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King Charles III: the UK's 'most pro-Islam monarch'

King Charles expressed profound respect for Islam and Islamic civilisation on multiple occasions before his recent accession to the throne.

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King Charles III believes Islam 'can teach' modern society about 'understanding and living in the world' [source: Getty]

A conspiracy theory has been circulating on the Internet in recent days: is [King Charles III](#) (<https://english.alaraby.co.uk/news/king-charles-iii-and-middle-east-what-can-we-expect>), the UK's new monarch, a Muslim?

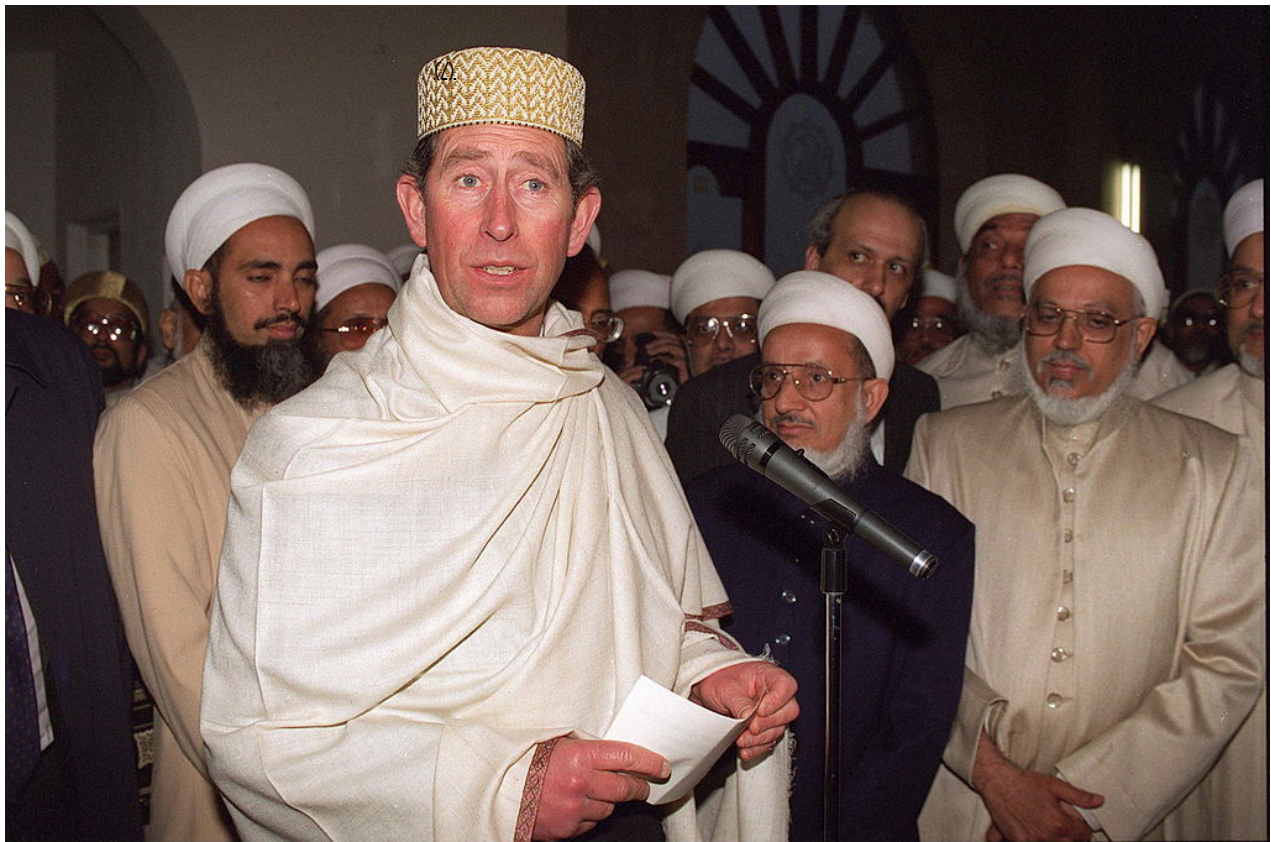
Pictures of the 73-year-old - who assumed the throne last week after [Queen Elizabeth II's death](#) (<https://english.alaraby.co.uk/news/queens-death-ignites-debate-over-africas-colonial-past>) - in a series of Islamic garments have been shared widely online along with comments of the then Prince of Wales praising the virtues of Islam.

Back in 1996, the Grand Mufti of Cyprus - shockingly - claimed that the new king was secretly a Muslim.

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King Charles III visited a number of Islamic Centres in Britain as Prince of Wales [Getty]

Given the modern British monarchy's commitment to the Church of England - "the Church in which my own faith is so deeply rooted" as Charles recently said - this "theory" could be dismissed almost instantly.

However, pause and there is a wider context to this Reddit-sounding inquiry.

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The UK's new king differs from his royal predecessors and many politicians in Liz Truss's current government for one much-repeated act: expressing his fervent admiration for [Islam \(https://english.alaraby.co.uk/news/yemeni-arrested-after-umrah-queen-elizabeth-ii\)](https://english.alaraby.co.uk/news/yemeni-arrested-after-umrah-queen-elizabeth-ii)and Islamic civilisation.

1993: 'The links between these two worlds matter more today than ever before'

In 1993, the new king was made a patron of the renowned Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies.

Charles devoted his [inaugural address \(https://www.princeofwales.gov.uk/speech/speech-hrh-prince-wales-titled-islam-and-west-oxford-centre-islamic-studies-sheldonian\)](https://www.princeofwales.gov.uk/speech/speech-hrh-prince-wales-titled-islam-and-west-oxford-centre-islamic-studies-sheldonian) to challenge notions that Islamic and Christian societies stood at odds with each other, a binary which he viewed as misguided and fuelled by the media. Instead, he stressed that these "two worlds" must live and work together.

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"For that which binds our two worlds is so much more powerful than that which divides us," he said.

The then Prince of Wales spoke about shared values such as justice, respect for knowledge, compassion towards the poor, and the importance of [family life. \(https://english.alaraby.co.uk/features/my-paper-life-new-life-syrian-refugee-family\)](https://english.alaraby.co.uk/features/my-paper-life-new-life-syrian-refugee-family)

"It is... misunderstandings [that] arise when we fail to appreciate how others look at the world, its history, and our respective roles in it.

"More than this, Islam can teach us a way of understanding and living in the world which Christianity itself is the poorer for having lost," he added.

1996: 'Islam respects the timeless traditions of the natural order'

In 1996, Charles delivered a speech (<http://www.alhewar.com/PrinceCharles.htm>), entitled "A Sense of the Sacred: Building Bridges Between Islam and the West" in which he praised Islam for its respect of the "natural order".

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The ardent environmentalist said: "[This respect] could help us in the West to rethink, and for the better, our practical stewardship of man and his environment - in fields like healthcare, the natural environment and agriculture, as well as in architecture and urban planning."

Charles criticised the materialistic culture of Western societies, and spoke about how Eurocentric scientific advancement has precipitated a dangerous view of man's domination over nature.

"In those instances where Islam chooses to reject Western materialism, this is not, in my view, only a political affectation or the result of envy or a sense of inferiority," he said.

"Quite the opposite. And the danger that the gulf between the worlds of Islam and the other major Eastern religions on the one hand, and the West on the other, will grow ever wider and more unbridgeable is real, unless we can explore together practical ways of integrating the sacred and the secular in both our cultures in order to provide a true inspiration for the next century."



Charles is well-known for being a keen environmentalist [Getty]

2004: 'Muslim religious education is key'

During a speech at the Muslim College in Ealing (<https://www.princeofwales.gov.uk/speech/speech-hrh-prince-wales-during-visit-muslim-college-ealing-london>) in 2004, Charles spoke about the importance of religious education in Britain

"I see Muslim religious education as a key factor in helping Muslims integrate into British and western society without losing their identity – and am particularly encouraged by the success the college has had in producing successful imams with responsibility for spreading this message in countries as different as Afghanistan and Malaysia."

This speech, which "enthralled" its audience according to Ajmal Masroor who was there, represented an important acknowledgment of Muslims' visibility in both the Commonwealth and the UK.

2006: 'The West is in debt to Islam'

In 2006 at a 'Unity in Faith' (<https://www.princeofwales.gov.uk/speech/speech-hrh-prince-wales-titled-unity-faith-al-azhar-university-cairo-egypt>) speech at Egypt's Al-Azhar University, the world's second oldest university, the new monarch told the audience: "We need to remember that we in the West are in debt to the scholars of Islam, for it was thanks to them that during the Dark Ages in Europe the treasures of classical learning were kept alive."

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This is a theme Charles has turned to repeatedly in his speeches - the idea that history is not a linear trajectory of Christian enlightenment, but must be seen as an amalgamation of cultures and societies that interacted over time and were enriched by each other.

2013: 'The Quran tells us that humanity is responsible for stewardship of the earth'

As the Prince of Wales, Charles made several speeches about Islamic finance, showcasing his detailed knowledge of the benefits it could bring to global markets.

In a 2013 speech to the World Islamic Economic Forum (<https://www.princeofwales.gov.uk/speech/speech-prince-wales-world-islamic-economic-forum-london>) in London, he said: "Where, then, might the solutions lie? It is clear from the Quran and, indeed, from the Bible too, that humanity has a sacred responsibility for the stewardship of the Earth.

"The time has surely come for our financial institutions to recognise that the Earth is not a limitless resource that can be plundered at will, and to integrate that principle of stewardship into our financial structures."



Prince Charles delivered a speech during a reception & dinner at the World Islamic Economic Forum in 2013 [Getty]

2022: Charles 'stands with us'

Following news of Queen Elizabeth II's death on 8 September, sermons and prayers were held in her honour throughout the UK.


One Friday sermon in Cambridge Central Mosque caught people's attention on social media.

Islamic scholar Abdul Hakim Murad read some words from King Charles and said: "Whether we are monarchist or not monarchist, or care about this or not, it does matter that in a time of mounting [Islamophobia](https://english.alaraby.co.uk/features/french-muslim-women-lift-veil-islamophobia-france) (<https://english.alaraby.co.uk/features/french-muslim-women-lift-veil-islamophobia-france>), there are some people who wish to stand with us."

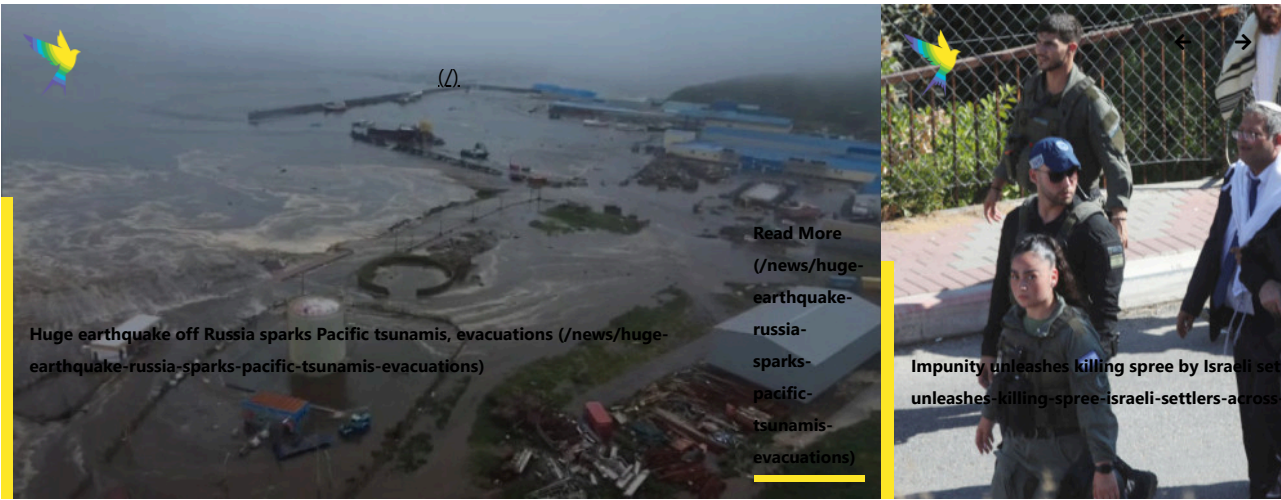
Charles had gone out of his way to make positive remarks about Islam, overcoming outdated binaries, he added.

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