

Statement

Muslim federations and mosques in France

Great Mosque of Paris

November 2nd, 2020

There are moments of truth in the history of Nations and in that of Men.

There are times when citizens all together must build their destiny in the Nation they have chosen or which saw them be born and grow.

There are times when we must stand in solidarity with our country, which has been undergoing unjustified attacks for several weeks. This situation returns each citizen to his conscience and his responsibilities.

Yes, this context obliges us! And it commits us to assume our responsibilities, especially since the Constitution of our country enshrines the intangible principles set out in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen.

In the first, we would like to recall that French law places great emphasis on freedom of expression and enacts the principles of believing or not believing. Values to which we are deeply attached, because they allow each of us, in accordance with the legal framework, to freely express our religious and/or philosophical convictions. It is thanks to this essential foundation of the Republic that we, as citizens of the Muslim faith, can exercise our worship.

In France, within the limits of the law alone, the citizen is free, the believer is free, civil society is free and the press is free too. Differences and conflicts, when they arise in a democratic space, cannot be arbitrated elsewhere than in court.

This preamble being clarified, as French people of Muslim faith, and without interfering in political or diplomatic polemics, we would like to reiterate firmly and clearly this:

- **Our condemnation of terrorism and all forms of violence expressed in the name of our religion.** And we express to all victims of Islamist terrorism our unconditional support and our deepest sympathy.
- **Our condemnation of all those who instrumentalize Islam for political, diplomatic or mercantile ends** to mislead our fellow citizens and our co-religionists, to exacerbate hatred and finally to cause the irreparable. Islam is a religion and not a tool to fuel populist discourse with often disastrous consequences.
- **Our condemnation of unjustified calls to boycott French products.** As the media in France are free, no politician, including the President of the Republic, can force a press organ to publish or not to publish a cartoon or caricature. The separation of powers is inseparable from our democratic framework. Also, we consider that these calls are unfounded and are based on political manipulations hiding other objectives than the "defense of Islam".
- **Our condemnation of the calls for murder launched by foreign officials.** Secularism is an essential value that allows different religions, including Islam, to

flourish in France. We denounce all those who want to manipulate our co-religionists, especially our youth, and international public opinion, by suggesting that in France we would be subjected to a policy of "state racism" or a policy of "hatred against Muslims". These are blatant lies that we denounce and demand a public apology from their authors as they try to divide us, to introduce doubt and to sow discord.

We therefore call for a return to calm and we encourage our youth not to be drawn into winding paths which have no other exit than destruction and self-destruction.

Finally, we call on the authorities of our country to take strong measures so that the Muslim component of France, which has broadly condemned the recent terrorist acts, is not amalgamated with the sowers of hatred. The largely majority of Muslims in France are integrated into society and intend to live their religion serenely, this authentic Islam, of fraternity and solidarity, while respecting the laws of the Republic.

May GOD, the Most Beneficent and the Most Merciful, bless and protect our Homeland, France.

Signatories

Great Mosque of Paris

Great Mosque of Lyon

Great Mosque of Saint Denis de la Réunion

Rally of Muslims in France (RMF)

French Federation of African Islamic Associations of the Antilles and Comoros (FFAIACA)

Coordination of Muslim Associations of Paris (CAP)