



## **President Ashraf Ghani Rejects the New School Uniform for Girls for being not Representative of the Culture and Tradition of his Country**

School girls in Afghanistan have complained about the color of their school uniforms. They are asking the government and schools to change the typical, black dress and white scarf to a color that does not absorb the heat and is less depressing.

The Ministry of Education unveiled on 14 of March the new design. It is blue color uniform for primary school girls, grey for middle schoolers and navy blue for high schoolers. As before, the new uniform also required girls to wear a white scarf on their heads. This proposal from the Ministry of Education caused restlessness. But the problem was not the new color, it was that the new uniforms were replacing uniforms that consisted of black dresses that hit just a few inches below the knee and were worn over pants leggings. Not so the new design, which mandated that elementary school girls as young as five would have to wear tunics that would fall several inches below their knees and for girls 12 and up, the tunics had to extend all the way to the floor. And although the head scarves would continue to be required and would still be white, they had to conform to a style that no longer allowed hair to show (like the tradition Afghan-scarf which doesn't cover all the hair), but would have to conceal every strand of hair.

The Afghan government retracted the proposals earlier this month. President Ashraf Ghani says: *"The new school uniform which was announced by the Ministry of Education is not representative of the culture and tradition of the Afghan people."* He has directed the Ministry of Education to work on a new design that is affordable together with a nationally representative group of teachers, parents and students. Now the school year in Afghanistan has begun and the girls are still wearing the old uniform. (Source: Independent.co.uk)

In Afghanistan, the affairs regarding the women are very important and becomes always a significant role and attention in the society. That is because Afghanistan is one of the countries where the secular power has penetrated to 'so-called' liberate the population from the existing misery and above all to liberate specially the Afghan women from the apparent oppressor of religion and tradition. Because of that all eyes are open when it concerns the affairs of Afghan women. The "democratic helpers" want to give the Afghan women freedom, gender equality and empowerment as the western women have it. They grudge to the Afghan women that this will be possible if they liberate themselves from the Islamic religion.

In this case, it is about the school uniform of the girls in the public schools. The Ministry of Education (MoE) has proposed a school uniform which corresponds to the Islamic dress code of women. But this uniform is strongly rejected from women's rights activists and the secular Afghan government. Women's rights activists who live abroad had already planned demonstrations and to even start online campaigns against this new Islamic conservative uniform. One example is Zuhra Bahman, an Afghan writer in London who organized a petition against the new uniform, implored Muslims to sign it saying: *"The new uniform misinterprets Islam and what it says about Muslim women's dress."* She also urged Americans and Europeans to object to the change, given that the West provides financial backing to the school system in Afghanistan. Freshta Ibrahimi also opposed the change. She is a graduate of the American University of Afghanistan who lives in Kabul and is now the program coordinator for Ascend, a team of women mountaineers. *"We women in Afghanistan never want to go back to the Taliban era, when women were forced to wear burkas,"* she wrote to NPR in an email. *"If women accept this uniform for me that means that government will also design another Taliban-like role for women. Women in Afghanistan want to experience freedom and it will happen if all women stick together."*

But it did not come to the demonstrations, because the Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani has already rejected the new Uniform. He mentions in his statement that the new school uniform which was announced by the MoE is not representative of the culture and tradition of Afghan people.

It's interesting that in Afghanistan the state religion is Islam and 99.0% of the population are Muslims. The culture and tradition of the country is therefore rooted in the Islamic ideology, convictions and beliefs of the Afghan people. But for the foreign-imposed secular Afghan government, Islamic clothes for women are apparently not a part of his culture and tradition. It is clear that President Ashraf Ghani does not speak about the Islamic culture and tradition which should really exist in a country like Afghanistan. Rather he talks about a culture and tradition which is infested by the enemies of Islam and he accept this as his own – that based on western secular and liberal beliefs.

Unfortunately, the Afghan government sees the secular regimes as his example and idol of the future and tries also to impress this in the minds of the Afghan population. They want save the Afghan culture but don't care about the Islamic obligations. The government and the secular powers will not allow that the women comply with this Islamic dress codes, because they see this as restrictive and not as a right way to progress and empowerment according to their narrow and restrictive secular viewpoint. The secular ideas slip into the country and want to cloak the people like a storm. Furthermore, the government tries to arouse the patriotic and nationalistic feelings and speaks about the non-Islamic afghan culture and traditions which must be saved.

It is questionable why the MoE makes such a proposal, because it cooperates very closely with the western governments and measures the standards of education in their preconditions. But the point which is clear is that the Afghan government clearly showed for all the population who lives in Afghanistan, that the public dress code of Afghan Women is not the Islamic dress. The talk is not about the issue of whether these clothes are compulsory for every Muslim woman. The talk is about these clothes not corresponding to the Afghan culture and tradition. With this statement the MoE becomes the confirmation card to make the next proposal far from the Islamic dress code.

Whether it is manifest in the western countries or veiled in the Muslim lands, one thing is crystal clear - that the enemies of Islam together with their helpers in the Muslim lands, are trying to remove the Muslims from their values and concepts and force them to adopt the values from the man-made democratic system.

These signs should be a signal of awakening for the Ummah. These signs are supposed to lead the Ummah to finally break the silence over their secular governments. These signs must push the Ummah to work for the reestablishment of the Khilafah (Caliphate) according the Method of the Prophethood, which will implement, protect and propagate all the beliefs and laws of Islam.

﴿وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾

**“And let there be [arising] from you a nation inviting to [all that is] good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and those will be the successful.” [Al-i-Imran: 104]**

**Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by**

**Amanah Abed**

**Member of the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir**