

Yahya Sergio Yahe Pallavicini is an Italian citizen who 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.

2007

- Vice-President and Imam of the CO.RE.IS (Comunità Religiosa Islamica) Italiana.
- Adviser to the **Ministry of the Interior** in the Council for Italian Islam.
- President of the **ISESCO** (Islamic Organization for Education, Science and Culture) Council for Education and Culture in the West.
- Global Expert of the Alliance of Civilisations, United Nations.
- He is one of the 138 international Muslim scholars who have signed the document ‘A Common Word between Us and You’ addressed to the religious authorities of Christianity.
- Alumni, Interfaith Project Exchange, American Jewish Committee.
- Member of the executive committee of the European Muslim Council for Justice, Equality and Peace.
- Author of the book *Dentro la Moschea*, published in the Futuro Passato series by BUR-Rizzoli, Milan.

At an institutional level, Yahya Pallavicini has been involved in the drawing up of the ‘Carta dei Valori della Cittadinanza e dell’Integrazione’ (Charter on the Values and Significance of Citizenship and Integration) promoted by the Minister of the Interior, Giuliano Amato. As a member of the Council for Italian Islam, he has participated, at the Chamber of Deputies, in the hearings of the Constitutional Affairs Committee (regarding the Law on Religious Freedom) and the Social Affairs Committee (an analysis of the family in Italy) and, at the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research, in the National Committee for Intercultural Education. He has contributed to the drafting and presentation of a parliamentary bill on a register of imams in Italy.

In 1997 he 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**.

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.

At present he is vice-president of the **CO.RE.IS. (Comunità Religiosa Islamica) Italiana**, on behalf of which he has met the king of Morocco, Hassan II, the president of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Hosni Mubarak, and the Libyan head of state, Muammar al-Gaddafi, as well as the ministers of religious affairs of various Middle Eastern and South-East Asian countries.

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 Il Saggiatore published his book *L'Islam in Europa. Riflessioni di un imam italiano (Islam in Europe: The reflections of an Italian imam)*, with forewords by the minister for community policy, Rocco Buttiglione, and the president of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities, Amos Luzzatto. In September of the same year 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).

In January 2005 he participated in 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. During the month of Ramadan, the president of the Republic of Tunisia, **Zine El Abidine Ben Ali**, awarded him the prize of the World Competition for Islamic Studies.

In 2006 he participated in the Congress of the Imams of Europe in Vienna, which was promoted by the European Commission; he went to Israel as the Muslim member of the interreligious project organized by the American Jewish Committee; at the end of September, in coincidence with the beginning of the month of Ramadan, he was invited an audience called by **Pope Benedict XVI** at his summer residence at Castel Gandolfo specifically for leading members of the Muslim communities in Italy and representatives of the diplomatic corps of the Islamic countries accredited to the Holy See.

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On an international level Yahya Pallavicini has represented Italian Islam in Berlin (Konrad Adenauer Foundation and Heinrich Böll Foundation, ‘Muslims as Citizens. An International Dialogue on Civic Engagement’); Tunis (Zaitouna University, Faculty of Theology, ‘La civilization islamique en Europe: culte et culture’); Naples (Fondazione Mediterraneo, ‘Giving Voice to Muslim Democrats: Securing Democracy and Peace in the Mediterranean Space’); the Netherlands, in the Faculty of Theology of the University of Leiden (‘The Training Programme of Imams in Italy’); Paris (UNESCO, ‘The Responsibility of European Muslims in the Renewal of Islamic Civilization’); London (University of Cambridge and the Foreign Office, ‘Muslims in the West: Engagement and Representation’); Singapore (ISESCO); Washington (Migration Policy Institute, ‘Transatlantic Dialogue on Islam and Integration’); Rome (IOM [International Organisation for Migration], ‘Immigration and Cultural Diversity in Europe. The Role of Muslim Migrant Women’); Brussels (Konrad Adenauer Foundation, ‘Muslims in Europe’); Rhodes (World Public Forum ‘Dialogue of Civilisations’); Brussels (European Commission, ‘Education in the Prevention of Violent Radicalization’); Naples (Sant’Egidio international meeting ‘Religions for Peace’, For a World without Violence: Religions and Culture in Dialogue); Washington (US Department of State, ‘Radicalization and Muslim Engagement in Europe and the United States’); Tunis (Zaitouna University, ‘Islam between Unity and Pluralism’), St Petersburg (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, ‘The Future the Middle East and the Mediterranean: Religions, Dialogue, Peace’), Venice (IPS [International Press Service], ‘The Role of Communication in the Alliance among Civilisations’).

In Italy Yahya Pallavicini has participated in conferences and lectures in Pisa (University of Pisa, Management of Intercultural and Interreligious Conflicts); Genoa (Italian Red Cross, Muslims and Westerners: Truth and Misrepresentation); Lucca (Diocese of Lucca, Community, Beauty, Hospitality and the Desire to Meet: the Dialogue between Judaism, Christianity and Islam), Pisa

(Diocese of Pisa, The Different Architectural Forms of the Great Religions), Venice (University of Venice, Islam in Italy), Naples (Young European Federalists, European Citizenship and the Islamic Identity), Naples (Institute of Philosophical Studies, The Philosophy of Religion between Universalism and Pluralism), Florence (Ministry of Family Policy, As the the Family Grows, So Does Italy), Rome (LIDU Italian League of Human Rights, Human Rights: Sources and Orientations for a Common Language); Sanremo (Teatro dell'Opera, Centenary of the Award of the Nobel Peace Prize); Pisa (University of Pisa, Master Course in Public and Political Communication); Rome (Link Campus, University of Malta, 'Cultural Diversity and Religious Pluralism: the Possible Dialogue in Europe'); Terni (FilmFestival Popoli e Religioni, The Commitment of Religions to Civil Rights and Freedom), Poggibonsi (CISRECO [Centro Internazionale per lo Studio del Religioso Contemporaneo], The Enemy and the Guest: Experiences of Foreignness); Venice (Palazzo Ducale, The West and Islam. Unity in the Difference between Art and Intellectuality); Sassari (Associazione culturale De Gasperi, Religions and Nature); Milan (Milan Politecnico, Faculty of Design, 'Dentro la Moschea'); Genoa (Palazzo Ducale, Values and Virtues of Citizenship, Integration and Dialogue); Milan (Associazione De Amicis, an interreligious meeting in honour of the Dalai Lama's visit).