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Press Release

Expressing the Stance on the Expulsion of Imams and the Closure of Mosques in Austria

(Translated)

On 8/6/2018, Prime Minister, Chancellor Sebastian Kurz and Vice Chancellor Heinz-Christian Strache announced in a joint government the closure of seven mosques and the expulsion of two Imams. These measures were justified by the "law on Islam" adopted in 2015, which banned foreign funding for imams and forced Muslim associations to take a positive view towards the state and society.

"Austria is a land of diversity, where religious freedom is highly valued, but political Islam place has no place in this country", said Chancellor Kurz. According to the law on Islam, Religious Affairs Minister Gernot Blumel said: "The fundamental goal of the law is to place religion as part of the solution to the process of integration." For religion to be part of the solution, it should give the bond to the person on the one hand on one hand but in return he should encourage dialogue and show his appreciation to Austrian civilization). Interior Minister Herbert Kickl stressed that "the essence of political Islam carries the spirit of hostility to personal liberty, democracy and the rule of law."

He stressed that "democratic societies are required to stand firm in the emergence of different societies within them." According to Vice Chancellor Strache, this is the beginning of subsequent actions, he said: "This phenomenon is not confined to us, but it is found in other states, especially in densely populated areas. We must fight radical Islam. The actions at hand are only necessary first steps in the right direction." According to the Presidential Office, 40 imams belonging to ATIB organization face losing their right to residency for possible infringement of the Foreign Financing Prevention Act.

Article IV - the third paragraph of the "law on Islam" which orders to express a positive fundamental view towards the state and society, which has now been used to close these mosques, is only an expression of the dominant mentality in the West which gives its ideology the absolute right to control people's thinking, leading to the elimination of any different view of life, even outside the political sphere. Heinz-Christian Strache described political Islam, incompetently basing on the Age of Enlightenment, as "a satanic building that calls for hatred, persecutes women, indoctrinates children and justifies terrorist attacks and ultimately poses a threat to the state system."

Drawing on the principle of former German Interior Minister Shelly, the Austrian government feeds the myth that the very existence of Islam poses a threat to the destruction of Western societies. However, the accusations against the Arab Cultural Society and the closure of five mosques by means of coercive reports indicate that the issue is not a security issue to repel a threat, but rather a procedure for creating a monolithic society. Religious Affairs Minister Gernot Blumel has claimed that there are media reports about the possibility of people with "Salafist background" coming to one of these cultural centers. When he was asked about the mistake made by the Arab Cultural Association in particular, he replied with a fluid reference to Article 4, paragraph 3, of the "Law on Islam", which is called "loyalty clause". Thus, the Austrian coalition Government through the practice of the principle of forced integration joined the mainstream in Western and Central Europe, which was to implement an anti-Islam policy of assimilation. Instead of meeting the self-benefits of freedom of belief and religion, the Republic of Austria reduces this presumed supreme right to a restricted, limited freedom that allows for differing views only in the framework of its own political philosophy of a totalitarian nature.

Hizb ut Tahrir warns Austria of this dangerous trend, which has led its people into the abyss in the last century, through the imaginary illusion that a single-tendency and single-minded society should be created. Instead of tearing the society apart by creating false novels about the possibility of an enemy taking power, Hizb ut Tahrir demands an acceptable solution that makes the relationship between Muslims and the majority in society based on a clear and universally accepted basis: namely, the inviolability of public security. The key to that is the effective acceptance of multiple views of life and the associated preservation of Islamic identity and the practice of Islamic way of life in the personal sphere without any harassment. Thus, preserving peace in society and preventing socio-political disintegration.

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