

## A Response to the Anti-Hijab Protests in Iran

The following are some important points regarding the current events in Iran following the death of 22 year old Mahsa Amini who was reportedly killed whilst in the custody of the regime's police force, due to not wearing the Hijab properly.

1. The beating to death of Mahsa Amini was categorically wrong according to Islam which forbids any form of torture. This is explicit in Islamic texts. The Prophet (saw) said: **«إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُعَذِّبُ الَّذِينَ يُعَذِّبُونَ فِي الدُّنْيَا»** **“Allah tortures those who torture the people in this life.”**

2. There are many secularists who are exploiting the events in Iran to once again hurl their age-old orientalist allegations and lies against the hijab and Islamic social laws, falsely accusing Islam and the Shariah of oppressing women. For example, this was a quote from an article by the journalist Janice Turner in Britain's Times website on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September, under the title, 'If the hijab falls, Iran's cruel regime will follow': *“The headscarf is not just a dress code, it's an instrument of control designed to frighten and divide an entire nation.”* The underlying absurd claim is that the Islamic dress helps to facilitate the continuation of the rule of oppressive regimes such as in Iran. Such accusations, born from an Islamophobic, ignorant and Euro-centric vision of the world and other cultures, need to be vociferously countered.

3. The idea that the Iranian regime cares about implementing and protecting Islamic laws is farcical since this is a regime that has aided the butcher Assad to slaughter tens of thousands of innocent Muslims in Syria and has had its hand in the killing of innocent Muslims in Iraq and Yemen. It has also killed Afghan Muslims trying to cross over its borders to seek a better life. <https://www.hizb-ut-tahrir.info/en/index.php/press-releases/afghanistan/19439.html>. The Prophet (saw) said: **«كُلُّ الْمُسْلِمِ عَلَى الْمُسْلِمِ حَرَامٌ؛ دَمُهُ وَمَالُهُ وَعَرَضُهُ»** **“The blood, wealth and honour of the Muslim are sacred to all Muslims”** (Muslim).

4. There are those who are trying to portray the problem facing women in Iran as one of enforcement of the Hijab and other Islamic social laws and the lack of gender equality, while the real problem in Iran is the existence of a theocratic regime that governs according to the whims and dictates of clerics - rather than the Qur'an and Sunnah. Any system that is ruled by the whims of human beings - democracies or dictatorships - will result in oppression of the people and deprivation of their rights. Allah (swt) says: **«وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ»** **“Whoever does not rule by what Allah has revealed – they are the oppressors.”** [Al-Maeda: 45].

5. It is understandable that people are angry at the oppressive and authoritarian actions of the Iranian regime. But why are some Muslim women in these protests burning their hijab and dancing in public, expressing their anger and rebellion against Commands that are from Allah (swt) – their Lord and Creator? The covering of the whole body of the woman, except the hands and face, in the presence of non-Mahram men is an Islamic obligation defined clearly by the Qur'an and Sunnah, and not a dictate from the Iranian or any other regime. Allah (swt) says: **«وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَى جُيُوبِهِنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَائِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَائِهِنَّ أَوْ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ أَخَوَاتِهِنَّ أَوْ نِسَائِهِنَّ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُنَّ أَوْ التَّابِعِينَ غَيْرِ أُولِي الإِرْبَةِ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ أَوِ الطِّفْلِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يَظْهَرُوا عَلَى عَوْرَاتِ النِّسَاءِ»** **“And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their private parts, and that they should not show their Zeenah (charms) in public beyond what may be apparent; hence let them draw their head-coverings (khumur) over their necks and bosoms (juyub). And let them not display (more of) their charms to any but their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons, their womenfolk, their concubines, such male attendants as are beyond all sexual**

**desire, or children that are as yet unaware of women's nakedness.”** [An-Nur: 31]. And the Prophet(saw) said, «إِنَّ الْجَارِيَةَ إِذَا حَاضَتْ لَمْ يَصْلُحْ أَنْ يَرَى مِنْهَا إِلَّا وَجْهَهَا وَيَدَاهَا إِلَى الْمَفْصِلِ» **“When a girl reaches puberty (indicated by starting the menstrual cycle), it is not right that any part of her be seen except her face and the two hands up to the wrist.”** [Reported Abu Dawud].

6. There are those who are trying to portray Iran as the model of what life would be like for women and others under Islamic governance, while the theocratic – presidential – parliamentary – political system in Iran, with a so-called ‘Supreme leader’ and led by clerics has no basis in Islamic texts. Rather, the Islamic model of governance as clearly defined by the Qur’an and Sunnah is the Khilafah (Caliphate) based upon the method of the Prophethood, which has an elected leader who is accountable to the people, and governs purely according to the Qur’an and Sunnah rather than the dictates of self-appointed clerics.

6. The Iranian regime is an authoritarian leadership and needs to be removed, as with all the current unIslamic and dictatorial regimes in the Muslim lands. However, protesters who are calling for a liberal future for the country in the belief that this will bring a better future for women and others in the land are hugely misguided. We see liberal states in the West and elsewhere plunging from one crisis to another and with huge social and moral problems. This includes the epidemic of violence against women as well as the tsunami of broken families. One in three women in the European Union are victims of violence, while one in two have experienced sexual harassment (European Commission). In France, a woman is killed every three days by a current or former partner (The Guardian, 2019), while in the US, nearly 3 women are killed every day by domestic violence (Bureau of Justice). All this is the result of liberal values such as personal and sexual freedoms, that encourage men to act upon their individualistic whims and desires. It is also the result of the absence of clear social rules to regulate the relationship between men and women and to define their rights and responsibilities in family life and society such that a dignified and respectful relationship is established between the genders, based on healthy cooperation. It is this healthy cooperation between men and women within society that the Islamic social laws, of which the hijab is part of, aims to achieve.

6. The only path to building a brighter future for women and others in Iran and elsewhere in the Muslim world is the complete and correct implementation of Islam under the political System of Allah (swt), the Khilafah based upon the method of the Prophethood. Anyone who studies this system in an objective manner, free from colonial myths and falsities, will recognise that it has a credible and time-tested approach of establishing respect for women within society, protecting them from violence, and guaranteeing all their God-given political, economic, educational, legal and social rights. These are rights which cannot be discarded by those who rule, for they are defined by Allah (swt) and therefore non-negotiable. This is in contrast to secular states, such as in France, Denmark, Belgium and The Netherlands, that have robbed Muslim women and girls of their educational, economic and other rights through their hijab and niqab bans. As Muslims, we should recognise that there can never ever be any success in this life or the Akhirah, other than by embracing comprehensively the Laws and System of our Creator, Allah (swt) – the All-Wise, the All-Knowledgeable.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَابْتَغُوا إِلَيْهِ الْوَسِيلَةَ وَجَاهِدُوا فِي سَبِيلِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ﴾

**“O you who believe! Be mindful of your duty to Allah, and seek the way of approach unto Him, and strive in His way in order that you may succeed.”** [Al-Maeda: 35]

**Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by**

**Dr. Nazreen Nawaz**

**Director of the Women's Section in the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir**