

Press Release

Banning the Niqab is an Affirmation on the Anti-Islam Policy

Following the Minister of Internal Affairs Plasterk's call at the Parliament last May to enact a law which bans the Niqab, the Dutch parliament has recently responded to this call and has ratified the decision of banning the Niqab, which was called a partial banning of the Niqab, which means preventing women from covering their faces in some places such as health centers, government offices, and police stations. The government will punish women who defy the law by paying a fine of 405 euros.

We have clarified earlier that the term "partial prevention", which was circulated for the first time in 2012, is general and vague, suggesting that women who wear the Niqab are still allowed to wear it in many other places and can still engage in a lot of activities in places that are not covered by the ban, and this is a deception emphasized by the parliament; the law states: "Every human being has the right to wear what they wish regardless of what others think of them", and while praising the right of everyone to wear what they wish, they are implementing restrictions that lead to a holistic and not a partial ban as they claim, so if a veiled woman was prevented from riding public transportation, and prevented from study and engaging in a lot of business because of her Niqab, and was prevented from taking her children to and from school, and hospitals closed their doors in her face, and she was prevented from entering the judiciary centers, then how much freedom of movement has this law kept for veiled women? Is this as they claim a partial prevention or a holistic prevention?

If the reason behind the ban is the difficulty of mutual communication between people caused by the veil as claimed by the Parliament, we say to this Parliament that communication between people is made up of two parts: speech and body language, and even if we consider the facial expressions like smile or anger or other such expressions within the theme of communication, then the face cover prevents just one part of communication and not all communication, hence, it should not prejudice the Niqab as a cause of tension and problems in this country. Meanwhile, no one can deny that speech, which is still permitted, is the best way of communication between people, as for the body language, it is resorted to in order to emphasize on the speech, moreover, means of communication such as Facebook and Twitter have emerged in recent years, as well as e-mailing and telephone, and people communicate through these means without seeing each other, so why doesn't the government prevent the use of such means as well? If they do allow them, then they do not have the right to prevent Muslim women from covering their faces, because her Niqab does not prevent her from communicating with people at all.

They also spoke about the threat to national security, but they did not prove even a single time that there is a relationship between the face cover and the threat to national security, and when they talk about the threat of the veil to national security without argument or proof to justify the ban, this means that they are playing with the security of Muslim women; because with these measures it becomes difficult for Muslim women to perform their jobs as nationals after their security has been threatened. In recent years, Muslim women have suffered greatly in this country, and pressures exerted against Muslim women have

increased. Therefore it is not surprising that the subject of the veil is open now and shortly after the attacks that took place in Paris. It is also noted that the issue of banning the veil is not a private affair in the Netherlands, but it is a modern time in France, Switzerland and Canada, and this means it is a global policy requiring the prohibition of all that would hinder the process of integration of Muslims in Western societies, and to begin the implementation of these policies, they had to wait for the right opportunity, so the Paris incident was a golden opportunity for Western governments, because people in such times would not oppose what measures the government is undertaking because of the negative public opinion about Islam and Muslims that has been made by politicians and the media. Therefore, since the Paris events took place, they became too busy calling to an Islam that has no values in it, and Mosques have become monitored more than ever under the pretext of preventing extremism, and they have been communicating with Imams of Mosques to call to a European Islam, until it became clear to many organizations here that the debates happening now about some of the concepts such as "one nation" and "Niqab" are but a prelude to the application of more stringent measures in the future.

For that reason we emphasized in the past and we continue to insist and call unto the Muslim community to preserve its Islamic identity and hold tight onto the Ahkaam of Islam especially in such difficult circumstances and to defend the interests of the Muslims, the government is seeking to pass a ban on the Niqab as if it is a normal measure, citing that this prohibition only affects a few in society. We must also beware of being dragged behind the justification of those banning Niqab that the issue of covering the face holds a difference of opinion between scholars, because the matter is a political one and not a jurisprudential difference, it is a clash of civilisations between Islam and Capitalism, and indeed, the ban on the Niqab is a cover over what their hearts conceal of malice against Islam and its followers, it is an attack on Islam first and foremost, and in such circumstances, it is not right to talk about the jurisprudential differences as each topic has its own circumstance.

Last year we clarified how things will turn in this country as an inevitable result of the policies that apply to Muslims, through the campaign that we have undertaken, named: "Together Against anti-Islam Policies", and here we are now seeing those results before our eyes, and we have said over and over again that policies that apply to Muslims are not due to existing elements in the Muslim community, which they describe as "extremist", but every Muslim has become a subject of suspicion, so we in Hizb ut Tahrir in the Netherlands call on Muslims to come together to remain united in the issues that affect us all, such as the issue of the Niqab, to send a strong message as a Muslim community to all those tempted to prey on us, and not be up for grabs for those who want to keep us away from our religion.

Okay Pala
Media Representative of Hizb ut Tahrir
in The Netherlands