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IntelligenceReport®

September 21, 2008

Toward Common Ground

Foreign-policy experts in Washington are about to release a report that they hope will change the way the U.S. and Muslim countries relate to one another. Rob Fersh of [Search for Common Ground](#) and David Fairman of the [Consensus Building Institute](#) gave us a sneak preview.

How do we change course in U.S.-Muslim relations?

We can change conflicts into partnerships. For example, many Muslim nations, even the wealthy oil producers, have problems finding jobs for young people. There are real opportunities for oil-rich nations and U.S. businesses to build new industries that create jobs in Muslim countries and in the U.S.

Is there really a "clash of civilizations"?

Our research shows that the primary causes of upset with the U.S. in the Muslim world are policies and actions, not a clash of civilizations. Most Muslims admire our political freedom and economic opportunity and want to develop them in their own countries in their own ways. We need to figure out how to help them do that.

How can we bring about change?

We need to take action to show we're committed to a new kind of partnership and ask our Muslim counterparts to do the same. Americans should start by learning more about the choices we face and the actions that all of us can take, from the President on down.

— *Lyric Wallwork Winik*

For more information, visit USMuslimEngagement.org.

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