

### Press Release

## **Burka Ban is an Attack on Muslim Identity**

The politicians have barely had time to take a breath after talking about *further* tightening of the Private School Law with the declared aim of “tightening the grip on Muslim private schools”, and now they have decided to ban the Muslim face-veil, while deceitfully presenting this ban as an extension of the existing law against masking in public.

A year has barely gone by since implementation of the “Imam-Bill” and since the first tightening of the Private Schools Law, which was a departure from a more than 150 years old tradition, only to target Muslim private schools, which Denmark’s largest political party – the Social Democrats – want to shut down entirely.

With the forthcoming burka ban, an almost unanimous parliament continues the crusade of bans, and nothing indicates that they intend to stop or slow down the least. On the contrary, the clear trend is an increase in frequency of the bans targeting Muslims, and the limits are pushed for each year we pass.

Despite a ban on burkas being in clear contradiction with both the constitution and the liberal rights of freedom, which are constantly celebrated, and to which the Muslims are demanded to swear loyalty, the politicians hold nothing back in their cultural struggle. In intellectual impotence, they have – as we know it from police-states – decided to move one step closer toward totalitarianism by undressing women who think differently by force.

Firstly, we want to make it clear that for the woman to cover her face is a legitimate position in the Islamic *fiqh* (jurisprudence). Therefore, this ban is an intervention in the Muslim women’s right to manifest their Islamic identity for those who hold the face-veil to be an Islamic obligation. This ban will also be a forerunner to a ban against the *khimar* (Muslim head-scarf). This ban is based *solely* on the fact that the politicians consider the *niqab* as an Islamic symbol, and it is therefore an attack on the entire Muslim community.

The argument that such a ban is necessary in the fight against coercion and social control is an obvious lie, since existing laws already forbid coercion in relation to clothing. Furthermore, the “Burka Commission”, set down by the then-government itself in 2009, concluded that the women wearing *niqab* had chosen to do so themselves, often against the wishes of their families. There is absolutely no proof to back the claim that a single woman in Denmark has been forced to wear the *niqab*. On the contrary, it is the government which seeks to use social control and coercion to deprive the Muslim women of their right to dress as they choose in accordance with their beliefs.

As Muslims, we refuse to accept this discriminating and anti-Islamic law. We urge the Muslim women to stand firmly by their Muslim identity and wear what they find to be the correct Islamic dress, and to not be intimidated by this fascist law aimed at the Muslim community. We urge all Muslims – especially the Muslim organizations, representatives and mosques – to stand together in expressing our common, unequivocal stance; that the forthcoming ban on the burka and niqab is an anti-Islamic, totalitarian law, which will not be accepted by the Muslim Community.

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