



AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC COUNCIL
AND
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT (IIIT)
JOINTLY PRESENTS

ISLAMOPHOBIA AND INCITEMENT AGAINST MUSLIMS

4TH DECEMBER 2021

Speech by The Most Eminent
Imam Abdul Quddoos Al Azhari
National Grand Mufti of Australia



**Webinar
2021**

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلاة والسلام على أشرف الأنبياء والمرسلين

The Honourable president of AFIC Dr Ratib Jneid, Dato Seri Anwar Ibrahim the well-known leader of Malaysia, Professor Mohammad Naqib Eishan Jan Professor of Law at IIUM, Professor Samina Yasmeen AM Professor and Director of CMSS, Dr Anne Aly MP Member for Cowan, honourable audience and listeners.

Assalamu Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuhu

I would like to acknowledge the owners of this land on which we gather today and to pay my respects to the elders past, present and emerging.

It is really a great honour and privilege for me to be part of this important webinar. I am also delighted to be taking part with all our highly accomplished speakers to talk about the most important subject of the present day, that is 'Islamophobia - Incitement Against Muslims.'

It was great to hear our learned speakers who have been elaborating on various aspects of Islamophobia. Professor Samina Yasmeen was talking about the Muslim majority country leaders and their duties and responsibilities towards countering Islamophobia. She was also talking about what can be done by the Organisation of Islamic Conference.

Professor Naqib Jan was mentioning about the calls to declare Islamophobia as a crime against humanity.

Dr Anne Aly MP, was mentioning about the legislation acts on racial discrimination not religious discrimination. She was also talked about the contributing factors by the media sensationalising the events of Islamophobia.

It was also great to see and hear the Honourable Dato Sri Anwar Ibrahim, how eloquently he was presenting his talk.

Dato Sri was mentioning that the clash of ignorance is the main problem. He was referring to the Quranic verse 'Lita'arafoo', "We have made you into tribes and the nations so that you know each other." He was asking, what we have done through Lita'arafoo to know each other? Honourable Dato Sri was also pointing out about the failure of Muslim leaders to counter this Islamophobia. Brothers and sisters, ladies and gentlemen I will concentrate my talk on what we can and should do to counter ever increasing islamophobia problems in the world and our duties and responsibilities to clarify those misunderstandings.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, Islamophobia means intense dislike or fear of Islam or prejudice towards Islam and Muslims.

Islamophobia is a global issue founded on fear and hatred, Islamophobia has caused many painful consequences and untold miseries. It leads to discrimination, abuse and often harassment and violence against Muslim women, men and children. Many victims of Islamophobia experience anxiety, fear, worry, confusion, and anger. Some may struggle to make sense of what happened and may feel hopeless and helpless that they or their loved ones will be targeted.

There are many factors that can heighten Islamophobia in any society including the following:

- When a person labeled as a Muslim commits an act of violence, opportunists end up blaming or attributing the aggression and violence to all Muslims.
- Ignorance of Islam thereby leading to the fear of the unknown.
- Having very limited interaction with Muslim friends or neighbours thus leading to cynicism towards and suspicion of Muslims

Western Sydney University researchers analyzed data on racism and Islamophobia from 6001 adult non-Muslim respondents between 2015 – 2016.

The researchers found participants fell into four groups or categories based on their perception of Islam and the Muslims.

1. Those with progressive attitudes about diversity, but with concerns about Muslims - 50%.
2. Those, who are unsure about diversity and have some concern about Muslims -24%.
3. Progressives who have no concerns about Muslims - 13%
4. Islamophobics - 13%

When an Islamophobia incident impacts on us, we need to talk about it within our family circle at home, with our children, in our community, in the mosque and the society.

There are hundreds of ayat (verses in the Qur'an) and ahadeeth of our beloved Nabi (SAW) and examples of how our sahaba and tabieen illustrating the benefit of Sabr (patience and perseverance).

Remember the in Surat Al Sharh, Allah Ta'ala assures us:

فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا

With hardship comes ease.

إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا

With hardship comes ease.

(Al Quran 94:5-6)

We also need to educate ourselves, our family, our children and our community about the beauty of Islam, akhlaq (behaviour) and character of Islam and to learn more and act accordingly.

قَوْلٌ مَعْرُوفٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ يَتْبَعُهَا أذى وَاللَّهُ غَنِيٌّ حَلِيمٌ

*'Kind words and forgiveness are better than charity followed by harm.
God is He who has no need and He is Clement.'*

(Al Quran 2:263)

With your behavior your bitterest enemy can become an intimate friend.

وَلَا تَسْتَوِي الْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا السَّيِّئَةُ ۚ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي
بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ

'Good and evil are not equal. Repel evil with good, and the person between whom and you there is enmity becomes like an intimate friend'.

(Al Quran 41:34)

(تَبَسُّمُكَ فِي وَجْهِ أَخِيكَ لَكَ صَدَقَةٌ) رواه الترمذي
A smile to another person is charity

لا تظهر الشماتة لأخيك فيرحمه الله ويبتليك. الترمذي، حديث حسن غريب

Do not display happiness at the misfortunate (musibat) of your brother. Allah may through his mercy alleviate his problem while you are facing difficulties.

It is important for us to learn and practice Islam so that we can become true ambassadors of salvation for humanity. How can you become a good ambassador if you don't know what you are representing? We must be well informed so that we can overcome ignorance with true knowledge.

Islamophobia finds fertile ground when there are fear and ignorance. We have the responsibility to eliminate ignorance through providing correct information and to eliminate fear through creating friendship and spreading goodwill, we must:

- Establish good friendships, mix and mingle with neighbours. Talk to them with genuine good intentions.
- There are hundreds of hadeeth and ayat about our duties and responsibilities towards our neighbours, for example:
 - “He is not a Muslim who went to sleep on a full stomach and his neighbour was hungry.”

- The neighbour includes your neighbour at work, your neighbour in travelling, your neighbour in sport, your neighbour in business.
- Be honourable in your dealings with everyone, remember the following hadeeth reported in Bukhari:
 - *“May Allah bless a person who is generous when he sells, generous when he buys and generous when seeking arbitration in a dispute.”*
- Express joy at your neighbours good fortune and sadness at their misfortune. Extend good wishes on their happy occasions and offer your commiserations in their time of grief.
- Regularly organize open mosque days and information events, invite the neighbours to come to the mosque and extend your hospitality towards them. Show them that the mosque is a sanctuary of goodness, peace, tranquility, and solace.
- Invite your neighbours to come and share our food such as biryani, nasi lemak, baklava, gozleme and offer gifts on special occasions.

In my capacity as the National Grand Mufti of Australia, may I humbly request all Muslim countries and all Muslim leaders to follow the teachings of Islam.

I request all the honourable Muslims leaders and Muslim rulers to be true representatives of their own people, to take interest in their citizens and their countries needs.

Honourable president Dr Ratib Jneid, Respected Dato Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Professors Mohammad Naqib Eishan Jan and Samina Yasmeen, Dr Anne Aly, participants and my dear audience and listeners; Islamophobia is a phenomenon that we must address through goodwill, information sharing and the resilience to get up every time someone tries to put us down.

Let us work on this together as Allah Ta'ala commands us:

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ ۖ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ ۗ
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

“And cooperate with one another in virtuous conduct and God conscience, and do not cooperate with one another in sin and hostility. And be conscious of Allah. Allah is severe in punishment”.
(Al Quran 5:2)

ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ

“Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good advice
(Al Quran 16:125)

Ladies and gentlemen brothers and sisters, I would like to thank AFIC International Institute of Islamic Thought IIIT for organizing this important webinar. I would also like to thank learned speakers, valuable audience and listeners for valuable time in taking part.

Jazak Mullah Khair

May Allah bless you all.

Assalamu Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuhu