

**UCF PMBF Program, NAAM Association Hosts Interfaith Lunch
Featuring Notable Islamic Scholar Recep Şentürk
October 12, 2015**



As part of the ongoing interfaith initiative, on Thursday, October 8, 2015, the University of Central Florida's Prince Mohammad bin Fahd Program for Strategic Research and Studies (PMBF Program) hosted a small lunch in honor of Dr. Recep Şentürk, who heads the Alliance of Civilization Institute and is chair of the Department of Civilization Studies at Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakif University in Istanbul, Turkey. The lunch, which was held in Washington, D.C., was sponsored by NAAM Association, a non-government organization registered in Paris, France, that helps other NGOs, particularly cultural and educational entities, accomplish various societal and civic development goals.

The lunch provided an opportunity for Dr. Şentürk to discuss his most recent book, One Civilization, and his latest academic endeavors. During his presentation, Şentürk, who is a noted Islamic scholar and expert on Hadith (the traditions or sayings of the Prophet Muhammad), discussed the misuse of religion in contemporary trouble spots. He also spoke at length about how Islam worked on a practical level as a cement to the Ottoman Empire. Şentürk also took a number of questions for distinguished guest, many of them concerned about the growing use of religious as a mechanism for disunity, extremism, and sectarianism - particularly in conflicts in Syria and Iraq.



David Dumke, Director of the Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd Program for Strategic Research and Studies with Dr. Recep Şentürk

Guests at the lunch included an array of Washington-based regional and foreign policy experts, including representatives from the following organizations: the Arab Gulf States Institute Washington, Association of Former Members of United States Congress, Georgetown University Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Hollings Center for International Dialog, Congressional Research Service/U.S. Congress, *Newsweek* magazine, Georgetown University Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, National Defense University, East-West Institute, and the

International Republican Institute.

NAAM Association was established in mid-2005. Since its inception, it has sponsored or participated in numerous activities and joint efforts with various countries, groups, organizations, and individuals on a wide array of issues, including the promotion of values around human rights, cultural awareness, the environment, living standards, and human development. Her Royal Highness Princess Reem Al Faisal serves as NAAM Chairman, with former *Arab News* and *Saudi Gazette* Editor-in-Chief Khaled Al Maeena serving as Co-Chair.

In October 2014, the PMBF Program held an interfaith forum in Orlando featuring United Nations High Representative of the Alliance of Civilizations Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, United States Deputy Special Envoy to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Arsalan Suleman, and a number of local representatives of different faiths.

Biography of Special Guest:

Recep Şentürk is the director general and dean of graduate studies at the Alliance of Civilizations Institute at, Istanbul, where he also serves as the chair of the Department of Civilization Studies. He is also founder and president of International Ibn Khaldun Society. He holds a Ph.D. from Columbia University, Department of Sociology (1998), and specializes in sociology, human rights, and Islamic studies with a focus on the Ottoman Empire, Egypt, and Turkey. He is the author of (in English) *Narrative Social Structure: Hadith Transmission Network 610–1505* (Stanford University Press, 2005) and (in Turkish) *Open Civilization: Towards a Multi-Civilizational World and Society* (Istanbul 2010, 2014), *Sociology of Turkish Thought: From Fiqh to Social Science* (Istanbul 2008); *Islam and Human Rights: Sociological and Legal Perspectives* (Istanbul 2007); *Malcolm X: Struggle for Human Rights* (Istanbul 2006); *Social Memory: Hadith Transmission Network 610–1505* (Istanbul 2004); *Sociologies of Religion* (Istanbul 2004); and *Modernization and Social Science*

in the Muslim World: A Comparison between Turkey and Egypt (Istanbul 2006). He is the editor of *Civilization and Values: Open Civilization* (Istanbul 2010), *Ibn Khaldun: Contemporary Readings* (Istanbul 2009), *Economic Development and Values* (Istanbul 2008).