

# CIMS: Summary of Discussion

## 'The meaning and validity of Sunnah in the light of Ahl al-Bayt perspective'

The aim of the event was to explore prominent issues relating to the definition and validity of Sunnah; with a view to encourage harmony and understanding between the schools of thought. At the end of the programme, a joint statement was prepared on behalf of both, Sunni and Shia Schools of thought. In conclusion, both sides agreed upon

- 1) The definition and the legal position of Sunnah as Masdar al-Shar (a great source of guidance) second to the Quran, and also as the most authentic tafsir of the Quran.
- 2) There is unanimity in the collection and compilation of ahadith from the time of the Holy Prophet to the compilers of the second, third and fourth centuries of Hijrah, to a great extent.
- 3) The process of classification of ahadith such as sahih, hasan, daif, mutawatir and ahad is also appeared almost the same, though retaining some minor differences. However, the differences have also been found in the areas of isnad (chain of narration) and their narrators. Scholars of hadith of Ahl al-Shia narrate ahadith mainly from the chain of the Imams of Ahl al-Bayt, while Ahl al-Sunnah rely mainly on sahaba. To Ahl al-Sunnah, it is crucial the isnad (chain) of a hadith goes back and reaches the Holy Prophet directly without any break at any stage. Whilst to Ahl al-Shia, the chain of a hadith must reach any Imam (al-Masum) directly to qualify for the criteria of a sahih hadith.
- 4) It is also found that there are great similarities in ahadith of Tawhid, basic beliefs, Ibadat, Ethics, Risalah and Akhirah, halal and haram. Though in some areas, there are differences but, they do not create any problems as they are not related to the articles of Faith and the core part of Islamic Shariah.