

THE CENTRE FOR ARAB & ISLAMIC STUDIES
(THE MIDDLE EAST AND CENTRAL ASIA) PRESENT:



ANU PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES 2008

RELIGION, SECULARISM & DEMOCRACY

Dr Gholamali Khoshroo

Former Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs
Islamic Republic of Iran (2002–2005)



Thursday 3 July, 6pm

Law Link Theatre, Building 7, Fellows Road, ANU

This lecture is free and open to the public.

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In recent decades, religion in general – and Islam in particular – have played a more important role in political and social affairs. Despite classical sociological analysis, Islam is re-emerging in a very influential manner in the public sphere.

In the Islamic world, two mutually exclusive trends have occurred: one to protect the purity of religion from the sinful and mundane effects of modern time and the other to push religion out of public life – and even private life – in the name of progress, enlightenment and modernity. This secular trend and the religious reaction to it have created a deep mistrust and suspicion that has limited any opportunity for constructive interaction.

Is it really a deadlock or there is a way out? How?

Dr Khoshroo is assistant to President Khatami on Alliance of Civilisations and Dialogue among Civilisations. He has served as the Dean of the School for International Relations (1983–1989), Ambassador to the United Nations (1989–1995), Deputy Foreign Minister for Research and Education, Ambassador to Australia (1999–2002), and Member of OIC Commission of Eminent Persons on 'Enlightened Moderation'.

As a sociologist Dr Khoshroo studied at Tehran University and the New School for Social Research, New York, US. He has written extensively on political and social affairs. In recent years he has worked on the development of contemporary political Islam and its implication for western societies. In 2005, he asked for early retirement from foreign ministry and currently is serving as the senior editor of the *Encyclopaedia of Contemporary Islam*, to be published in English.

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