

## COMMENT 254 - Tarek Fatah

### *A life of courage*

By Paulo Casaca

26 April 2023– DOI: 10.48251/SADF.ISSN.2406-5617.C254



**Paulo Casaca** is the Founder and Executive Director of the 'South Asia Democratic Forum'; founder of the international co-operation association registered in Brussels ARCHumankind, 'Alliance to Renew Co-operation among Humankind'. Founder and senior partner of the consultancy company on sustainable development registered in Brussels, Lessmeansmore, Land and Energy Sustainable Systems

'I AM AN INDIAN BORN IN PAKISTAN; a Punjabi born in Islam; an immigrant in Canada with a Muslim Consciousness, grounded in a Marxist youth. I am one of Salman Rushdie's many Midnight's Children (...)'

[Fatah, 2011, p. XI](#)

One of SADF's closest friends and one of the most bright and courageous persons I ever met, Tarek Fatah passed away past Monday the 24<sup>th</sup> of April, after seventy-three years of an intense life. Born in Karachi, just on the wake of partition, in a Muslim family, Tarek Fatah grew up as a Pakistani and started his career as a journalist. ([Fatah, 2011](#))

Arrested and banned by the Pakistani military dictatorship, and after living in Saudi Arabia, he established himself in Canada where he became a journalist and eventually an elected politician. He was structurally a left-winger, mostly concerned with poverty, discrimination, and dictatorship; he remained particularly concerned with the way these flaws prevail in his native country. The responsibility for this state of things lies what he calls the 'Islamic State', as in the title he chooses for his seminal book: 'Pakistan, chasing a mirage, Tragic illusion of an Islamic State' ([Fatah, 2011](#)).

He offered me this book soon after I created SADF, and it exerted a lasting impression on me. The book is a critical history of Islam, written in a typically 'Tarek style', provocative, blunt, artistically playing with words and full of humour. He goes very much on the detail of history, the realities of his native country and of Saudi Arabia (where he lived for ten years) as well as on Iran, whose fanaticism he fully grasps, to make an easily accessible Muslim manual against fanaticism ([Fatah, 2011](#)).

His book is dedicated to 'Benazir Bhutto and Daniel Pearl, A Muslim and a Jew, both victims of terrorism' ([opening words, Fatah, 2011, p.VII](#)) and is very much anchored in the fight against antisemitism that is a trademark of Islamic fanaticism. For instance, he precises that:

'I write as a Muslim whose ancestors were Hindu. My religion, Islam, is rooted in Judaism, while my Punjabi culture is tied to that of the Sikhs.' ([Fatah, 2011, p. XI](#))

The admiration for Israel and his stern opposition to antisemitism – as to all other forms of racism and discrimination – was one of his most obvious credentials, as it was his denunciation of the Western cooperation with islamo-fascism, which led him to be vilified by both open Islamist organisations and by those financed by Western business-political establishment (promoting disinformation on behalf of Islamists, for instance ‘[EU DisinfoLab](#)’).

It was only a couple of months ago, in his periodic column in the ‘[Toronto Sun](#)’, that he expressed his dismay for the appointment by Canadian authorities of a ‘woman who wears the Muslim Brotherhood flag’ as the ‘first special representative on combatting Islamophobia’; (...) ‘the sight of thousands of exiled Iranians who now call Canada their home upset [her]. What else could we have expected from Trudeau’s new czarina who, instead of criticizing the Ayatollahs of Iran, chose to target fellow Muslims who seek democracy, liberty, freedom of conscience and speech?’

Tarek Fatah is no longer physically there, but the millions of Muslims that strive for freedom and equal rights, Iranians or otherwise are, as are those in the West who support oppressed Muslims and are willing to face both Islamo-fascists and the disinformation and propaganda machine supporting them – which is, let us say in passing, lavishly financed by a politico-business machine whose true motives are hidden in opaque tax-haven constructions.

Congratulations Tarek! You made a tremendous job!

## Reference List

Fatah, T. (2011). Pakistan: Chasing a Mirage Tragic Illusion of an Islamic State. Vanguard.

Fatah, T. (2023). FATAH: Trudeau’s choice of Hijabi to combat Islamophobia is puzzling. Toronto Sun. <https://torontosun.com/opinion/columnists/fatah-trudeaus-choice-of-hijabi-to-combat-islamophobia-is-puzzling>

Machado, G., Alaphillipe, A., Adimczyk, R., & Grégoire, R. (2020). Subsequent investigation: a deep dive into a 15-year operation targeting the EU and UN to serve Indian interests. EU DesinfoLab. [https://www.disinfo.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Indian-chronicles\\_FULLREPORT.pdf](https://www.disinfo.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Indian-chronicles_FULLREPORT.pdf)