



27 October 2024

MEDIA STATEMENT: HSF ANNUAL MEMORIAL LECTURE

During May 2024 the Helen Suzman Foundation confirmed Dr Imtiaz Sooliman of Gift of the Givers as speaker for our annual memorial lecture reflecting on the role of civil society in advancing social justice in South Africa for 30 years of democracy and beyond. Dr Sooliman was considered the best choice for this address given the positive impact he and Gift of the Givers have made to alleviate the plight of the most poor and vulnerable in South Africa, especially in light of the lack of service delivery by government. While HSF commends this important work, it has not provided any material or financial support to Gift of the Givers.

Recently, there have been serious allegations levelled at Gift of the Givers and Dr Sooliman, in particular linking him to the Muslim Brotherhood's Al Aqsa Foundation and accusing him of funding terrorist organizations. Consequently the HSF has faced criticism for our choice of speaker for the annual lecture. The HSF is not in a position to determine the merits of the allegations made against Dr Sooliman, but he has assured us and stated publicly that the allegations are untrue and without substance.

With regard to certain of Dr Sooliman's recent public statements, we would like to make clear that the HSF has an unequivocal stance against anti-Semitism and has a commitment to upholding the rule of law.

We are also committed to the principle of free speech.

The HSF will host its annual memorial lecture as planned.

Kalim Rajab
Chairperson

Naseema Fakir
Executive Director

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