Excerpt: His Highness the Aga Khan’s 2005 message to The International Islamic Conference in Amman, Jordan

"In my presidential address [to the 1976 Seerat Conference in Karachi], I appealed to our ulama not to delay the search for the answers to the issues of a rapidly evolving modernity which Muslims of the world face because we have the knowledge that Islam is Allah’s final message to mankind, the Holy Qur’an His final Book, and Muhammad, may peace be upon him, His last and final Prophet.

"These are the fundamental principles of faith enshrined in the Shahada and the Tawhid therein, which bind the Ummah in an eternal bond of unity. With other Muslims, they are continuously reaffirmed by the Shia Ismaili Muslims of whom I am the 49th hereditary Imam in direct lineal descent from the first Shia Imam, Hazrat Ali ibn Abi Talib through his marriage to Bibi Fatimah-az-Zahra, our beloved Prophet’s daughter....

"Our historic adherence is to the Jafari Madhhab and other Madhahib of close affinity, and it continues, under the leadership of the hereditary Ismaili Imam of the time. This adherence is in harmony also with our acceptance of Sufi principles of personal search and balance between the zahir and the spirit or the intellect which the zahir signifies.

"I agree with our distinguished hosts and conference participants that there is a need today to define which Madhahib will apply to the Ummah. This clarity is critical for modern life in Islam as is evident in areas such as law, access to Islamic banking, or in
dealing with the challenges of the rapid generation of new knowledge such as in bio-medical and other scientific fields."

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