

Envoy stresses importance of Islam in United States

Speaker focuses on tolerance at Embassy's Ramadan event

By A Staff Reporter
OMAN TRIBUNE

MUSCAT "Do unto your neighbour what you would have him do unto you." Giving one of the shortest and perhaps most profound bottomlines of all religions of the world was Michael Bos, Director of the Al Amana Centre in Muscat, as part of a talk on religious tolerance at the US Embassy in the capital on Saturday.

The embassy hosted a Ramadan event at the atrium of



Richard Baltimore III with some of the invitees.

the Chancery to buttress the spirit of tolerance and cooperation that characterises the Holy Month. Over 60 guests from different religions and nationalities attended the event, which included a display of an art exhibit entitled 'Islam in America'.

The US Ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman, HE Richard L Baltimore III, began the programme by welcoming the guests and wishing them blessings during

the month of Ramadan.

HE Baltimore then spoke about how Islam continues to contribute to the cultural and religious landscape of the United States. Noting that America is home to an estimated five million Muslims, the Ambassador emphasised that awareness of Islam's customs and observances in the United States is on the rise.

The invited speaker for the evening was Bos, who has

done postgraduate work on Near Eastern culture and religious pluralism at the Free University in the Netherlands, and is currently working on a PhD at the University of Bristol.

Bos, an American, works internationally to foster understanding, acceptance, trust and peace between Muslims and Christians. In Bos's remarks, he mentioned the need for societies to move from 'plurality' - in which different religious faiths are merely acknowledged - to 'pluralism', wherein the diversity of faiths is celebrated and defended.

It is important, Bos said, to develop a sense of internal advocacy for each other.

The evening concluded with a reception in the lobby of the Embassy, where the guests gathered to reflect upon the wisdom of Bos's words.



Michael Bos.