

Press Release

Austria's Intention to Impose a Criminal Offense called "Political Islam"

(Translated)

Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz announced on 11 November the government's intention to create a new clause of criminal offenses under the name "political Islam", "so that it can take action against those who are not terrorists, but who are creating fertile ground for them." In addition, new methods will be devised to close places of worship (i.e. mosques), introduce a registry of imams, and tighten the law prohibiting symbols and associations. Through this announcement of the creation of a new criminal clause under the name of "political Islam", the Austrian government reveals the true essence of the totalitarian integration policy, which is the complete intellectual and practical assimilation of Muslims living in Austria.

This announcement was preceded by a speech on 3 November in which Sebastian Kurz stated about an ongoing struggle "between civilization and brutal barbarism", which in terms of "terrorists", this applies to "extremists who reject the Austrian way of life and its basic values, as well as to those who reject democracy." Kurz says: "We will search for the perpetrators, the people behind them and the like-minded people, and we will pursue them and bring them to justice!" In his speech at the National Assembly meeting held on 5 November, the Chancellor made it clear that the matter is not only related to those who commit acts of violence, but to those who intellectually participate with them and to fight the ideology behind them, as he said: "We cannot and will not allow parallel structures and societies to exist on the Austrian territories that hate our republic and work against our constitution. The Center for Documentation of Political Islam and the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution and Combating Terrorism (BVT) play a crucial role in tracking down extremist associations and dismantling them in cooperation with the security services". This was followed on 9 November by the implementation of the "Operation Luxor", where more than 900 police officers in four federal states raided more than 60 apartments, homes, commercial headquarters and associations of Islamic organizations.

The manner of these speeches that preceded Operation Luxor and then the implementation of this process clearly shows that the announced measures are not a response to the 2 November attack, but rather are part of the integration policy that aims at complete assimilation, that is, the ideological assimilation of Muslims living in Austria. In the "National Action Plan for Integration" (NAP.I) adopted by the government, the clear commitment to Austria and its standards and values "is considered one of the most important foundations for integration". Also, the measures taken in recent years, such as banning the khimar and closing many mosques and Islamic societies, were taken under the pretext of "fighting political Islam" and as necessary measures for the integration

process, and they took their legitimacy on this basis. So is the 2018 Constitution Protection Office report, which clearly demonstrates that all actors in the Muslim community can be categorized under the militant term "political Islam." Under the title "Political Islam in Austria", the report states: "Islamic activists are not only interested in the affairs of religious worship in the Muslim community [...]. Rather, they are also active in matters beyond that, such as education, social care and the organization of the cultural life of Muslims in Austria." So, contrary to what Kurz has claimed, the measures taken have nothing to do with combating terrorism, but rather to dismantle the Islamic identity and the Islamic way of life. The Office for the Protection of the Constitution has explicitly recognized that the central problem it sees in political Islam is (its attempt to prevent Muslims from "melting" (i.e. assimilating) into this society). In order to consolidate this definition in public discussions and to legitimize the political measures based on it, the Ministry of Interior announced on 15 July the creation of the Center for Documentation of Political Islam. With the government announcement on November 11, Sebastian Kurz is now moving to publicly attack the previously identified enemy, and to consolidate the persecution of this enemy politically through the enactment of a criminal code condemning thought and belief.

All this reveals that the coalition government considers the November 2 attack an appropriate pretext to reinforce the policy of oppressive assimilation and raise it to an unprecedented level through systematic interference in the self-identity of Muslims. Against this background, Hizb ut Tahrir in the German-speaking countries calls on all the active forces in the Islamic community to firmly oppose this development and not to submit to this tutelage authority measures! The responsibility here rests with all of us and requires us to defend our beliefs and take a clear stand against the policy of religious extermination practiced by the Austrian state. This is especially true for Islamist organizations and representatives of the community with great influence and great mobilization capacity. Only together we can avert this destructive political plan and secure our Islamic existence in the future.

Allah Almighty says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ * وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَى شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ * وَلَتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾

“And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided. And remember the favor of Allah upon you - when you were enemies and He brought your hearts together and you became, by His favor, brothers. And you were on the edge of a pit of the Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus does Allah make clear to you His verses that you may be guided. * And let there be [arising] from you a nation inviting to [all that is] good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and those will be the successful.” [Al-i-Imran: 103-104]

**Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir
in the German-Speaking Countries**