

Miscellaneous, brief reports

2018

Paigham e Pakistan (Message of Pakistan) – an excellent document launched in the capital

Islamabad; January 16, 2018: A narrative and decree against terrorism and extremism (Paigham e Pakistan) issued by Muftis and religious scholars of all schools of thought with the efforts of Islamic Research Institute of the International Islamic University, Islamabad (IIUI) was launched at Aiwane Sadar in a ceremony chaired by the President of Pakistan, Mamnoon Hussain.

Unanimous fatwa by 1829 scholars condemning extremism and terrorism declared the supporters of suicide bombing as traitors, the religious decree defined jihad as being the purview of the state and disallowed the use of force to compel obedience to Islamic laws.

The declaration said the soil of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan should not be allowed to be used by any group for promoting terrorism. It also called for offering protection to the life and property of non-Muslims in Pakistan. It called for tolerance and promotion of justice and fair play in Pakistan.

According to the declaration the use of force and waging armed struggle in the name of enforcing Shariah and also acts of terrorism and sabotage in any shape, exploiting linguistic, regional, religious and sectarian differences were against Shariah and un-Islamic and amounted to rebellion against the Constitution and the law.

It noted that imposing one's views and ideology on others was against the teachings of Shariah and was akin to spreading chaos. The declaration said that no individual and group had the right to take law into its hands or set up a parallel court system.

Religious scholars and Muftis declared unanimously that suicide attacks, armed insurgency against the state and the use of force in the name of enforcing Shariah was '*Haram*' or forbidden in Islam, and this announcement was named as 'Paigham-e-Pakistan (Message of Pakistan)'. The effort is being termed a second biggest historic consensus among all the sects after the 1973 Constitution.

The President said that according to Islamic teachings, extremism, bloodshed and suicide-bombing were categorized as spreading evil on earth (*Fasaad-fil-Ard*) which was categorically prohibited and unjustified.

He said the decree would not only promote positive image of the Islamic teachings and Pakistani society in the world but would also help in overcoming the menace of extremism.

Ahmadiyya community finds the Paigham e Pakistan an excellent document. While one would like to agree with and wish the best to the expectations of the President, one is reminded of the fate of such past initiatives, for example the National Action Plan.

This narrative and decree is signed by a large number of ulama. Many of the prominent signatories, however, continue to indulge in fomenting sectarian hatred against Ahmadis. They have not given up on their radicalism and extremism. This shows a wide gulf between what is said and what is undertaken by these clerics. For example, the leading signatories include mullas like Munibur Rahman, Abdul Razzaq Sikandar (of AMT Khatme Nabuwwat), Hanif Jalandhry, Zahid Mahmud Qasmi, Sajid Mir, Muhammad Ahmad Ludhianwi, Hamid Raza, Zahid ur Rashidi, Zawwar Bahadur, Shabbir A Usmani etc. All these are on record to have explicitly and publicly taken extreme anti-Ahmadi position – even anti-Shia. It is obvious that they have serious reservations over the contents of this document; however they found it convenient and self-serving to sign the Paighame Pakistan, prompted, endorsed and launched by the Government of Pakistan.

Whatever the result and fruits of this initiative, it does great credit to the Islamic Research Institute at the International Islamic University, Islamabad to have produced this narrative and acquired the *fatwa* (decree) from such prominent ulama and hundreds of Islamic scholars from all over the country.

P.S. It is noteworthy that relatively few ulama from Lahore (the Punjab) signed the document.