

An Open Letter from Hizb ut Tahrir / Wilayah Tunisia to Members of the Tunisian Government

Signing an Agreement with the International Monetary Fund is Another Instrument for the Colonization of Tunisia

(Translated)

Ladies and Gentlemen, Members of the Tunisian Government

Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatahu

After the agreement on 15 October 2022 between the International Monetary Fund and Tunisia at the level of experts on financing of \$1.9 billion for a period of 4 years, we, Hizb ut Tahrir / Wilayah Tunisia, address you, advising and warning of the consequences of this agreement and its repercussions on the country and the people, especially since you claimed, in more than one occasion, that you came to fix what the previous governments had corrupted!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Pre-revolution and post-revolution governments used to adopt a policy of borrowing to deal with economic crises and to make pledges to implement external programs and dictates without referring to the real reasons that led to falling into a cycle of indebtedness and entering the economy into a vicious circle in which the state's demand for loans is increasing to pay off previous debts, in addition to exhausting the people by raising unjust taxes to be scattered, especially to foreign lenders. Undoubtedly, you are aware that the loans granted to Tunisia by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 2013 (\$1.5 billion), 2016 (\$2.8 billion) and 2020 (\$0.745 billion) did not solve the economic problem. On the contrary, poverty has increased and risen, unemployment, inflation, and debts have steadily accumulated due to loans and debt service (interest) and the deterioration of the currency price, until it reached 114 billion dinars, according to the Ministry of Finance's forecasts for the current year (2022).

The most dangerous part is that more than two-thirds of these debts are owed to external parties that exchange their financial dues on unfair terms, where the IMF used loans as a tool to impose its conditions on Tunisia, such as reducing the mass of wages, lifting subsidies on energy and basic foodstuffs, reducing the value of the dinar, austerity in government spending, increasing taxes, privatizing public property and giving it to foreigners, and interference in the legislative, cultural aspect, and political, and the consequent of full political dependence and deterioration in the standard of living and societal values. In this regard, it is sufficient to refer to the Investment Law and the Central Bank Independence Law to know the extent of the disasters caused by the so-called major reforms imposed by the IMF and the European Union on the previous government of Youssef Chahed.

You know that the conditions of the IMF are not subject to discussion or negotiation, and it may allow the state to respite a period of time to implement its conditions, but it is not allowed to change them at all, and as an evidence, it refrained in 2019 from handing over Tunisia the sixth and seventh installments of the extended loan (2016-2020), despite the implementation of 85 percent of the terms of the loan of the so-called reforms (dictations) required, according to what was stated by Tawfiq Al-Rajhi, the former minister in charge of major reforms, which confirms that the main function of the IMF in the world is to extend influence through the conditions it imposes on countries.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Do you expect, by adopting the policy of borrowing, to have a different result from that of your predecessors in power?

Hizb ut Tahrir / Wilayah Tunisia realizes that you are aware of the serious repercussions of these conditions, as evidenced by the fact that you made an agreement to increase wages with the Tunisian General Labor Union, on one hand, to absorb the anger of the street, and on the other, in response to the IMF, which stipulated the understanding with the union so that its conditions would be implemented without disturbance.

External loans have a real harm to the country's independence and political decision. The path of external loans for financing was previously a path to direct colonization of the country. Through it, the French came to colonize Tunisia, and today it is a primary way to extend influence and conspiracy against the country, and no good ever comes from it. Our country, Tunisia, is the best witness to this. The total public debt in dinars amounted to 105.7 billion dinars last March, meaning that it doubled more than 4 times than it was in 2010 (25 billion dinars).

So, by borrowing from the colonial IMF, will you disrupt with the policies of those who preceded you in power, and fix what they have corrupted? Or will you accumulate Tunisia's debts more and more and in return mortgage the country's economic capabilities, its political decision, and the future of future generations to a cunning enemy that only keeps watch over us?

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The economy is not dealt with by borrowing from this international organization or that, but by standing on the reality of the economic problem in the beginning and then searching for the correct treatments, especially since the economic crisis in Tunisia is not a transient crisis, but rather a structural crisis that includes all economic sectors, and its main cause is the capitalist system which enabled, through its economic legislation, to place the country's economy under Western hegemony and its financial arms, which led to:

- Imposing sterile economic policies under the title of economic reforms that financial institutions require when granting loans, which impeded vital sectors such as agriculture, industry and commerce, and replaced marginal sectors such as tourism with them. And the imposition of the Association Agreement with the European Union, which destroyed the industrial fabric, increased unemployment and poverty rates, and deepened the trade deficit.

- The seizure of public institutions and the looting of the country's wealth of oil, gas, minerals and others by colonial companies in the name of foreign investment.

- Connecting the dinar to foreign currencies, causing its value to decline almost to the point of losing it. The Tunisian dinar depreciated against the dollar during the years following the revolution by 128% (1.42 dinars per dollar in 2011 to 3.25 dinars currently).

Moreover, the capitalist system itself is the root of the disease and the worst affliction because the foundations upon which the capitalist economic life is built are destructive in nature. Among these destructive capitalist ideas and dangerous economic concepts:

- Depicting the economic problem as the relative scarcity of goods and services (wealth), not the equitable distribution of this wealth.

- The dependence of the capitalist economy on interest.

- Corruption of the global monetary system, which excluded gold and silver from cash, and made the dollar the basis of global money.

- The wrong limitation of property that is subdivided into a private sector (private property) and a public sector (state ownership), and the omission of public ownership that Islam specified and distinguished it from other systems.

What made matters worse was that capitalism was transformed into a coercive world system under the name of globalization, which led to an increase in global economic lethality

and the rapid impact of crises on weak economies, as what is happening today in Tunisia, for example, the high rate of inflation, currency turbulence and the spread of more extreme poverty due to Coronavirus and the war between Russia and Ukraine.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This letter of ours is a sincere invitation addressed by Hizb ut Tahrir to the members of the government, so that they cut their ties with international financial institutions and do not respond to the prescriptions of the IMF and its lethal doses, because it deals with interest, which is forbidden by Sharia, for Allah Almighty says: ﴿يَمْحَقُ اللَّهُ الرِّبَا وَيُزِيلُ الصَّدَقَاتِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ أَثِيمٍ﴾ **“Allah has made interest fruitless and charity fruitful. And Allah does not like any ungrateful evildoer.”** [Al-Baqarah 2:276]. And Allah’s saying: ﴿وَأَحَلَّ اللَّهُ الْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ الرِّبَا﴾ **“Allah has permitted trading and forbidden interest.”** [Al-Baqarah 2:275].

The most dangerous in the matter is that the authority and its experts, graduates of the capitalist school, insist on linking Tunisia with the West and excluding Islam and its rulings. Thirteen centuries, zakat caravans used to roam the country in search of one poor person to take zakat, but there weren’t any, while poverty today includes almost everyone except for a few stakeholders.

Therefore, we in Hizb ut Tahrir / Wilayah Tunisia invite you to renounce the capitalist principle and its economic and financial system, refuse to respond to international pressures and reject international aid and bank loans, and in return you must activate the Islamic civilizational project so that you can look forward to a new, safe and secure life free from economic or financial crises, in the light of the justice of the Islamic economic system. Islam established a divine system that prevents any class in society from controlling all other people.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The adoption of Islam as a principle from which a system emerges, and the application of its systems, including the economic system, is enough to solve our problems and crises. The foundations that Islam legislated and upon which it built its economic system are able alone to solve the economic crises in the country without the need to borrow from foreign, colonial international financial institutions that do not want us to rise or elevate, and these foundations are enough to redistribute wealth in a fair distribution in society, so no one controls anyone and a handful of wealthy people and foreign companies do not control the resources of the country and the people.

These solutions are not fiction, but rather a thought that deals with reality, and they were already applied in Islamic history in the era of the Khilafah (Caliphate), and they produced a great good, and this matter will return again, if Allah wills, as the Messenger of Allah (saw) mentioned in the authentic hadith: «يَكُونُ فِي آخِرِ أُمَّتِي خَلِيفَةٌ يَحْثِي الْمَالَ حَثِيًّا، لَا يَعُدُّهُ عَدَدًا» **“At the end of my Ummah there will be a Khalifah (Caliph) who will urge money to be indifferent, but he will not count it as a number.”** (Narrated by Muslim).

28 Rabi' al-Awwal 1444 AH

24 October 2022 CE

Hizb ut Tahrir

Wilayah Tunisia