, Faculty of Languages;
University of Cagliari, Faculty of Political Science;
University of Catania, Faculty of Political Science;
University of Campobasso, Faculty of Arts and Philosophy;
University of Genoa, Faculty of Arts and Philosophy; Faculty of Education Sciences;
University of Insubria, Como, School of Law;
University of Rome, Faculty of Sociology.

Publications

In 2004 Il Saggiatore (Milan) published *L'Islam in Europa. Riflessioni di un imam italiano* (Islam in Europe. Reflections of an Italian imam), with forewords by the minister for European affairs, Rocco Buttiglione, and the president of the Italian Jewish Communities Union, Amos Luzzatto. He was awarded the prize of the World Competition for Islamic Studies by the president of the Republic of Tunisia, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, for the French edition of the book.

In 2007 BUR-Rizzoli (Milan) published *Dentro la moschea* (Inside the mosque), containing the experiences and sermons of the first generation of Italian Muslims.

In 2009 a Catholic publishing house, Edizioni Messaggero (Padua), brought out *Il Misericordioso. Allah e i suoi profeti* (The Merciful. Allah and his prophets).

In 2010 Editrice Morcelliana (Brescia) published *La Sura di Maria* (Mary's Sura), consisting of a translation of and commentary on the 19th chapter of the Koran.