

Press Release

Austrian National Assembly Ratifies the Establishment of the System of Intellectual Repression!

(Translated)

On 7 July 2021, the Austrian People's Party, the Green Party, the Austrian Socialist Party and the right-wing Austrian National Party voted to pass the controversial anti-terror package, through which the essential elements of the Islamic view point of life will be criminalized and all Islamic cultural bodies and associations will be placed in the dock. By introducing amendments to the penal code, and to the procedures of criminal trials, and by expanding the Symbol Act and introducing restrictions to the Islam Act and the Citizenship Act, Austria will have laid the foundations for a system of creedal loyalty, which aims at the complete intellectual and practical assimilation of Muslims, and which will make the persecution of small religious groups its prominent feature.

It has been clear since government statements last year that this legislative initiative is not intended to maintain internal security as it is claimed, but rather serves the Austrian government's comprehensive assimilation agenda. Prime Minister Chancellor Kurz declared in November 2020 that there is a war raging between "civilization and barbarism", and that this war is directed "against everyone who rejects the Austrian way of life and its basic values". In addition to the perpetrators of violent acts, the "perpetrators of extremist ideology and also the ideology that drives them" must be fought. In December 2020, Integration Minister Susan Raab clarified that the "focus" is on "fighting political Islam" and against "anyone who propagates anti-Western ideology, the fundamental values of democracy and the rule of law wherever they are." As well as what was mentioned in the commentary document for the draft law, proves that the package so called "anti-terror package" is directed specifically against non-violent Muslims and Islamic movements.

It stated: "Islamic movements that do not practice violence are distinguished by their rejection of the principles of the democratic state of law, and they are working (...) to find a model that is counter to the model of Western society." Although the legal punishment of the so-called "religiously motivated associations" is still contingent on criminal acts, the new legal package focuses on the vital area of societal policy and is an extension of the overall strategic direction of Austrian integration and assimilation policy. "The National Integration Initiative" (NAP.I) had previously made "a clear loyalty to Austria - to its values and customs", the most important basis for integration, and justified the struggle against political Islam through the Constitutional Protection Agency that this Islamic trend is trying to "prevent the opening of Muslims to society." (i.e. their assimilation in it).

The adoption of the anti-terror package law against this background represents a dangerous escalation and threatens to permanently damage the foundations of coexistence between Muslims and non-Muslims in Austria. As Muslims, we are committed to the sanctity of blood, money, and honor, and not to intrude upon the beliefs and religious contents that shape the identity of others. However, the establishment of this system of doctrinal oppression puts our faith under accusation and systematically destroys the appropriate relationship required by the peaceful coexistence between the various religious communities and groups.

Therefore, Hizb ut Tahrir calls on all the actors in the Muslim community to completely reject the "anti-terror package" and work to develop a strategy that leads to a radical change in the policy of dealing with Muslims. This entails gathering and unifying all the capabilities of Muslims in Austria and making use of them in engaging in an open dialogue within society. We will only be able to strengthen our position and create pressure in public opinion by controlling public arenas for discussion, through which we expose this "anti-terror package" as a despicable maneuver behind which hides the policy of a few repressive and destructive groups.

Also, the strategy of informal individual conversations between political decision-makers and actors in the Muslim community is no longer sufficient, but must be supplemented by a confident and uncompromising discussion, to put public opinion in a position through which it can differentiate between the truth and falsehood. ﴿وَقُلْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ الْبَاطِلُ إِنَّ الْبَاطِلَ كَانَ زَهُوقًا﴾ "And say, "Truth has come, and falsehood has departed. Indeed is falsehood, [by nature], ever bound to depart." [Al-Isra: 81].

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