

MUBANY

Muslim Bar Association of New York

P.O. Box 1171, New York, New York 10013 - www.muslimbarny.org

Officers:

August 29, 2008

President

Asim Rehman

Ms. Cie Armstead

Vice-President

Asaad K. Siddiqi

Director, Center on Racial and Ethnic Diversity

American Bar Association

321 N. Clark St.

Chicago, IL 60654

Secretary

Madiha Zuberi

Treasurer

Safia Hussain

Ramadan Greetings!

Dear colleagues:

Board of Directors:

Engy Abdelkader

Diane Aboushi

Jennifer Ismat

Afsaan Saleem

On behalf of the Muslim Bar Association of New York (MuBANY), I am happy to inform you that this year, September marks the start of Ramadan, a holy month that affects the lives of many of your Muslim colleagues. During this month, Muslim attorneys across the United States will be observing the fast, reflecting in prayer, and trying to do more to improve our communities. We hope that the American Bar Association and its subsidiary organizations can lend a helping hand in informing law firms about Ramadan and what it means for their Muslim colleagues.

This year, Ramadan will run from on or about September 1 to October 1, 2008. During this month, Muslims who observe the Ramadan fast will abstain from eating and drinking from dawn to dusk, among other things. In addition, Muslims will strive to perform their prayers at five prescribed times during the day and will break their fast at sunset. Such observances rarely take more than five to ten minutes but they can occur during business hours. That said, Muslims across America have been fulfilling their Ramadan obligations for years and rarely has it disrupted their professional responsibilities.

We believe that many law firms, corporate legal departments, government entities, judicial chambers and other organizations may not be aware of the religious observances followed by many Muslim lawyers during Ramadan. We are confident that if informed, legal employers would be more that willing to provide whatever minimal accommodations might be necessary to assist their Muslim colleagues. While each person's needs are unique, such accommodations are often as simple as briefly excusing a colleague from a meeting so that he or she may break their fast or offer prayers. In addition, the end of Ramadan is marked by the joyous holiday of Eid ul Fitr, and many Muslim lawyers may seek to take the day off to attend services and spend the day in celebration with family and friends.

Through this letter, we would like to enlist the ABA's assistance in educating its members, particularly those in management positions, so that they are properly informed about the needs of lawyers and legal professionals observing Ramadan. We will likewise be asking Muslims lawyers nationwide to talk to their employers about Ramadan so that there is an open and informed channel of communication.

We respectfully ask that you distribute this letter to the appropriate offices and committees so that it might reach as many employers as possible. Similarly, we would appreciate any suggestions that you may have on how to effectively share this message with other legal employers.

Please feel free to contact me at president@muslimbarny.org if you have any questions. We hope that we will have the ABA's active support on this issue and we wish you a warm "Ramadan Mubarak!" (Happy Ramadan!).

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A. Rehman'.

Asim Rehman, Esq.
President
Muslim Bar Association of New York

cc: Presidential Advisory Council on Diversity in the Profession
ABA Diversity Coordinating Group
The Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Profession