

Press Release

The Statement by the Ministry of Justice

An Explicit Threat to Muslims from the Government of Uzbekistan

(Translated)

The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan issued a statement on September 7, notably saying: “According to Article 31 of our Constitution, **everyone shall have the right to profess or not to profess any religion...** This means that each person is independent in following or not following his or her beliefs.... The notes indicate that there have been attempts to turn moral and religious opinions into **the subject of legal relations** and there have been media campaigns that go against our national values **and trample and restrict the personal rights of individuals...** In our country the forced assimilation of religious opinions is not allowed. This peremptory and immutable constitutional principle **will not be abandoned**. Any actions or propaganda aimed at implanting religious views in people by force necessitate liability. 30 years ago the people of Uzbekistan chose their own path of development, they want to build a humane, legal and democratic state based on secularism. **Nobody has the right** to question this fact and propagate fanatical ideas.” (Quotation ended).

This statement issued by the Ministry of Justice reflects the government's position. Of course, although it is clear that this statement is not only contrary to Islam but also directed against it. We will focus on some of the ideas contained therein. First of all, it should be noted that since the statement protects democratic principles, we would like to pose a question to the Ministry of Justice and the Government of Uzbekistan in general: Is the application of democracy not the imposition of a belief on the people?! Democracy is an integral part of capitalism, which gives human being a specific thought about life; that is, a general thought of the separation of religion from life, and on this thought, laws are also based. Hence, capitalism, like Islam or socialism, is also a doctrine and an ideology. If this is the case, how and on what basis do you consider forcibly imposing something alien to Islam and Muslims as legal or correct?! Then you speak as if the Muslims in our country had the opportunity to choose! As if they compared democracy and Islam, then they chose democracy! The people of this country have become Muslims since the arrival of Islam in Central Asia and remained Muslims even after the false independence! These people did not abandon Islam and did not choose democracy! They do not even understand the essence of democracy and do not follow it. On the contrary, they are against it. Moreover, if you do not follow

the policy of distancing these people from Islam and deceiving them with various tricks and leave them to themselves, you will see them return to Islam at lightning speed.

As for the condition to respect and obey the constitution, which is based on the separation of religion from life, you should request that from the government itself first, because since the adoption of this constitution, the government itself has not committed to it, even for a single day! It is no secret that Uzbekistan is governed by verbal and informal orders. The government has trampled on the constitution that it has adopted and other laws as well. This indicates the invalidity of man-made laws. Yet, do you ask Muslims to respect and obey it?! Of course, we Muslims obey laws, but on condition that the source of those laws is correct; that is, we obey only if they are based on the belief of Islam, because everyone who believes in "there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah" must lead an Islamic way of life.

It is clear that this statement is filled with hostility and hatred of Islam through which the government openly threatens Muslims who spread the pure call to Islam. It can also be assessed as a fear on the part of the government which sees that Muslims in our country are reverting to their Islam. We say that you will not be able to stop the revival of Muslims on the basis of Islam through persecution, imprisonment or killing. You observed this many years ago and still do. And if you use your brain, you will stop doing it. And if you cannot help people to live an Islamic life, then at least you can stop averting them from it, or else prepare for the day when a severe punishment from Allah will befall you.

﴿وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ أَفَّاكٍ أَثِيمٍ * يَسْمَعُ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِ ثُمَّ يُصِرُّ مُسْتَكْبِرًا كَأَن لَّمْ يَسْمَعْهَا فَبَشِّرْهُ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ﴾

“Woe to every sinful liar * Who hears the verses of Allah recited to him, then persists arrogantly as if he had not heard them. So give him tidings of a painful punishment.” [Al-Jathiya: 7-8].

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