

U.S. envoy to Muslims lays out plans

Dennis Coday | Jul. 2, 2009 NCR Today

Last week, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton appointed Farah Pandith as special representative to Muslim communities. Pandith, who had worked in the State Department's European Bureau as a special adviser for outreach to Muslim communities in Europe, will now have "more of a global role," State Department spokesman Ian Kelly said announcing the appointment.

She [gave her first press briefing](#) [1] today and said, she expects to go beyond criticism of Washington's foreign policy, outlining an ambitious program of reconciliation.

Pandith ... said her previous work in dealing with European Muslims showed the need for dialogue beyond objections against US policy in the Middle East.

"There are going to be a wide range of questions that come up," the Indian-born Muslim American said. "I know that because I did this on the ground in Europe."

"But the vast majority of young Muslims that I met were very interested in thinking about their futures, and thinking about how to participate in their communities, and thinking about what they need to do to engage in building communication with other countries and with themselves and with the United States."

President Obama has made outreach to Muslims a priority, highlighted by his speech in Cairo in early June. Pandith, a Muslim, immigrated to the United States with her parents from Srinagar, Kashmir, India. She grew up in Massachusetts.

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