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Rabb Invited to White House Iftar Dinner

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Newton, MA—Boston College Law School Professor Intisar Rabb was invited to attend the White House Iftar dinner on August 13th as a guest of President Obama, along with members of congress, the administration, diplomats, and leaders and scholars active in the Muslim community.

Iftar is the evening meal when Muslims break fast during the month of Ramadan. The first White House Iftar dinner was hosted by Thomas Jefferson, and it has been an annual tradition for over 200 years.

Professor Rabb, who received her J.D. from Yale and her Ph.D. in Near Eastern Studies at Princeton, is both an American and Islamic law expert. She was honored to be a guest at the Iftar Dinner on Friday, and applauded the President's "commitment to religious freedom, diverse and enriching community, and democracy that champions both."

The month of Ramadan and the dinner comes at a time of increased focus on the US Muslim community. Much of the attention draws from a hotly-debated proposal to build an Islamic Cultural Center in Lower Manhattan, several blocks from Ground Zero.

President Obama addressed the sensitive issue in his remarks at the Iftar Dinner. "Ground Zero is, indeed, hallowed ground," he said. "We must never forget those who we lost so tragically on 9/11...but time and again, the American people have demonstrated that we can work through these issues, and stay true to our core values, and emerge stronger for it."

"We must reject attempts to limit our democratic freedoms and American values of diversity in favor of ignorance and intolerance of Muslims or any other group who make up and enrich the social fabric of our country," Rabb said. "Rather than equate Muslims with violent extremists or falsely characterize shari'a as an inherently harsh legal system that aims to take over America, we should seek to understand Islam and Islamic law from credible sources on the basis of scholarship rather than punditry...I hope [the President’s] words will be received in a way that has a positive effect on the national debate."

For a full transcript of the President’s remarks, go to:


For more on Professor Rabb, please visit:

/schools/law/fac-staff/deans-faculty/rabb.html