



New ISIM Headquarters at Rapenburg 59 (corner building), Leiden

PHOTO BY DENNIS JANSSEN, 2005

## Rights at Home Website

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The meeting of the Editorial Board of the RaH website was hosted by the NGO Sisters in Islam Forum Malaysia (SIS). Initially, the website was set up as a tool for human rights activists in Southeast Asia, as an alternative for the RaH Capacity Building Workshops (CBWs) in Yemen and Tanzania. It was to become a reservoir of progressive Islamic documents for civil society groups engaged in Islamic and state law reform related to human rights. Given the extent of internet connectivity in the region, the website was going to be used as a tool for building a community for the promotion of human rights.

As the process developed, it was felt that the Yemeni and Tanzanian trainees of the CBWs would also benefit from the tool. Consequently, the eight female website trainees who took part in the website training in Cape Town, February 2004, were recruited from all three target regions of the project. Representatives of the RaH counterparts in Tanzania, Malaysia, and Yemen contributed by submitting website materials in Kiswahili, English, and Arabic on the priority issues of domestic violence, early marriage, inheritance, and women in public life.

While the content building of the website moved on steadily, its tech-

**The Editorial Board of the website of the ISIM project "Rights at Home: An Approach to the Internationalization of Human Rights in Family Relations in Islamic Communities" held its third and last meeting in Kuala Lumpur in April 2005. The meeting met to discuss the functioning of the website, and to plan for its future beyond the Rights at Home (RaH) Project.**

nical development faced some major obstacles and challenges. The whole project turned out to be much more complex than initially envisaged. Visitors of the site may still experience some inconvenience since construction is going on. Moreover, a major crash on the UWC server which has been hosting the site has set the project back for a while. But

work is in process to have the site re-established on a Malaysian server.

On a positive note, the number of registered users and reactions from the RaH counterparts and their grassroots members confirmed that there is a great demand for the website. A similar body of progressive literature is not available elsewhere. Moreover, the users are no longer limited to the initial target countries either. SIS received a request from Egypt about the issue of domestic violence and more questions from the Middle East are expected in the future. The same applies to Islamic communities elsewhere, including the West.

Next to the document and link sections, a chatroom and a discussion board are already available on the site. The RaH Advanced Training manual, which also contains specific parts on advocacy will soon be loaded. Moreover, the website's Editorial Board, in its final meeting, considered the possibility of featuring current developments, like Amina Wadud's khutbah. In such cases, juristic opinions regarding women in the role of imams or women in the public space can be added so that arguments for a progressive Muslim view are developed and made available.

Since the RaH Project ends on 30 September 2005, the future management of the website was to be one of the main issues of the Editorial Board meeting in Kuala Lumpur. SIS seemed to be the most suitable candidate to be charged with the ownership of the site, and the Editorial Board resolved to do so. The network of activists, academics, and resource persons related to the website is expected to stay engaged on the long term. During the final phase of the RaH Project its team will continue supporting SIS in organizational matters.

The website will be available through [www.rightsathome.org](http://www.rightsathome.org).

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### EDITORIAL BOARD OF THE R@H WEBSITE

Editorial Board of the Rights at Home website (until 4 April 2005):

- Prof. Dr Nasr Abu Zaid (Utrecht University, the Netherlands)
- Cassandra Balchin (United Kingdom)
- Yasmin Busran-Lao (Al-Mujadilah Development Foundation, the Philippines)
- Syafiq Hasyim (International Centre for Islam and Pluralism, Indonesia)
- Salma Maoulidi (Sahiba Sisters Foundation, Tanzania)
- Prof. Dr Muhammad Khalid Masud (former ISIM Academic Director, Pakistan)
- Prof. Dr Ebrahim Moosa (Duke University, USA)

Webmasters

- Adibah Syarifatul (SIS, from 1 March 2005 onwards)
- Pia Zain (until 1 March 2005)