

## Saudi Arabia's Permanent Council of Senior Scholars on Terrorism & Related Issues<sup>1</sup>

The 1995 Riyadh Bombings.....	1
The 1996 Khobar Bombings .....	3
Terrorist Cells .....	6
Takfīr .....	14
Boycotting Products Manufactured by Non-Muslims .....	20

### **The 1995 Riyadh Bombings**

All praise is due to Allāh alone and may He send prayers and peace upon the one after whom there will be no other prophet, Muhammad, and upon his family and companions.

The Permanent Council of the Senior Scholars of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have come to know of the bombings that occurred in the 'Ulayyá neighborhood of the city of Riyadh the afternoon of Monday, 6/20/1416 Hijrah (November 15, 1995) in which innocent souls were massacred and people wounded because of the actions of others and due to which, those who once felt safe were terrorized and common pedestrians threatened.

For this, the Permanent Council holds this to be none other than a sinful act of transgression and an atrocious crime. It's an act of treachery and treason, a public display of breaching that which is considered sacred by religion such as people's lives,

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1 Some of the "Related Issues" may not seem directly related to terrorism at first. However, keep in mind that many of these issues are at the very core of some Muslims' anger and frustration with governments, both their own and other world governments. – T.N.

religion, wealth, their safety and security. No one but a wicked person could do such an act, someone full of envy, disloyalty, jealousy, oppression and enmity, and the hatred of life and well-being. Muslims have never differed with regards to the forbiddance of such an act, its hideousness, and the great sin acquired thereby. The verses of the Quran and ḥadīth (statements of prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) regarding the forbiddance of these kinds of crimes are well-known.

In establishing the prohibition of this crime, the Permanent Council warns everyone against these evil tendencies, against aligning themselves with those of this ideology and corruptive belief and this destructive cause. If a soul inclined to evil takes this matter lightly, then someone could possibly convince them that an act like this is justified, thus leading him to the methodology of destruction and killing. In this way, the envious people find an entrance to spread their objectives and desires that they try to beautify within people's hearts. It's an obligation on anyone and everyone who knows anything about these corruptors that they report it to the appropriate authorities. Allāh (ﷻ) has warned in His revelation of wisdom (the Quran) against the callers to evil and those who spread corruption on earth... He said:

﴿ وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُعْجِبُكَ قَوْلُهُ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيُشْهَدُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ مَا فِي قَلْبِهِ  
وَهُوَ أَلَدُّ الْخِصَامِ وَإِذَا تَوَلَّىٰ سَعَىٰ فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ الْحَرْثَ  
وَالنَّسْلَ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفُسَادَ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُ اتَّقِ اللَّهَ أَخَذَتْهُ الْعِزَّةُ بِالْإِثْمِ  
فَحَسْبُهُ جَهَنَّمُ وَلَيْسَ الْمِهَادُ ﴾

**And of mankind there is he whose speech may please you in this worldly life, and he calls Allāh to witness as to that which is in his heart, yet he is really the most harshest opponent. And when he turns away, his effort in the land is to spread corruption and destroy crops and cattle, and Allāh does not like corruption. And when it is said to him, “Fear Allāh,” he is led by arrogance to (more) crime. So sufficient for him is Hell, and worst indeed is that destination.**

[Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2:204-206]

We ask Allāh by His perfect names and exalted characteristics that He discloses and exposes those who attack the sanctity of people's safety, and that He protects us and all Muslims from their harm, and that He safeguards these lands and all Muslim lands from every evil plot. We ask Him to guide our leader and all the leaders of the Muslims to that which establishes well-being of the servants and their lands. Certainly, He is the best One to ask.

May He send prayers and peace upon our prophet, Muhammad, and upon his family and companions.<sup>2</sup>

### **The 1996 Khobar Bombings**

All praise is due to Allāh alone and may He send prayers and peace upon the one after whom there will be no other prophet, Muhammad, and upon his family and companions.

The tenth meeting of The Permanent Council of the Senior Scholars of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia convened in the city of Taif on Saturday, 2/13/1417 Hijrah (corresponding to June 29, 1996) to review the bombing incident which occurred in the city of Khobar, in the Eastern Province, on Tuesday, 2/9/1417 Hijrah (corresponding to June 25, 1996) and what resulted of murders, destruction, and terror that afflicted Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

After reviewing this incident, The Permanent Council has unanimously come to the following conclusions:

First, this bombing is a crime forbidden by Islamic legislation as agreed upon by the main body of Muslims for the following reasons:

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<sup>2</sup> Taken from the book: *Kayfa Nu'āliju Wāqi'anā al-Alīm* (pgs. 139-142).

1. Such bombings are public displays of violating the sanctity of the basic rights that are well-known to be held sacred by Islam: the sanctity of innocent people, the sanctity of wealth, of safety and security, the lives of people safe and secure in their dwellings, and the sanctity of comfort. It infringes upon public well-being without which no people can live. What an enormous and horrible crime someone has committed against the sanctities of Allāh, of transgression against His servants, and terrorizing Muslims and others living among them. (About such a person we say) Beware, beware of the punishment of Allāh and His recompense. Beware of supplications made against him. We ask Allāh to expose him and disclose his plots.
  
2. Islam's legislation protects every Muslim as well as anyone that their exists between them and the Muslims a trust, as Allāh says:

﴿ وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمَّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا ﴾

**And whoever kills a believer purposely, his recompense is Hell to reside therein forever, Allāh is angry with him, He curses him, and He has prepared for him a great punishment.**

[Sūrah al-Nisā', 4:93]

And He (ﷻ) says about the rights of a non-believing resident living among Muslims if he is killed unintentionally:

﴿ وَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ فَدْيَةٌ مُسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ وَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةً ﴾

**And if he belonged to a people with whom you have a treaty of mutual alliance, then compensation (blood-money) must be paid to his family, and a believing slave must be freed.**

[Sūrah al-Nisā', 4:92]

So, if a non-Muslim living under an Islamic government is killed by accident and yet he (his family) has the right of blood-money and expiation must be made in his case, then how about when he's killed intentionally?! Of course, the crime would be worse and the sin greater. It's also been authentically reported that Allāh's messenger ( صلى الله عليه وسلم ) said:

مَنْ قَتَلَ مُعَاهِدًا لَمْ يَرِحْ رَائِحَةَ الْجَنَّةِ

“Whoever kills a Mu'āhad<sup>3</sup> won't even smell the fragrance of paradise.”<sup>4</sup>

So, harming anyone who's been guaranteed safety and security is not permissible, let alone killing him by such a horrendous attack like this. This is a very severe threat to whoever murders a Mu'āhad. It's a major sin that has been condemned, its perpetrator threatened with not entering paradise. We seek refuge with Allāh from being forsaken.

3. This crime includes many things forbidden in Islam like treachery, treason, transgression, oppression, open sinning, and the terrorizing of Muslims and others. All these things are detested and hated by Allāh, His messenger, and all believers.

Second, after The Permanent Council has clarified the forbiddance of this criminal act, we then declare to the world that Islam is free of such crime and likewise any Muslim that believes in Allāh and the Last Day should also renounce and disassociate himself from this crime. It's only the doing of those people deceitful in ideology, misguided in 'Aqīdah (faith and conviction). Such a person bears the sin himself and the consequences of his crime. He should neither attribute nor associate in any way his action with Islam nor to the rightly-guided Muslims – those who adhere to the Quran and Sunnah, holding together collectively to the unbreakable rope of Allāh. It's merely an act of corruption and crime renounced by all religious legislations and even by people's basic inherent nature.

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<sup>3</sup> Mu'āhad: A non-Muslim that there exists between him and the Muslims a treaty, trust, peace, or agreement. This agreement is even indicated by a government issuing an entry visa to enter the country. [T.N.]

<sup>4</sup> Recorded by al-Bukhārī (no. 3166) from the ḥadīth of 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Amr (رضي الله عنه).

For this reason, the texts have come clearly and explicitly forbidding such acts, warning one from befriending such people...

## **Terrorist Cells**

All praise is due to Allāh, the Lord of all creations. May prayers and peace be upon the noblest of Prophets and Messengers, our prophet, Muhammad, and upon his family and companions.

The fifty-ninth meeting of The Permanent Council of the Senior Scholars of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia convened in the city of Taif beginning on 6/11/1424 Hijrah (corresponding to August 10, 2003) and discussed and reviewed what has taken place recently in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia of bombings (in Riyadh) committed only to destroy and kill innocent people, resulting in terror and distress.

The Permanent Council also focused on the recent discoveries of illegal, dangerous weapon caches including explosive devices prepared for future bombings and destruction to be carried out in this land – the same land that protects the establishment of Islam and in which is the sacred mosque of Allāh (in Mecca), the direction of Muslims' prayers, and the mosque of Allāh's messenger ( صلى الله عليه وسلم ). Preparations are being made to commit more of these crimes in order to infringe upon public safety and murder people, thereby causing such extreme devastation not specific to anyone or any place, (but rather indiscriminate attacks). This is one of the greatest, most dangerous obstacles preventing national public well-being.

We also discussed in this meeting what's required of this country's scholars to clarify these dangers. There must be mutual cooperation between all individuals to expose and repel these evils and warn others from them. It is absolutely forbidden to remain silent about any information of danger that's being cultivated against public safety and security. The Permanent Council also holds the position that it's an obligation, in light of these matters, to clarify Islam's innocence to those non-Muslims living in our lands and to

advise the nation to have compassion upon the Muslim youth so they are not used as tools for corruption and destruction, following deviant callers promoting tribulations and division. Allāh has taken a covenant from the people of knowledge to make clear such issues to the people. He said:

﴿ وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ لَتُبَيِّنَهُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَكْتُمُونَهُ فَنَبَذُوهُ  
وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ وَاشْتَرَوْا بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا فَبُئِسَ مَا يَشْتَرُونَ ﴾

**And remember when Allāh took a covenant from those who were given the  
Scripture that they are to make it known and clear to mankind and not  
conceal it.**

[Sūrah Āli-'Imrān, 3:187]

Such a covenant includes all of that as well as reminding people and warning them not to take any matter lightly that has to do with the preservation of peace in the land and safety from all types of danger. Therefore, the Permanent Council clarifies the following points:

First, such acts of devastation and corruption like bombings, killings, and destruction of property are criminal acts of enmity against innocent people, also resulting in the wasting of wealth respectfully spent (on structures, safety, etc.), among other things. Such a crime is well-deserving of the legal deterrent punishments in accordance with the legislative texts that preserve authority and forbid rebelling and opposing a nation's leadership. The prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) says regarding this:

مَنْ خَرَجَ مِنَ الطَّاعَةِ وَفَارَقَ الْجَمَاعَةَ فَمَاتَ مَاتَ مِيتَةً جَاهِلِيَّةً، وَمَنْ قَاتَلَ تَحْتَ  
رَايَةٍ عَمِيَّةٍ يَغْضَبُ لِعَصْبَةٍ أَوْ يَدْعُو إِلَى عَصْبَةٍ أَوْ يَنْصُرُ عَصْبَةً فَقُتِلَ فَقُتِلَ  
جَاهِلِيَّةً، وَمَنْ خَرَجَ عَلَى أُمَّتِي يَضْرِبُ بَرَّهَا وَفَاجِرَهَا وَلَا يَتَحَاشَى مِنْ مُؤْمِنِيهَا  
وَلَا يَفِي لِذِي عَهْدٍ عَهْدَهُ فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي وَلَسْتُ مِنْهُ

“Whoever renounces obedience (to the leader) thereby separating himself from the main body (of Muslims) and then dies, he dies the death of Jāhiliyyah (the pre-Islamic state of ignorance). And whoever fights under a banner, yet blind (to

the cause for which he's fighting), or whoever gets angry based solely on nationalism (racism, factionalism, etc.), calls to nationalism, or supports nationalism and then he is killed, he is killed in the state of Jāhiliyyah. Whoever rebels against my nation, killing both the righteous and wicked (indiscriminately), not even sparing the devout believers, and not fulfilling the obligation towards those given a pledge (of security) – then such a person has nothing to do with me and I have nothing to do with him.”<sup>5</sup>

Anyone who claims these destructive crimes and the reasons for bombings and killings are forms of Jihād, then such a person is totally ignorant and completely astray. They have nothing at all to do with Jihād for the sake of Allāh. So, from what has been presented, it should now be apparent and known that what those people committed, and those who may do likewise, is nothing but a crime of corruption, destruction, and complete misguidance. It's incumbent upon them to fear Allāh (ﷻ), return back to Him, repent and to closely examine the current affairs and not be hasty to relay everything heard of false rumors intended to split and divide the nation, causing discord among its people. Most of these rumors contain nothing of truth with regards to the religion, being only deceptions of ignorant people and conspirators. The religious texts contain punishments for whoever commits crimes like these as well as the obligation to deter and prevent those who may commit similar crimes. Such people must be reported and tried by the legitimate authorities.

Second, after clarifying the previous point, the Permanent Council supports what the country, may Allāh honor it with Islam, has begun doing of pursuing and persecuting this group, exposing them, protecting the land and servants from their evil, and thus repelling such tribulations from entering the homes of Muslims and safeguarding their children. It is compulsory on everyone to collectively cooperate to eradicate this dangerous problem because doing so is a form of cooperating in righteousness and piety which Allāh (ﷻ) commands in His statement:

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<sup>5</sup> Recorded by Muslim (no. 1848) from the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه).



﴿ تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ ﴾

**Cooperate with one another in righteousness and piety, but do not help one another in sin and transgression. And fear Allāh.**

[Sūrah al-Mā'idah, 5:2]

The Permanent Council also warns everyone from concealing or protecting these people, harboring or accommodating them. Doing so is a major sin that is included in the prophet's (صلى الله عليه وسلم) general threat:

لَعَنَ اللَّهُ مَنْ أَوْى مُحَدِّثًا

“May Allāh curse the one who protects or accommodates an innovator (anyone who introduces foreign matters into the religion).”<sup>6</sup>

The scholars have also explained the “innovator” mentioned in this ḥadīth to be anyone who causes corruption on earth. So, if such a severe threat is regarding someone who merely accommodates them, then how much more severe would the case be for those who actually support and assist them in their actions?

Third, the Permanent Council calls out to the people of knowledge to fulfill what is required of them by concentrating on guiding the public regarding this issue in order to clarify the truth about it.

Fourth, the Permanent Council condemns the issuing of certain religious verdicts and personal opinions that allow crimes like these or encouraging them because this is really the most hazardous and disgraceful origin of these matters. Allāh has already shown the severity of giving religious verdicts without knowledge, warning His servants from it, and clarifying that it is from the affairs of Satan. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

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<sup>6</sup> Recorded by al-Bukhārī (no. 17) and Muslim (no. 1978) from the ḥadīth of ‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib.

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ كُلُوا مِمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُواتِ الشَّيْطَانِ  
إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ إِنَّمَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالسُّوءِ وَالْفَحْشَاءِ وَأَنْ تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا  
تَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

**Oh mankind, eat of that which is lawful and good on the earth, and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Surely, he is a clear enemy to you. He commands you only what is evil and sinful, and that you should say things about Allāh that you do not know.**

[Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2:168-169]

And He (ﷻ) said:

﴿ وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَا تَصِفُ أَلْسِنَتُكُمُ الْكَذِبَ هَذَا حَلَالٌ وَهَذَا حَرَامٌ لِتَفْتَرُوا عَلَى  
اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ لَا يُفْلِحُونَ مَتَاعٌ قَلِيلٌ وَلَهُمْ  
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴾

**And do not say anything that your tongues may put forth falsely: “This is lawful and this is forbidden,” so as to invent lies against Allāh. Certainly, those who invent lies against Allāh will never prosper. A passing brief enjoyment (will be theirs), but they will have a painful torment.**

[Sūrah al-Naḥl, 16:116-117]

And He also says (ﷻ):

﴿ وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَئِكَ كَانَ  
عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا ﴾

**And follow not (do not say, do not do, do not witness, etc.) that of which you have no knowledge. Certainly, the hearing, the sight, and the heart - of each of those you will be questioned.**

[Sūrah al-Isrā', 17:36]

It's also been authentically narrated that Allāh's messenger ( صلى الله عليه وسلم ) said:

مَنْ دَعَا إِلَى ضَلَالَةٍ كَانَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْإِثْمِ مِثْلُ آثَامِ مَنْ تَبِعَهُ لَا يَنْقُصُ ذَلِكَ مِنْ آثَامِهِمْ شَيْئًا

“Whoever calls to misguidance, there's upon him a sin like the sin of whoever follows him without diminishing anything from their own sins.”<sup>7</sup>

So, anyone who issues religious verdicts or propagates personal opinions that allow these kinds of crimes, then it's incumbent upon the authorities to apprehend him and take the necessary legal actions against him as a form of advice to the nation, a pardon to those (non-Muslims) living under Muslim rule, and a protection of the religion. And it is required from anyone to whom Allāh has given knowledge to warn against these statements of falsehood, explaining their maliciousness, and exposing their lies. No doubt, this is one of the most important obligations today and a way of giving sincere consideration for Allāh, His book, His messenger, the leaders of the Muslims, and the common people. The danger of such baseless religious verdicts is even more severe when they're intended to jeopardize public safety and security, and cultivate trials and tribulation among people. This is nothing but speaking about Allāh's religion with ignorance and personal objectives in order to deceive the youth and those having no knowledge of the realities of these verdicts. They fool them with weak arguments to make their own evil intentions appear correct. These crimes are horrid and detestable in the religion of Islam and none of the Muslims having the slightest knowledge of Islamic limits would ever condone them, especially after understanding the noble goals and objectives of Islam. The actions of these speakers (those who issue these destructive verdicts) are some of the greatest means of splitting and dividing the nation, spreading enmity and hatred among its people.

Fifth, the authorities must prevent people like these who have the audacity against the religion and its scholars to influence people to take the matters of religion lightly, opposing it and its adherents, trying to connect what's happened of such crimes with religiousness and religious organizations. The Permanent Council also denies the claim

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<sup>7</sup> Recorded by Muslim (no. 2674) from the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) and by al-Tirmidhī (no. 2674) and Abū Dāwūd (no. 4709).

associating these destructive actions with our school curriculums, and also condemns taking advantage of these recent incidents as means of taking the rich resources of this blessed land which has been established upon the 'Aqīdah of the Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ (righteous predecessors), taking from the rectifications called to by the scholar, Muḥammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb.

Sixth, the religion of Islam has come with the command of social unity and Allāh prescribes this in His Book, forbidding division and any biased sectarianism. He (ﷺ) says:

﴿وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا﴾

**And hold fast collectively to the rope of Allāh all together and do not be divided.**

[Sūrah Āli-'Imrān, 3:103]

And He (ﷺ) says:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا شِيَعًا لَسْتَ مِنْهُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ﴾

**Indeed, those who divide their religion and break up into sects, you (Muhammad) have nothing to do with them in the least.**

[Sūrah al-Anā'm, 6:159]

Allāh disassociates His messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) from those who split up their religion and divide into separate factions. This proves the forbiddance of division and shows it is a major sin.

It is well-known that one of the fundamental necessities of the religion is the command to adhere to the main community and to obey whoever assumes authority of the Muslims in what they instruct of obedience to Allāh. He (ﷺ) says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ﴾

**Oh you who believe, obey Allāh and obey the messenger, and those in authority among you.**

[Sūrah al-Nisā', 4:59]

Abū Hurayrah ( رضي الله عنه ) narrated that Allāh's messenger ( صلى الله عليه وسلم ) said:

عَلَيْكَ السَّمْعَ وَالطَّاعَةَ فِي عُسْرِكَ وَإِسْرِكَ وَمَنْشَطِكَ وَمَكْرَهِكَ...

“You must listen to and obey (the leader) during hardship, ease, (your times of) activity, and even in what you hate...”<sup>8</sup>

Also narrated by Abū Hurayrah ( رضي الله عنه ), the messenger of Allāh ( صلى الله عليه وسلم ) said:

مَنْ أَطَاعَنِي فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ وَمَنْ عَصَانِي فَقَدْ عَصَى اللَّهَ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ الْأَمِيرَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَنِي وَمَنْ يَعْصِ الْأَمِيرَ فَقَدْ عَصَانِي

“Whoever obeys me has obeyed Allāh, and whoever disobeys me disobeys Allāh. Whoever obeys the leader obeys me, and whoever disobeys the leader has disobeyed me.”<sup>9</sup>

The Salaf of this nation from the companions ( رضي الله عنهم ) and those who came after them have always understood this – the obligation of listening to and obeying the leaders.

After mentioning all that has preceded, the Permanent Council warns those callers to misguidance, to problems, to division – those who emerged in recent times turning against the Muslims, trying to persuade them to disobey the leaders and to rebel and oppose them. Those are some of the greatest forbidden sins as the prophet ( صلى الله عليه وسلم ) said:

<sup>8</sup> Recorded by Muslim (no. 1836).

<sup>9</sup> Recorded by al-Bukhārī (no. 7137) and Muslim (no. 1835).

إِنَّهُ سَتَكُونُ هَنَاتٌ وَهَنَاتٌ فَمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُفَرِّقَ أَمْرَ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ وَهِيَ جَمِيعٌ فَاضْرِبُوهُ بِالسَّيْفِ  
كَأَيُّنَا مَنْ كَانَ

“There will certainly come different kinds of evil. So, whoever tries to disrupt and divide the affairs of this nation while they are united, you should strike him with the sword whoever he may be.”<sup>10</sup>

There is a threat of punishment in this life and the hereafter in this ḥadīth to people who call to misguidance and division and their extremist followers. It is essential to adhere to this sound and moderate religion and to stay on the straight path based upon the Quran and Sunnah and according to the understanding of the companions ( رضي الله عنهم ) and those who followed them in righteousness. It is also essential to raise the next generation of youth upon this sound methodology and straight path so that they may be safe, with the help of Allāh, from the evil tendencies and effects of these callers to deviance, calamities, and division...

## **Takfīr**

All praise is due to Allāh, and may prayers and peace be upon the messenger of Allāh and upon his family, his Companions, and whoever follows his guidance.

The Permanent Council of the Senior Scholars of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, during its forty-ninth meeting which convened in Taif beginning on 4/2/1419 Hijrah (corresponding to July 26, 1998), discussed and reviewed what seems to be prevalent in many Islamic countries of Takfīr (declaring fellow Muslims to be disbelievers) and bombings. Such concepts eventually develop into bloodshed and the devastation of structures. We have looked into the dangers of this matter and what results from it innocent souls being murdered, destroying wealth and property, terrorizing people, and infringing upon national safety and security. The Permanent Council felt it necessary to put forth a

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<sup>10</sup> Recorded by Muslim (no. 1852) from the ḥadīth of ‘Arfajah Ibn Shurayh (رضي الله عنه). Of course, this is an allowance for capital punishment to be determined and carried out by legitimate leaderships, not by individuals.

clarification and explain the ruling of this issue (Takfīr) as a way of showing sincere concern to Allāh and His servants and as a pardon to the non-Muslims residing in Muslim lands. We hope to thereby remove the doubts and confusion that may have crept into the understandings of some people. So we say, beseeching Allāh for correctness and success:

First, Takfīr is a legislative ruling that is to be referred back to Allāh and His messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم). So, just like saying other things are permissible, forbidden, or obligatory are decisions for only Allāh and His messenger, likewise is the issue of Takfīr. And not everyone who may be described with disbelief, whether in statement or action, is considered to be an absolute disbeliever having left the religion.

Since the issue of Takfīr is a ruling to be made by Allāh or His messenger, it is not permissible for us to declare anyone a disbeliever except someone whom the Quran or Sunnah has clearly and blatantly testified to such a person's absolute disbelief. It is not sufficient in this matter to act solely upon suspicion and assumption due to the dangerous consequences that could arise. Since the religiously prescribed punishments can be deterred and postponed due to mere doubts or not being absolutely sure and their consequences are even less severe than those of Takfīr, then people should be even more hesitant about the pronouncement of Takfīr due to the presence of any uncertainties. For this, the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) warned against making a ruling of disbelief upon someone who may not actually be an absolute disbeliever; he said:

أَيُّمَا امْرِئٍ قَالَ لِأَخِيهِ: يَا كَافِرٌ، فَقَدْ بَاءَ بِهَا أَحَدُهُمَا إِنْ كَانَ كَمَا قَالَ وَإِلَّا رَجَعَتْ  
عَلَيْهِ

“Anyone who says to his brother, ‘You disbeliever!’ it (such a judgment of disbelief) then falls back upon one of them – he is either as he (the accuser) said or it falls back upon himself.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Recorded by al-Bukhārī (no. 6104) and Muslim (no. 111) from the ḥadīth of Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه).

There have been circumstances reported in the Quran and Sunnah of statements, actions, or beliefs that are understood to be disbelief, yet the person they are associated with was not declared to be an absolute disbeliever because of some excuse preventing this. This (pronouncing a judgment of Takfīr) is like other legal rulings in that they are not applied unless and until all of their conditions have been fulfilled and there exists no reasons preventing such a ruling... Also, a Muslim may utter a statement of disbelief out of extreme joy, anger, etc. yet he is not considered a disbeliever because he did not actually believe and intend what he may have said. This is just like what has been reported in the story of the man who said:

اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ عَبْدِي، وَأَنَا رَبُّكَ

“Oh Allāh, You are my servant and I am Your Lord!”<sup>12</sup>

He made this mistake only after being overcome with extreme happiness.

When such a ruling is made against a Muslim leader or ruler, then the issue is even greater because of the outcomes a ruling like this produces like people rebelling against them, taking up weapons against them, public chaos and bloodshed – all of which corrupt the servants and their nation. Because of such outcomes, the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) prohibited rebelling against leadership, saying:

إِلَّا أَنْ تَرَوْا كُفْرًا بَوَاحًا عِنْدَكُمْ مِنْ اللَّهِ فِيهِ بُرْهَانٌ

“...unless you see clear and absolute disbelief from them for which you have evidence from Allāh to support you in that.”<sup>13</sup>

His statement, “unless you see” indicates that mere assumptions and rumors are not sufficient.

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<sup>12</sup> Recorded by al-Bukhārī (no. 6309) and Muslim (no. 2747) from the ḥadīth of Anas Ibn Mālik (رضي الله عنه).

<sup>13</sup> Recorded by al-Bukhārī (no. 7056) and Muslim (no. 1709) from the ḥadīth of ‘Ubādah Ibn al-Ṣāmit (رضي الله عنه).



His statement, “disbelief” indicates that committing evil, crimes, sins, even major sins, is not sufficient, such as if he is oppressive, drinks alcohol, gambles, or commits other forbidden sins.

His statement, “clear and absolute” indicates that an act of disbelief that is not completely apparent and explicit is not sufficient.

His statement, “for which you have evidence from Allāh to support you in that” indicates that there must be an explicit supporting proof that is authentic, clear in its evidence. So, a proof with a weak chain of narration for example is not sufficient, nor is a proof that its evidence isn’t entirely clear and applicable.

His statement, “from Allāh” indicates that regardless of the statement of any scholar – no matter what level he may have achieved in religious knowledge and trustworthiness – if he does not have a clear explicit proof from the Book of Allāh or the Sunnah of His messenger ( صلى الله عليه وسلم ) to support his statement, then it is rejected. All of these conditions show the danger and severity of this matter of Takfīr.

To summarize, rushing to pass a ruling against someone as being a disbeliever is a very dangerous issue because of the statement of Allāh (ﷻ):

﴿ قُلْ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ وَالْإِثْمَ وَالْبَغْيَ بِغَيْرِ  
الْحَقِّ وَأَنْ تُشْرِكُوا بِاللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزَّلْ بِهِ سُلْطَانًا وَأَنْ تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا  
تَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

**Say: “Indeed, my Lord has only forbidden immoral sins, whether committed openly or secretly, sinning (of all kinds), transgression without right, that you join partners (in worship) with Allāh for which He has sent down no authority, and that you say about Allāh what you do not know.”**

[Sūrah al-A'rāf, 7:33]

Second, this incorrect belief (Takfīr) frequently develops into other crimes such as further declaring people's blood lawful to spill, violating people's honor, plundering private and public wealth and property, bombing homes and structures, and the devastation of buildings.

These acts and others like them are completely forbidden by Islamic legislation according to the consensus of all Muslims due to what they contain of violating the sanctity of innocent people, the sanctity of wealth, and that of safety and security. They infringe upon people's rights to live their lives safe and sheltered in their homes, during their work and recreations. They destroy the basic well-being without which no people could live their lives.

Islam has protected the Muslims' wealth, honor, and lives and has forbidden any form of violation against them. Islam is very strict in this regard and they are from the last things the prophet ( صلى الله عليه وسلم ) advised his nation with. He said in his Farewell Pilgrimage Sermon:

إِنَّ دِمَاءَكُمْ وَأَمْوَالَكُمْ وَأَعْرَاضَكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ حَرَامٌ كَحُرْمَةِ يَوْمِكُمْ هَذَا فِي شَهْرِكُمْ هَذَا فِي بَلَدِكُمْ هَذَا

“Certainly, your blood, wealth, and honor are sacred to each of you just as the sanctity of this day of yours in this month of yours in this city of yours (Mecca).”

He then said:

أَلَا هَلْ بَلَّغْتُ؟ اللَّهُمَّ فَاشْهَدْ

“Have I not conveyed (the complete message)? Oh Allāh, be witness to this.”<sup>14</sup>

He ( صلى الله عليه وسلم ) also said:

كُلُّ الْمُسْلِمِ عَلَى الْمُسْلِمِ حَرَامٌ دَمُهُ وَمَالُهُ وَعَرِضُهُ

<sup>14</sup> Recorded by al-Bukhārī (no. 1741) and Muslim (no. 1679) from the ḥadīth of Abū Bakrah (رضي الله عنه).

“Every Muslim is sacred to another Muslim – his blood, wealth, and honor.”<sup>15</sup>

And he said:

اتَّقُوا الظُّلْمَ فَإِنَّ الظُّلْمَ ظُلُمَاتٌ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

“Beware of committing oppression for oppression will be darkness on the Day of Resurrection.”<sup>16</sup>

Allāh has threatened whoever kills an innocent person with the harshest of threats. He (ﷺ) says:

﴿وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا﴾

**And whoever kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Hell to abide therein. Allāh is angry with him and curses him, and He has prepared a great punishment for him.**

[Sūrah al-Nisā', 4:93]

And He (ﷺ) says with regards to a non-Muslim living legally under a Muslim government:

﴿وَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ فَدْيَةٌ مُسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ وَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ﴾

**And if he belonged to a people with whom you have a treaty of mutual alliance, then compensation (blood-money) must be paid to his family, and a believing slave must be freed.**

[Sūrah al-Nisā', 4:92]

So, if a nonbeliever who has been guaranteed safety is killed even in an accident, yet blood-money and expiation are still required for such an accident, then how about when

<sup>15</sup> Recorded by Muslim (no. 2564) from the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه).

<sup>16</sup> Recorded by al-Bukhārī (no. 2447) and Muslim (no. 2579) from the ḥadīth of Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنهما) and Muslim also recorded it from the ḥadīth of Jābir (رضي الله عنه) (no. 2578).

he's killed intentionally?! Of course the crime would be worse and the sin greater. It's also been authentically reported that Allāh's messenger ( صلى الله عليه وسلم ) said:

مَنْ قَتَلَ مُعَاهِدًا لَمْ يَرِحْ رَائِحَةَ الْجَنَّةِ

“Whoever kills a Mu'āhid will not even smell the fragrance of paradise.”<sup>17</sup>

Third, after the Permanent Council has clarified the ruling of making Takfīr of people with no supporting evidence from the Book of Allāh or the Sunnah of His messenger ( صلى الله عليه وسلم ), the comprehensive dangers of such a ruling, and the sins and evils it causes; the Council then further declares before the world that Islam is free of this corruptive creed. And as for what occurs in some countries of the shedding of innocent blood and bombings of structures, they are criminal acts from which Islam is also free. Likewise, every Muslim who believes in Allāh and the Last Day is free of this. It is only the actions of some people of deviated ideologies and misguided religious beliefs. Those particular individuals bear the burden of such sins and crimes themselves. Their actions should neither be attributed to Islam nor to those common Muslims who guide themselves by the true teachings of Islam – those who collectively adhere to the Quran and Sunnah...<sup>18</sup>

### Boycotting Products Manufactured by Non-Muslims

**Question:** Some people these days call others to boycott American products and companies like Pizza Hut, McDonald's, etc. So, should we comply with such requests? Are transactions like buying and selling with non-Muslims in countries at war against us permissible, or are they only allowed with those with whom we have peace?

**Answer:** It is allowed to buy any product that is permissible in itself no matter where it was produced unless the government commands that we should boycott something for some benefit to Islam or the Muslims. This is because the general rule regarding buying and selling is that it's allowed, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

<sup>17</sup> Recorded by al-Bukhārī (no. 3166) from the ḥadīth of 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Amr (رضي الله عنه).

<sup>18</sup> Taken from the magazine: Majallah al-Buḥūth al-Islāmiyyah (no. 56, pgs. 357-362).

﴿ وَأَحَلَّ اللَّهُ الْبَيْعَ ﴾

**And Allāh has made selling permissible.**

[Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2:275]

And the prophet ( صلى الله عليه وسلم ) used to buy things from the Jews.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> The Permanent Council for Research and Religious Verdicts (no. 21776, 12/25/1421 Hijrah).