

# Raheel Raza to talk about universal human rights at 'Secularism 2016' conference

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The National Secular Society is pleased to announce that secularist campaigner Raheel Raza will be speaking at our September conference 'Secularism 2016 – living better together'.

Raheel is the author of *Their Jihad – Not My Jihad* and regularly appears in Canadian TV and print.

She is an advocate for gender equality and an activist for women's rights, as well as an interfaith activist and the first Muslim woman in Canada to lead mixed gender prayers.

In her pursuit for human rights, Raheel is accredited with United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva through The Centre for Inquiry (CFI).

She is a recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee medal for service to Canada and has received many awards for her work on women's equality including the City of Toronto's Constance Hamilton award and the Urban Hero award.

Raheel made a documentary film called "Whose Sharia is it anyway?" dealing with the debate about sharia in Canada and she runs a Forum for Learning to educate young people about the dangers of radicalization and terrorism, and she continues to write and speak about the subject. She has taught a course on Islam and Modernity at George Brown College in Toronto for the past five years titled "The Passion and Politics of Islam".

She is the President of the Council for [Muslims Facing Tomorrow](#) which works to secure "peace for all people", oppose extremism and "advance among Muslims the principle of individual rights and freedoms".

"In order to succeed we are dedicated to nurturing harmonious coexistence among people of all faith traditions, to supporting open and free intellectual discourse about our history beset with problems that need to be publicly discussed," the group says.

She has [criticised the use of the term Islamophobia](#), writing that it is "used too often to stifle debate or criticism".

Stephen Evans, the campaigns director of the National Secular Society, said: "We are delighted to be hosting Raheel at our conference, among a slate of speakers who will give a fascinating insight into the issues facing the secular movement today."

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