

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

WITH THE NAME OF GOD, MOST GRACIOUS, MOST MERCIFUL

FATWA ON THE SO-CALLED "ISLAMIC STATE" (FORMERLY "ISLAMIC STATE IN IRAQ & SYRIA")

Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds. Peace and blessings be upon His final messenger Muhammad.

Due to recent events in the Middle East and their impact on some people in Britain, we as imams and scholars based in the UK, would like to issue the following clarifications in the form of a fatwa:

1. There is no doubt that President Assad's regime in Syria is oppressive, unjust and brutal, and has committed numerous atrocities against its own people.
2. The same is true of the so-called "Islamic State" (IS) or self-styled "Caliphate," formerly known as "The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria": it is an oppressive and tyrannical group.
3. By murdering prisoners of war, journalists and civilians, including mosque imams who refused to endorse their campaign, and by enslaving the women and children of their opponents, ISIS has violated international agreements such as the Geneva Conventions and conventions on slavery that everyone, including Muslims, have signed up to. God says in the Qur'an, "*Believers, fulfil your covenants!*" (5:1)
4. The IS persecution and massacres of Shia Muslims, Christians and Yazidis is abhorrent and opposed to Islamic teachings and the Islamic tolerance displayed by great empires such as the Mughals and Ottomans.
5. Based on all of the above: IS is a heretical, extremist organisation and it is religiously prohibited (*haram*) to support or join it; furthermore, it is an obligation on British Muslims to actively oppose its poisonous ideology, especially when this is promoted within Britain.
6. British and other EU citizens are bound by their duties to their home countries according to Islamic theology and jurisprudence: it is therefore prohibited (*haram*) to travel to fight with any side in Syria, including non-state actors, since this is forbidden by laws in EU countries.
7. It is a moral obligation upon British Muslims to help the Syrian and Iraqi people without betraying their own societies: "*If they ask for your help in religion, you must help, except against a people with whom you have a treaty.*" (Qur'an 8:72)