



انستیتوت مطالعات استراتژیک افغانستان  
Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies

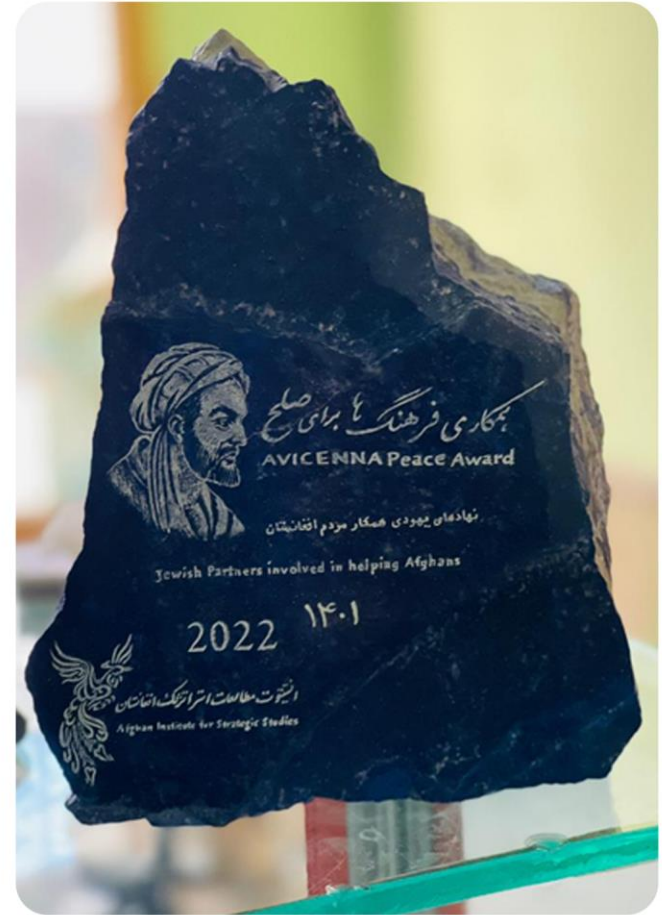


هنکاري فرهنگنا براي صلح  
AVICENNA Peace Award-IV

June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023 | London



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## Agenda

Monday, 26 June 2023

18:00-18:30	<b>Guest Arrival and Reception</b>	
<b>Opening Session</b>		
18:30-18:35	Welcoming Remarks by Revd. Dr. James Heard	
18:35-18:40	Introductory Remarks by DG of AISS, Dr. Davood Moradian	
<b>Programme</b>		
18:40-19:00	Deep-rooted History of Jews of Afghanistan By Ambassador Jawad, Former Ambassador of Afghanistan to the UK	
19:00-19:15	Musical Performance by Professor John Baily	
19:15-19:35	Keynote Speech by Professor Shirin Ebadi, Nobel Peace Laureate	
19:35-19:45	Afghanistan Collapsed: Human and Cultural Consequences	
19:55-19:55	Documentary on Avicenna Peace Award	
19:55-20:05	Presenting the Award by Dr. Sahraa Karimi, Writer/Filmmaker	
20:05-20:20	<b>Acceptance Speeches:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Yotam Polizer, Global CEO of the IsraAID</li><li>➤ Rabbi David Mason, CEO of HIAS</li><li>➤ Paul Anticoni, CEO of World Jewish Relief (WJR)</li></ul>
20:20-20:30	Sufi Music	
20:30-21:00	<b>Dinner</b>	

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## Avicenna:

Abu 'Ali al-Husayn ibn Sina is better known in Europe by the Latinized name "Avicenna." Avicenna is probably the most significant philosopher in the Islamic tradition and arguably the most influential philosopher of the pre-modern era. Born in Afshana near Bukhara in Central Asia in about 980, he is best known as a polymath, as a physician whose major work the *Canon (al-Qanun fi'l-Tibb)* continued to be taught as a medical textbook in Europe and in the Islamic world until the early modern period, and as a philosopher whose major *summa* the *Cure (al-Shifa')* had a decisive impact upon European scholasticism and especially upon Thomas Aquinas. Primarily a metaphysical philosopher of being who was concerned with understanding the self's existence in this world in relation to its contingency, Avicenna philosophy is an attempt to construct a coherent and comprehensive system that accords with the religious exigencies of Muslim culture. As such, he may be considered to be the first major Islamic philosopher.\*

\*Source: The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy.

## Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies:

The Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies (AISS) was established in October 2012 in Kabul and has since become a premier research institution in Afghanistan. After the fall of the Afghanistan Government on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2021, AISS had to close its Kabul office and relocate to the UK. On March 2022, AISS succeeded in registering in the UK and opened its office at the University of Sussex in Brighton. Research England and the University of Sussex have provided support to AISS for its integration into UK's academic ecosystem as well as providing a platform for fleeing Afghan researchers/scholars.

AISS aims to create an intellectual space to address strategic issues pertaining to Afghanistan in the broader regional and international contexts. AISS seeks to foster timely discussions on Afghanistan by publishing high-quality research reports and promoting dialogue amongst a broad spectrum of stakeholders. All our activities and programmes are based on the principles of Professionalism, Independence, Internationalism, and Progressive Values. The AISS is an independent, not-for-profit research institute that provides qualitative, non-partisan, and policy-oriented research, alongside academic publications, translation of books/reports, professional training, and policy advocacy with a distinct focus on Afghanistan.



Avicenna

## Speakers' and Performers' Biographies:

**Dr Shirin Ebadi:** Iranian political activist, lawyer, former judge and human rights activist, and founder of Defenders of Human Rights Center in Iran.

**Dr James Heard:** Vicar of St George's Campden Hill and St John the Baptist. Holland Road.

**Ambassador Jawad:** Afghan politician and diplomat. Former Ambassador of Afghanistan to the UK.

**Dr Sahraa Karimi:** Visiting Professor at the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia (Experimental Cinematography Center) in Rome.

**Paul Anticoni:** CEO of World Jewish Relief (WJR).

**Rabbi David Mason:** Executive Director of HIAS+JCORE.

**Yotam Polizer:** CEO of IsraAID.

**Professor John Baily:** Former Professor of Ethnomusicology and Head of the Afghanistan Music Unit at Goldsmiths, University of London.

**Peyman Heydarian:** Award-winning music scientist and santurist.

**Sulaiman Haqqana:** Musician (Tabla player).

**Ziba Tabrizi:** Leading professional performer of dance from Iran, Afghanistan and Azerbaijan.

**Annie Levy:** Campaigns and Communications Manager, WJR.

**Massoud Malik:** Journalist at Afghanistan International TV.

## **Avicenna Peace Award:**

Real and often perceived differences contribute and drive conflicts within and across societies and nations. Bridging such differences through dialogue is vital in preventing, resolving and transforming conflicts as well as realizing our collective potentials in building a more humane, just and peaceful world. To this end, there are inspirational personalities that can help transcend our self-imposed isolation by broadening our mutual understanding and recognizing the abundant commonalities that exist across different societies and cultures. In line with the AISS' core objective in promoting understanding and cooperation through dialogue, the Avicenna Award honours distinguished individuals, institutions, initiatives and projects, advocating dialogue, intercultural exchange, mutual coexistence and non-violent approaches. The Award is named after one of the World's renowned scholars, Avicenna, whose life and work transcended cultural and geographical boundaries.

Previous winners include:

Professor Michael Barry (USA/2018).

The Honourable Rashid Al Ghannouchi (Tunisia/2019).

Senator Anarkali Kaur Honaryar (Afghanistan/2020).

**World Jewish Relief (WJR):** WJR is one of Britain's leading development organizations, working with Jewish and non-Jewish communities alike. which supported the UK Government's resettlement of Afghan refugees in the UK with charitable work. It provided employment services to refugees, through its Specialist Training and Employment Programme (STEP).

**Jewish Federations (JFED):** JFED is a secular Jewish non-profit organization, found within many metropolitan areas across the United States with a significant Jewish community. They provide supportive and human services, philanthropy, financial grants to refugees around the world, humanitarian and disaster relief, host leadership conferences and fellowship opportunities for women and youth, charitable drives, help those in need navigate comprehensive resources, and provide outreach to at-risk Jewish populations in 70 countries worldwide. Their initiative with the Shapiro Foundation, a \$1 million initiative to support local Jewish organizations in resettlement efforts for more than 1,900 Afghan refugees across 15 communities and 12 states, as well as through 42 volunteer circles.

## 2021 Afghanistan evacuation:

The events of August 2021 in Afghanistan resulted in a cataclysmic political shift, which saw the return of the Taliban to power and the withdrawal of the last remaining international troops. Given the brutality of the first Taliban regime in the 1990s many civilians were deeply concerned about their welfare and the future of their country.

After the fall of Kabul, many people attempted to flee the country, through any means available to them, including to neighbouring countries such as Iran and Pakistan. This also included the various air evacuations that multiple countries were engaged with. It was not only NATO member countries that were involved with these evacuations and resettlement but many charities, NGOs and non-profit organisations as well. These organisations, both civil and religious, not only complemented but in some case exceeded governmental efforts to assist people fleeing at the time. The assistance provided by these organisations was vital in supporting vulnerable people during this unprecedented humanitarian crisis. The assistance provided by numerous Jewish organisations during the Afghanistan evacuations of 2021 demonstrate the principle of 'mutual co-existence' which is at the core of the AISS Avicenna Peace Award.

As a result of the support provided to help evacuate vulnerable Afghans from the country, these refugees are now in a position to rebuild their lives, reimagine their futures and live a life free from the fear of persecution. With time they will be able to contribute to their new host societies in novel, innovative and positive ways. However, none of this would have been possible without the help of the organisations we are honouring today. And to them we are eternally grateful and say, thank you.

## This year's winners:

**Israel Forum for International Humanitarian Aid (IsraAid):** IsraAid an Israel-based non-governmental organization that responds to emergencies all over the world with targeted humanitarian help. They coordinated the evacuation of 167 vulnerable Afghan nationals, from Afghanistan to the UAE and Albania, before long-term resettlement in countries including Canada, France, and Switzerland.

**HIAS:** Drawing on its Jewish values and history, HIAS provides vital services to refugees and asylum seekers around the world and advocates for their fundamental rights so they can rebuild their lives. HIAS works across 22 countries and is headquartered in the US. Earlier this year, they joined forces with JCORE, the UK's Jewish voice on refugees and racial equality, to create a new partnership called HIAS+JCORE. Throughout the Afghan crisis, the extended HIAS community assisted with housing: this includes helping new resettlement partners to start receiving refugees during this unprecedented moment. Evacuated Afghans were housed on eight military bases across the country and HIAS' involvement in this unprecedented resettlement effort was immediate. In the UK, HIAS+JCORE initiated the Afghan Emergency Appeal to raise funds for refugees in the UK with basic necessities — from outerwear and underwear to toothpaste and towels — as well as practical, social and psychological support.