

OIC condemns publication of cartoons of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

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Iran-OIC-Prophet

The General Secretariat of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) has closely followed the development over reprehensible incident of publication of caricatures of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in the Danish newspaper Jylland Posten and their recurrence in the Norwegian daily Magazinet.

A press release issued by OIC Tehran Office on Tuesday, quoting the statement by OIC Secretary General Professor Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu on the issue from Jeddah, said that there was far and wide condemnation in the member states through official and individual reaction, condemnation by international and non-governmental organizations and rightly an outcry and anger of the Muslims whose most important religious symbol in the person of the Prophet was targeted and ridiculed.

According to the report, the secretary general noted with a deep sense of disappointment the lack of empathy and rejoinder by the Danish authorities on the publication of blasphemous and sacrilegious cartoons printed in the Danish daily.

The response was highly unsatisfactory, it was issued after procrastination of over three months and was unable to reach the underlying reasons on which the Muslims were anguished.

It said that however, by providing protection to the newspapers and failure to censure in unequivocal terms, it has served neither the cause of freedom of expression nor has it advanced the goals of multiculturalism domestically or internationally.

The secretary general also noted with regret that failure to categorically condemn the cartoons by the Danish authorities may set a dangerous precedent which has already been witnessed on recurrence of the cartoons by two publications in Norway as they were encouraged over the manner the Danish authorities approached the incident.

In his letter to the Danish prime minister, the secretary general drew attention of the fact that series of Islamophobic acts including the invitation to portray Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) by the paper could lead to escalation of tension which he has sagaciously advised could be avoided only if the Danish authorities, may promptly refrain perpetrators of sacrilege and issue their condemnation.

In this backdrop the secretary general views that how far it could be called a civilized democratic behavior when a newspaper invites publicly to draw pictures of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), which blatantly purge his personality by showing him terrorist with a bomb over his turban, most wanted criminal, fond of women, dagger carrier, etc; need no further mentioning due to reverence for him.

These are all reprehensible and deeply sick notions portrayed by individuals who have no knowledge about the personality of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

It is evident that the intention of Jylland Posten was motivated to incite hatred and violence against Muslims. By exposing the level of understanding of Islamic religion and its symbols the dailies have seriously damaged their credibility in the eyes of Muslim world and harmed democracy, freedom of the press, violated decency and civilized norms.

The Muslim societies all over the globe are endeavoring to put in place political institutions based on democratic and pluralistic values and without hesitation acknowledge the origin of those good values for reference. However, if sensitivities of cultural and religious differences are not observed no room will be left to respect those values and freedoms.

The freedom of expression as a right is not confined only to Danish or Norwegian people but these are university accepted norms which must be judged on the basis of responsibility and freedom in the global context.

The angry reaction in the Muslim world is not per se on the insinuation against Muslims as terrorists which they indeed condemn and over the damage done to their religious sentiments. But it is mainly due to that premeditated an deliberate attack on the revered person of the Prophet, whose holy position, message and teachings were so maliciously and calculatingly sacrilege by the so-called defenders of freedom.

In his statement, the secretary general appealed to the Muslims to stay calm and peaceful in the wake of sacrilegious depiction of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), which has deeply hurt heir feelings.

He noted by concluding that it was the legitimate expectation of three billion Muslims that perpetrators of blasphemy who have transgressed civilized boundaries of freedom can redress the situation by extending an unqualified apology.

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