Preface

The idea for this book was initiated when the three of us decided that there was a paucity of empirically validated literature regarding the policing of Muslim societies. This was an area that was rife with various myths, stereotypes, and prejudices masquerading as received science and had not been studied from a social scientific perspective. The present work is an initial attempt to remedy this deficiency. The authors attempt to distinguish between two different approaches to policing. The first is the current approach to police administration by government agencies, and secondly, an ideal alternative approach, which applies the findings of evidence-based research for the benefit of local communities, and the society at large.

With the advent of the twenty-first century, law enforcement agencies have taken on an important dimension in international criminal justice. Globally, scholars of policing have witnessed a shift in focus from the traditionally reactive, law-and-order and crime control model of policing to one that is more just and equitable and is accountable to the community so as to ensure support. Using evidence-based research and applying theories that make police more accountable and democratic are some of the best safeguards towards achieving lasting gains in public order, and also making improvements towards the protection of human rights. With the emergence of the new globalized social structures, traditional boundaries and threats have now taken on new forms. There is a need to balance the public safety concerns of society with those of human rights violations. This transition from law-and-order policing, to a problem-oriented policing model calls for more systemic and structural changes in modern police forces. In order to garner the support of local communities police agencies need to find ways not to be perceived as an undemocratic occupying force, set up to harass and intimidate marginalized communities; one such way may possibly be a change in the composition of the force that will mirror more closely the population it polices.

Police forces today face challenges in finding effective methods to mobilize diverse communities and garner their support in combating terrorism and international crime control. A failure to get cooperation from all sections of the community challenges the legitimacy of the policing endeavor and makes their task less effective. This work is an exploratory study that examines the issue of policing Muslim

societies, using evidence-based research and the application of accumulated knowledge regarding the policing of religious minorities. At a later stage, attempts will be made to commence research in this field by surveying the communities, initially starting with focus group interviews. This process should build on the current science of policing and should offer scholars with more insight into a much neglected area of policing.

Raleigh, NC   Farrukh B. Hakeem
New York, NY   M.R. Haberfeld
Bloomington, IN   Arvind Verma