

Press Release

Critical Reflection on the Statement of the Association of Imams in the Netherlands

The statement of the Association of Imams in the Netherlands (VIN) asserts that political participation within European societies is a “permissible and legitimate means,” and that participation can even be recommended or obligatory depending on the situation. This position requires careful consideration, as it rests on assumptions that do not adequately reflect the reality of the secular system.

Secularism is not merely a separation between religion and politics, but it also dictates what role religion is allowed to play in society. It is therefore not a neutral framework in which Muslims can simply protect their rights, but an ideological order with its own rules. In this order, legislation is not based on divine revelation but is left entirely to human decision-making, dependent on shifting majorities.

In fact, secularism behaves like a new religion: a religion in which the source of law is no longer divine, but where man himself is elevated to the absolute source. This “religion” now dominates globally, including in Muslim lands, where it has displaced Islamic legislation. This has led to uprooting, division, and the weakening of the Islamic identity. For many, Islam has been reduced to a personal or spiritual matter, while its broader vision as a complete way of life has faded into the background.

How then is it possible that imams, who are aware of this reality, still call on Muslims to participate in this system? How can they, fully conscious of the destructive consequences secularism has brought upon the Islamic world—colonization, division, oppression, and betrayal—use the mosque’s minbar to direct the Ummah down the very same path?

What harm do they truly hope to avert, and what benefit do they imagine to gain, by guiding Muslims into a system whose very aim is to marginalize and combat Islam? How can one seek salvation in an order that is itself responsible for the humiliation, division, and oppression of Muslims worldwide? Do they not see that it is precisely secularism that has caused the Ummah’s humiliation?

Especially in this era of uprooting, the imams bear a duty to remind the Muslims of their true aspiration: the return to Islam in its entirety, as an ideological alternative to the failing secularism. Islam is not merely a spiritual faith but a complete system that encompasses politics, economics, society, and jurisprudence.

It would honor the imams to call upon the community without hesitation to this path—not by urging them to dissolve into the secular system, but by inspiring them to remain loyal to their foundation and to work for the return of Islam as a comprehensive way of life.

This is not a call for passivity, for Muslims can make their voices heard and exert pressure without compromise and without reducing our values to the secular framework. Real action does not lie in giving away our vote within a system that excludes Islam, but in strengthening our collective voice and holding firmly to our own principles.

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