

THE COEXIST FOUNDATION

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31st March 2009

Dear Gail,

"The Messenger"

It has been a pleasure to discuss this ambitious project with you over the last week or two, and I cannot thank you enough for the encouragement you have given us through the work you are doing. As we said on the telephone, your own and your mother's extraordinary leadership and vision is a model for others – with this new film you will have made a truly historic impact on public understanding not just of Islam, but of faith in general, and its vital role in inspiring a better world for our children.

It was to address exactly these challenges that the Coexist Foundation was established. Building bridges between Jews, Christians and Muslims, whose shared traditions and ideals inspire the lives of more than half the world's population, is our core purpose. Through the programmes and projects we support, we hope to educate people about this family of faiths, to show how each draws inspiration from the other, and how their central messages can be a force for good in today's world – something the Media seem all too ready to dispute. Education is central to our work; but we are also promoting programmes to encourage dialogue between faith communities; and research on how best to enable the moderates' voices to be heard, when too often the papers and television are dominated by extremists.

I enclose a pamphlet which gives a few more details on the sort of projects with which we are engaged – and of course can give you more information on any of these if you wish. I also enclose a short summary of the exhibition we sponsored at the British Library in 2007, "Sacred"; a note on our computer based course "Understanding Islam"; and a book about Gallup's project, with us, to give voice to the mainstream of Muslim opinion around the world. Finally, I enclose a prospectus for "Abraham House", our long-term project, with the University of Cambridge, Tony Blair's Faith Foundation and other partners, to transform public understanding of what it means to be Jewish or Christian or Muslim today.

Trustees: The Rt Hon and Rt Rev'd Richard Chartres, Christopher Griffiths, Mohammed Abdul Latif Jameel, Lord Janner of Braunstone QC, Edward McCabe, Timothy Ryan, Professor Muhammad Yunus

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The Coexist Foundation works to promote understanding between faiths

I hope you and your mother will share our conviction that, in many ways, your film project and Abraham House complement each other perfectly. "The Messenger" will, we hope, inspire people – Muslims and non-Muslims alike - to better understand Islam and its timeless vision for humanity. Abraham House, based in London but, through its programmes and projects, very much for the whole world, will enable those inspired by "the Messenger" to dig more deeply into these faith traditions; to learn more about them; and to understand that this is a vision of peace and hope for the world, not just for their community.

Your extraordinarily generous offer to support the work we are doing through whatever profits accrue from "The Messenger" is, as I hope I have made clear, a vital encouragement to us, and hugely appreciated. We look forward to hearing more as this great project develops, and, needless to say, wish you the very best with it.

With all my warmest f+d wishes,
Yours ever,
James

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Encs.