

# Ja zum Islam, Oui à l'unité, Our promise!

الشورى الإسلامية المركزية في سويسرا  
**IZRS**  
Islamischer Zentralrat Schweiz

**Jahreskonferenz 2011**  
Islamischer Zentralrat Schweiz (IZRS)

Samstag 19. Februar 2011  
14 Uhr bis 22 Uhr  
CTS-Kongresshaus Biel

**Annual Conference 2011**  
Islamic Central Council of Switzerland (ICCS)

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2011  
2 p.m. until 10 p.m.  
CTS congress house Biel

**Conférence annuelle 2011**  
Conseil Central Islamique Suisse (CCIS)

Samedi 19 février 2011  
14h00 à 22h00  
Palais des Congrès CTS Bienne

Die Referenten:  
The speakers:  
Les orateurs:

**Yusuf Estes**

**Prof. Dr. Shefqet Krasniqi**

**Nora Illi**

**Adem Ramadani**

**Yvonne Ridley**

**Nicolas Blancho**

**Masum (Labbayk)**



# Annual Conference 2011

## Islamic identity and modernity

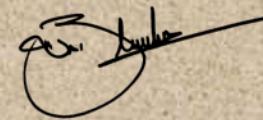
As-salaamu alaikum wa rahamtullahi wa barakatuhu  
dear brothers and sisters in Islam, dear guests from inland and  
abroad

The annual conference of the Islamic Central Council Switzerland (ICCS) at the congress house of Biel is meant to be an unforgettable gathering of Muslims and interested adherents of other faiths from inland and abroad. The event of the 19th February 2011 should not only be an event to listen, speak and discuss, but also to enjoy and spend a nice time. The ICCS is expecting around 1000 distinguished guests. These include high-profile speakers, such as the well-known preacher Yusuf Estes and renowned Nasheed singers, as Adem Ramadani, who will frame the day with songs and praise to Allah ta'aala. In the foyer and the side rooms of the congress house there will be a big Muslim bazaar with booths of well known Islamic lifestyle products. Also snacks and drinks will not be missing.

The panel discussion with the famous American Sheikh Yusuf Estes, the British journalist Yvonne Ridley, the German Melih Kesmen, founder of «Style Islam®» and others, presented by Abdel Azziz Qasim Illi, should encourage many Muslims to participate actively in the current and future discourse on Islam in Switzerland and Europe. The Muslims should not remain on the defensive, but get active in the offensive. The Muslims are active fellow citizens!

Within the lectures and the panel discussion it will be discussed, how Islamic identity and modernity can be combined. The ICCS wants to give all the Muslims the possibility to participate actively, that the Muslim community within the Swiss society holds a full-fledged, respected role.

Muharram 1432,



Nicolas Blancho  
President of the Islamic Central Council Switzerland





**Yvonne Ridley**



**Nicolas Blancho**



**Yusuf Estes**



**Adem Ramadani**



**Nora Illi**

## Speakers

### ●●● Yvonne Ridley

After the attacks of 9/11 the British reporter travelled through Pakistan to Afghanistan to report for the «Sunday Express» about George W. Bush's «War on Terror». On her way back on a donkey, wrapped in a Burqa, the camera slipped from her shoulder in the border area. Promptly she was arrested by the Taliban and taken to a prison in Kabul. «The people at home probably thought that I was beaten, tortured or sexually abused», Ridley said in an interview. «Instead of this, friendliness, hospitality and respect radiated to me in the prison», she is telling. During her captivity she promised to an Imam to read the Qur'an after her release. Ridley kept this promise and says: «The Qur'an changed my life.» She describes the Qur'an as «Magna Charta for Women». In summer 2003 Ridley embraced Islam. At present she is working as a freelance journalist for the English Iranian news channel Press TV.

### ●●● Nicolas Blancho

From 2002 to 2006 Nicolas Blancho studied at the Institute for Studies and Research on Islam in Paris Islamic theology and law. After his degree he pursued further studies in the Middle East and specialized on master level in basic principles of Islamic jurisprudence. Today he is studying Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies and Law at the University of Berne. He is fluent at German and French, as well as at Arabic. Blancho wants Islam to get into an institutional frame in Switzerland. For this the Muslims need an established theological authority to deal with those Islamic issues, which can not be derived directly from the normativity. In addition, the president of the ICCS strives to actively support Muslims in developing an «Islamic self-understanding in the Swiss society. By this we mean the promotion of an active process of identity formation as 'Swiss Muslims'», says Blancho.

### ●●● Scheikh Yusuf Estes

Yusuf Estes was a highly committed evangelical missionary and he hated Islam. How can it be that a Christian priest embraces Islam and after this becomes the best know Muslim preacher of the USA? «Ask the One, who created you to guide you to the truth», Yusuf Estes says today. He became well-known also outside the USA by numerous appearances on Islam Channel, Peace TV and Huda TV, as well as by his activity as a delegate of the summit meeting of religious leaders of the UN.

### ●●● Adem Ramadani

It is not necessary to explain who Adem Ramadani is. He is the epitome of Nash-eed («Ilahije») in Macedonia, Albania, Kosovo and large parts of Serbia and Montenegro. Due to his reputation, he is one of the most popular Muslim singers in the Albanian-speaking diaspora in Western Europe. With his last work «Fukaraja» (2009) he has again outbid of all his previous albums and reached with it easily the charts. Together with Sami Yusuf he sang the famous song «Ti oh Mohammed». Well known songs and video clips from him are «Shiko si I mashtrom shejtani rinin», «Gjith kundi ka hy sheri» or «Te duhemi per ALLAH».

### ●●● Nora Illi

«I personally don't know any Muslima, who doesn't wear the veil voluntarily», said the best known niqab-wearer of Switzerland, Nora Illi, in the online chat of the newspaper «Blick». Not only with bold comments as «Who said, that God doesn't like make-up? I also like to put on make-up in private or at events for women» the director of the department of women's affairs of the ICCS stands exemplary for the rights of the Muslim women. She is always ready to offer forehead to political and ideological opponents. Nora Illi embraced Islam at the age of 18 years. The trained polygraph is mother of four children and therefore she brings not only knowledge but also experience to her work for the rights of the women in Islam.



**Masum (Labbayk)**



**Prof. Dr. Shefqet Krasniqi**

●●● **Masum (Labbayk)**

The British Nasheed group Labbayk founded in 2004 is not only well known in Great Britain, but being also invited to events worldwide. The very first album «Rhymes of Praise» was an immediate international success. The top hits also include «The Lord of the Worlds» and «Best of Creation». The new album «O MY LORD» just appeared. As all members of Labbayk are working, often not the whole group may appear on stage, but only its lead singer Masum. He is also the one who will sing Nasheeds of the albums «Rhymes of Praise» and «O my Lord» at the Annual Conference of the ICCS.

●●● **Prof. Dr. Shefqet Krasniqi**

Shefqet Krasniqi is of Kosovar Albanian origin. He studied 15 years Islamic law in Medina and graduated successfully with a master and doctorate degree. Back home, he took the post of Imam in the great mosque in Pristina, where he has been working until today. In addition, he taught for seven years as a professor of Islamic law at the faculty in the capital. He is the author of several books and regularly writes columns and articles in various Albanian newspapers on Islamic issues.

**Can Islamic Organizations actively contribute to constructing Islamic identity in the West?**

In the «Western world» there is a centuries-long tradition of unilateral categorization of people. There, a distinction is made between the self and the alien other. Accordingly «the West» defines its identity through an arbitrary construction of «the other» and through delimitation of this “other”. How can European Islamic organizations actively contribute to constructing Islamic identity in the West?

On this thrilling topic are discussing in a panel of the annual conference of the Islamic Central Council Switzerland (ICCS) moderated by Abdel Azziz Qasim Illi:



**Yusuf Estes**  
*UN-envoy and preacher (USA)*



**Oscar Assadullah M. Bergamin**  
*ICCS, Cross Cultural Competence (3C) Project Management GmbH (Switzerland)*



**Melih Kesmen**  
*Graphic designer and founder of «Style Islam®» (Germany)*



**Yvonne Ridley**  
*Award-winning journalist; «The Sunday Times», «The Observer», «Daily Mirror» and «Independent on Sunday». (Great Britain)*




**Nora Illi**  
*Department for Women's affairs ICCS (Switzerland)*



**Coskun Gezer**  
*Muslim Media, Actor and Film producer (Germany)*




# Annual Conference 2011




The annual conference of the Islamic Central Council of Switzerland (ICCS) is taking place in the CTS congress house in the city center of Biel / Bienne, only a few walking minutes from the railway station.

## **Admission:**



CHF 15.- per person (children over 10 years)  
For ICCS members, the event is free!

## **Child care:**



Children are admitted only after 10 years at the event. For children aged two to ten years a babysitting service is available free of charge.

## **More information at:**

[www.2011.izrs.ch](http://www.2011.izrs.ch)

## **Information for sponsors and interested parties for sales or promotional items:**

Islamic Central Council Switzerland (ICCS), Telephone +41 31 511 02 90,  
E-Mail [jk\\_en@izrs.ch](mailto:jk_en@izrs.ch)

**Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2011**

**2 p.m. until 10 p.m.**

**CTS congress house Biel**

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