

Rome, Italy
23 October 2018



Declaration

Address to the Muslims of Europe

In the name of Allah, the Most Kind, the Most Merciful.

We, the representatives of the Muslim communities of Europe, **on behalf of the European Muslim Forum** that was founded in Barcelona on 8 October 2018, **address the Muslims of Greater Europe** - from the Atlantic to the Urals and the Caspian Sea.

Our continent first encountered Islam during the time of our great Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the early Caliphate - from the Pyrenees to Derbent. Throughout the next 14 centuries Islam and Muslims have been an integral part of the history and identity of Europe. More than a half of the Greater European countries have Islamic pages in their history as well, whilst Islamic civilisation has decorated their treasure-houses with spiritual and historical heritage. Europe, including the Mediterranean countries, since the time of ancient civilisations has played a significant and occasionally an influential role in the history, economy and culture of the world, particularly after the era of the Rashidun Caliphate, which was undertaken with the participation of our brothers in Faith. Today the entire Muslim population of Greater Europe, including Turkey and the countries of Transcaucasia and Kazakhstan, is estimated to be in the region of 170 million people, and the representatives of our Ummah live in every European country. The vast majority of European Muslims are native to the continent, although we also have people who came to these lands in search of a better life. Europe now is our beloved home which we are proud of and which we want to make even more comfortable.

Discussing the **spiritual sphere**, it is impossible to imagine *inter-religious dialogue* and *cooperation* without Muslims today, and we must voice our concerns, as we have been encouraged by Pope John Paul II with regards to the preservation of *all-important family values*.

As for **culture**, it is with our active participation that we should help Europe to become a model of a *multicultural* society in its true sense. Examples of multiculturalism exist on the continent, in the form of large cities and entire regions such as Tatarstan in Eastern Europe, which is part of the Russian Federation. Likewise, Muslims should have their say in assisting *refugees to adapt*, as a considerable number escaped wars and famine in the Middle East, Africa and certain regions of South Asia. Instead of becoming a part of the problem, they can become the catalyst that will deliver *impetus to European* demographics and contribute to solutions in relation to employment issues in various spheres starting from the digital economy to services and industrial production.

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Today, the Muslim community of Europe, being an integral part of the global Ummah, could play a significant part in **developing the European economy**, which is currently experiencing an exceedingly challenging time. This could be via *investments* from rich Muslim countries, finding *new markets* for European goods among Muslim consumers and *more cost-effective production* as a result of the employment and endeavour of Muslim migrants making Europe more competitive.

It is also worth mentioning that based on the ethos of our Religion, we should contribute to the preservation of **ecology**: starting from the ecology of our forests and fields to the *cleanliness of our cities* and the products we consume, whether it is with respect to household items or food, seeing as the future of Europe is closely related to how clean we keep it. This will enable our children to be raised in clean and well-maintained cities, have the opportunity to visit *pollution-free nature*, seas, mountains or other places, and moreover, so that people will be able to consume *clean organic products*.

According to our commandments and laws, Muslims should contribute to promoting a **healthy lifestyle** as the norm for Europeans: a lifestyle *free of alcohol, tobacco and drugs*; with a balanced personal life and personal development within the framework of family values, encouraging people to grow and strengthen professionally and spiritually. And of course healthy living also implies *sport and physical education*.

It is also important to state that the Muslims of Europe should more actively fulfil their potential in **political and public spheres**, be more active in social projects and media relations, supporting *truly democratic norms*, that typically concur with Muslim values.

In regard to issues pertaining to **ideology**, Muslims alongside other benevolent people should more actively *oppose extremist ideas* that manifest themselves in ideologies like fascism, Nazism, racism and various types of xenophobia, including Islamophobia and ultra-right nationalism that divides people into a 'good us' and 'bad them'. There should be no place for such ideologies, neither in contemporary Europe, nor worldwide in general.

In conclusion, we would like to invite representatives of the Muslim communities of Greater European countries: spiritual leaders, politicians, journalists, businessmen and people engaged in social projects *to cooperate with the European Muslim Forum*, so that together we may articulate a new image of the European Muslim - one who loves Europe and works for the benefit of its diverse peoples and countries; who endeavours to make Europe even more comfortable for all those who reside in and visit it and who preserves history and is able to react properly to any modern challenges, so that Europe continues with the integral participation of Muslims, so as to maintain its position in the world economy, politics and culture.

Therefore, let us all come together to achieve **positive development for Europe by means of Islam and for Islam in Europe!**

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