

Press News**Report about the lecture “I belong to the Muslims”**

Hizb ut Tahrir / The Netherlands organized a lecture on Thursday the 12<sup>th</sup> of December 2019 in the Hague titled: “I belong to the Muslims”. The event was opened by a recitation of the Quran after which Mikael ibn Hassan held the first talk. Mikael discussed the importance identity and explained that identity is that which connects a group of people and distinguishes them from the rest. Mikael also talked about the different challenges that Muslims face in the Netherlands and the West. He explained how in the Netherlands and other Western countries the Islamic identity is under ever-increasing pressure due to the integration policy of the government.

The integration policy turns out to be nothing more than the assimilation of Muslims whereby not only the acts, but also the Islamic thought is being attacked. Moreover Mikael explained the mustering of identity politics and why it isn't limited to The Netherlands.

The second lecture was given by Okay Pala (media representative of Hizb ut Tahrir / The Netherlands). He commented on the disturbing developments concerning the Muslims and their Islamic identity. Okay explained that almost every EU member state formulated policies to regulate Islam one way or another. This is a version of Islam that will be accepted which conforms to the vision of these EU member states. This vision aims at promoting a secular version of Islam.

Okay discussed the way in which the Dutch government is increasingly forcing this idea upon the Muslims. Okay showed the Dutch government does this with increasing harsh measures. Lastly, he explained the difference between a “Dutch Muslim” and a “Muslim in the Netherlands”. The moment a Muslim calls himself a “Dutch Muslim” he knowingly or unknowingly accepted the values of the Netherlands which go against Islam. In contrast, we believe in Allah and will not limit ourselves due to borders, nationalities or ethnicity. This will only lead to division. While it is true that we have several interests like mosques, schools and burial places, all of these are subordinate to the upholding of our Islamic way of thinking. Upholding our identity is our greatest interest.

**Okay Pala****Media Representative of Hizb ut Tahrir in The Netherlands**