

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

September 13, 2010

Dr. Mahmoud Mousa
President, Islamic Society of Greater Lansing
920 S. Harrison Road
East Lansing, MI 48823

Dear Dr. Mousa:

On Sunday, I became aware of the desecration of a Quran found on the property of the East Lansing Islamic Center.

I want to express my profound regret that this offensive act took place in our community, and I condemn this act of bigotry and intimidation in no uncertain terms.

What occurred is a violation of the spirit of Michigan State University and of the East Lansing community, both of which have embraced diversity and inclusiveness as core values. While we cannot diminish the free speech rights of individuals, it is unfortunate that the hateful anti-Muslim rhetoric we're hearing nationwide—including misguided calls for burning the Quran on September 11—has created an atmosphere that gives encouragement to such acts within our community.

Those responsible for this act in our community did not identify themselves. It is important that we not exaggerate the importance of this lone, anonymous, cowardly act, for that would be playing into the hands of forces that would like to divide us on the basis of religion and race.

The university community has a long history of coming together to extend support to victims of discrimination and bigotry. I would like to do the same once again on behalf of MSU by assuring the Muslim community at large, MSU's Muslim students, faculty and staff members, and the Islamic Center in particular that MSU's commitment to the principles of diversity and inclusiveness remains unshakable.

I plan to address this issue this week in my online column. My administration also has joined our Muslim Studies Program to sponsor the appearance on campus September 23 of Dr. Ali Mazrui, an eminent intellectual and Albert Schweitzer Professor in the Humanities, Professor in Political Science, African Studies and Philosophy, Interpretation and Culture, and Director of the Institute of Global Cultural Studies at Binghamton University, State University of New York.



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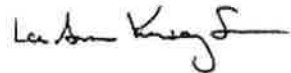
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He will deliver a public lecture titled "In the Shadow of Islamophobia: The United States and the Muslim World" at 4 p.m. in Room 303 of our International Center.

Again, please accept my expression of concern and this institution's support for East Lansing's Muslim community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lou Anna K. Simon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Lou Anna K. Simon, Ph.D.
President