

Press Release

European Justice Court Maintains Ban on Halal Slaughter, Thereby Creating Precedent to Ban it in the whole of Europe

Islamic (and Jewish) organizations that sought to fight the discriminatory decision of the Belgium government to ban ritual slaughter at the Justice Court of the European Union, came home empty-handed as the court ruled in favor of the Belgium government. Thereby not only legitimizing the enforcement of a discriminatory law in Belgium but also setting a precedent for other European member states to follow this oppressing course. If that was not already the case.

The court did not only ban ritual slaughter. It went a step further by applying their own interpretation to the religious rituals themselves. This was done by compromising between animal welfare and religious freedoms whereby the animal is administered a reversible intoxicant before being slaughtered. Besides the fact said compromise stems from the premise that ritual slaughter is by definition, in contradiction with animal welfare, which displays the court's prejudice. The court also interferes with the way in which ritual slaughter is performed by stating that the animal should be intoxicated before the ritual slaughter. Doing this is an attempt by the court to determine certain elements of the ritual slaughter given the fact that such slaughter practices are forbidden in Islam. The norm that Islam dictates is that the animal is to be slaughtered by a swift cut of the throat through which the animal will lose consciousness immediately, without the use of a sedative or a "reversible intoxication".

Even if differences of opinion would exist within the Islamic jurisprudence in which some of the scholars would allow "reversible intoxication", reality would show that many animals die due to intoxication. This results in uncertainty as to which animals died due to intoxicants and which animals died as a result of cutting the throat. The origins of the meat are therefore uncertain which means that its consumption is forbidden. However, such a consideration based on reality and Islamic source texts should be made by Islamic scholars and not by the "Justice" Court.

As if banning and interfering with ritual slaughter was not enough, the Court also applies double standards by claiming that interfering with ritual slaughter is the answer to the call of common goal in the European Union and that is improving animal welfare. Simultaneously, the EU does not see a problem in hunting and killing animals during "cultural- or sports events", even though these animals are not intoxicated before they are killed.

It appears the tone has been set. The Belgian Minister of Animal Welfare Ben Weyts (N-VA) (Flemish region) communicated through Twitter to be elated about the "historical ruling". This means "that in the whole of Europe the door has been opened to ban unsedated slaughter." "We as Flemish, should be very proud about this.". Ester Ouwehand, party leader of the Party for Animals in The Netherlands also responded joyfully Twittering: "The Party for Animals can continue its bill."

This shows that fighting a repressive and discriminatory law judicially is an uphill battle considering that the highest judicial umbrella organization that is supposed to ensure that the so-called "civil rights", "freedoms" and "fundamental human rights" are protected and acted upon; throws these principles overboard with such ease serving the populist anti-Islam discourse which is raging through Europe. Time in time again it shows that guaranteeing the so-called religious freedoms of people with different ideas only holds true in theory, not in practice. They are saying in other words that Muslims (and in this case the Jews) are just to accept this. Either adapt or scam.

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