

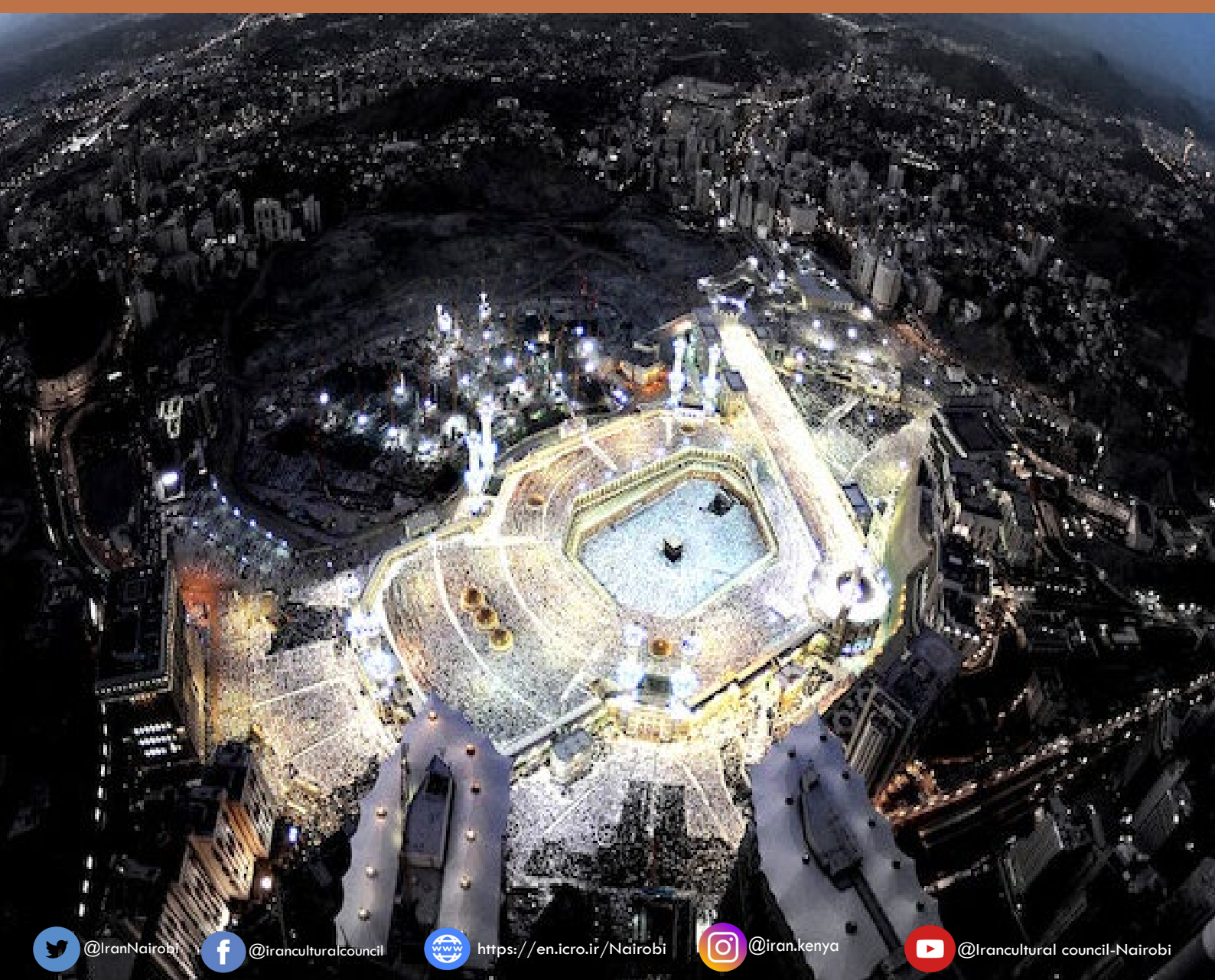
MAGAZINE



PUBLICATION OF THE CULTURAL COUNCIL OF THE EMBASSY OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, NAIROBI-KENYA

JULY 2023 | ISSUE NO. 04

Hajj: Proof of opposition to any form of discrimination



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Profile

The Cultural Council of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Nairobi promotes mutual understanding and cultural co-operation among people of Kenya and Iran in line with the principles of the cultural agreement between Iran and Kenya.

The Cultural Council aims to create enduring partnership between our two friendly states' cultures by creating opportunities to connect with the latest skills, ideas and experience from Iran.

Activities

Library:

The Cultural Council has a very rich library consisting of myriad of books in the field of Persian language and literature. Besides, books on human sciences, history of Iran, Islamic studies, world history, religion, Islamic philosophy, a large number of books on social sciences, political science, culture and art are also available for readers and scholars.

Film and Art Division:

The film and art division consists of video and audio tapes of classical Persian music, art books, calligraphy models, attractive sceneries, handicrafts and various prominent Iranian films. In addition, film festivals and cultural exhibitions in various parts of Kenya are also organised by this Office.

Public Relations Department:

The department arranges meetings with prominent personalities from the domain of Kenya art and culture. Organises seminars, round table discussions and cultural programmes.

Information Centre:

The centre provides necessary information about Iranian art, culture and all other facets of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Distribution Unit:

This unit is responsible for providing Persian books, periodicals, magazines to the Persian loving people.

Persian Language Teaching Centre:

This unit is responsible for organising Beginners, Intermediate and advance level Persian courses for interested students. Besides, the unit has introduced Persian language teaching programme in Kenyan Universities.

Scholarship for Kenyan Students

We offer scholarships to study in the Islamic Republic of Iran to pursue either Bachelors, Masters or PhD. Please visit www.irankenya.org for more information.

Translation Unit:

The Cultural Council also does translation of books from Persian to English.

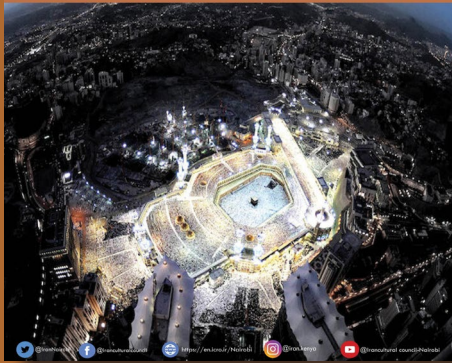
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Editorial

Hajj can render ineffectual all plans of Arrogant Powers & Zionism for moral downfall of humanity

The following is the full text of Imam Khamenei's message to the 2023 Hajj Pilgrimage.

In the Name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful

Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds and peace and blessings be upon the Great Messenger of God, Muhammad al-Mustafa and upon his Pure Progeny and upon his chosen Companions.

The Abrahamic call to Hajj and his universal invitation have once again addressed the entire world from the heart of history, making eager and excited the hearts that are ready and which remember.

The invitation is addressed to all human beings: "And proclaim the Hajj to all the people" (Holy Quran 22:27). The Kaaba is the blessed host and a guide for all people: "Indeed, the first house to be set up for humankind is the one at Bakkah [Kaaba], blessed and a guidance for all nations" (Holy Quran 3:96).

The Kaaba, as the focal point and the main focus of attention of all Muslims, and also the Hajj ritual as a small example of the extensive diversity of the Islamic world, can serve to elevate human society and improve the health and security of all people. Hajj can bless all humanity with spiritual and moral elevation, and this is the vital need of humankind today.

Hajj can annul and render ineffectual all the plans of the Arrogant Powers and Zionism for the moral downfall of humanity – today and in the future.

That which is a necessary condition for the occurrence of this universal impact is that as a first measure Muslims themselves should properly hear the life-giving message of Hajj and do their utmost to implement it.

The two main foundations of this message are "unity" and "spirituality."

Unity and spirituality are what guarantee the material and spiritual advancement of the Islamic world and its enlightening the entire world. Unity means being connected both intellectually and in practice. It means that hearts, thoughts, and orientations come closer together. It means a synergy in science and experience. It means having an economic connection between Islamic countries. It means the existence of trust and cooperation between Muslim governments. It means working together against common, definite enemies. Unity means that the plots designed by the enemy cannot set Islamic denominations, nations, races, languages, and the diverse cultures of the Islamic world against each other.

Unity means that Muslim nations should know each other, not through the enemy's seditious descriptions, but through communication, dialogue, and interaction. They should be aware of each other's potential and capacities and make plans to benefit from them.

Unity means that the scientists and universities of the Islamic world work hand in hand together, the scholars of Islamic schools view each other in good faith and with tolerance and fairness, and they listen to each other's words. The intellectual elites in all countries and of all denominations acquaint the people with each other's commonalities, and encourage coexistence and brotherhood.

Unity also means that political and cultural leaders in Islamic countries should prepare themselves in a coordinated manner for the situation that will exist in the upcoming world order. They need to determine with their own hands and by their own will the proper place for the Islamic Ummah in the new global experience, which is filled with opportunities and threats. They should not allow the bitter experience of the political and territorial engineering of West Asia at the hands of Western governments after WWI to be repeated.

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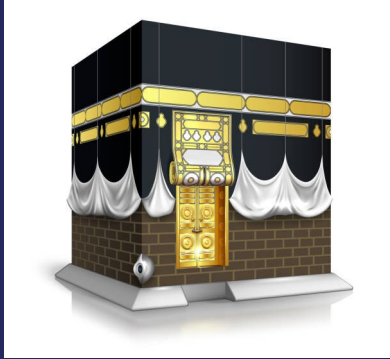
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Spirituality means advancing religious ethics. The enchantment of “ethics minus religion,” which has long been promoted by Western intellectual sources, has resulted in this unrestrained collapse of ethics in the West that everyone in the world is witnessing. Spirituality and ethics

should be learned from the Hajj rituals, from the simplicity that exists in Ihram, from the negation of illusory privileges, from “feeding the destitute and the needy,” from “there is to be no sexual contact, vicious talk, or disputing,” from the circumambulation of the entire Ummah around the axis of monotheism, from the Stoning of the Devil [shaytan], and from the Disavowal of the Polytheists [mushrikin].

My brothers and sisters who are performing the Hajj! Take advantage of the opportunity that Hajj provides to contemplate and ponder on the secrets and mysteries of this unparalleled obligatory action and make it a provision for the rest of your life. At this juncture in time and more than in the past, unity and spirituality are subject to the enmity and sabotage of the Arrogant Powers and Zionism. The US and other centers of Arrogance are strongly opposed to the unity of Muslims, to the understanding between nations, countries, and Islamic governments, and to the religiosity and commitment to religion of the younger generation in these nations. They are intensely opposed to these and they will fight these with any means they can. It is the duty of all of us, the duty of all nations, and the duty of our governments to stand against this evil scheme of the US and Zionist regime.

Ask the All-knowing, All-powerful God for help. Strengthen the spirit of “Disavowal of the Polytheists” in yourselves, and oblige yourself to spread and strengthen this spirit in the environment where you are living.

I ask Almighty God to grant all of you Iranian and non-Iranian pilgrims, success and an accepted and blessed Hajj, and I wish for all of you the accepted prayers of the great Vestige of Allah remaining on earth [Imam Mahdi (aj)] – may our souls be sacrificed for him.

May God's greetings and mercy be upon you.

Sayyid Ali Khamenei

Dhu al-Hijjah 6, 1444

June 25, 2023



Hajj: Islam proves in practice its opposition to any form of discrimination



Supreme Leader, Ayatullah Ali Khamenei

The following is the full text of the speech delivered by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution on May 17, 2023, during a meeting with Iranian officials in charge of organizing and conducting the Hajj pilgrimage this year.

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

All praise is due to God, Lord of the Worlds, and peace and greetings be upon our Master, Muhammad, and upon his Pure Progeny, particularly the Vestige of God remaining on earth.

Welcome my dear brothers and sisters. I would like to especially welcome the noble, honorable families of the

martyrs, as well as the organizers of the Hajj pilgrimage, and our dear pilgrims. I would like to extend my condolences to all the honorable people who are present here today on the anniversary of the martyrdom of Imam Sadiq (pbuh).

Regarding Hajj, understanding the significance of Hajj is a fundamental principle for everyone, both for the pilgrims and the organizers. They should understand the significance of Hajj in the Islamic system and as a part of the overall worship acts that people perform. This is important. We must understand the importance of Hajj. There may be a time when a person goes on a trip. Well, this trip might be for a pilgrimage, going on a tour, or it



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Now, there are numerous verses in the Quran about Hajj, each one covering a special point. But I have made a note here of two of these verses that refer to the benefits of Hajj that I will share with you. One is this verse from Surah Al-Maidah which states, "Allah has made the Kaaba, the Sacred House, a [means of] maintenance for mankind" (5:97). God regards the Kaaba as being the source of the [Islamic] community's stability. This is a very important matter. "A [means of] maintenance for mankind." In other words, if Hajj did not exist or if it were not carried out, the Islamic nation and the Islamic community would collapse. That is why jurists say that performing the Hajj pilgrimage is a collective obligation in certain cases. What this means is that if a day comes, God forbid, when there is no Hajj pilgrim from anywhere in the world, it is obligatory for you personally to perform the Hajj pilgrimage, even if you had previously made this trip ten times. This House [Kaaba], this main headquarters, this fundamental center, should never be left empty. "A [means of] maintenance for mankind." This is a very important statement.

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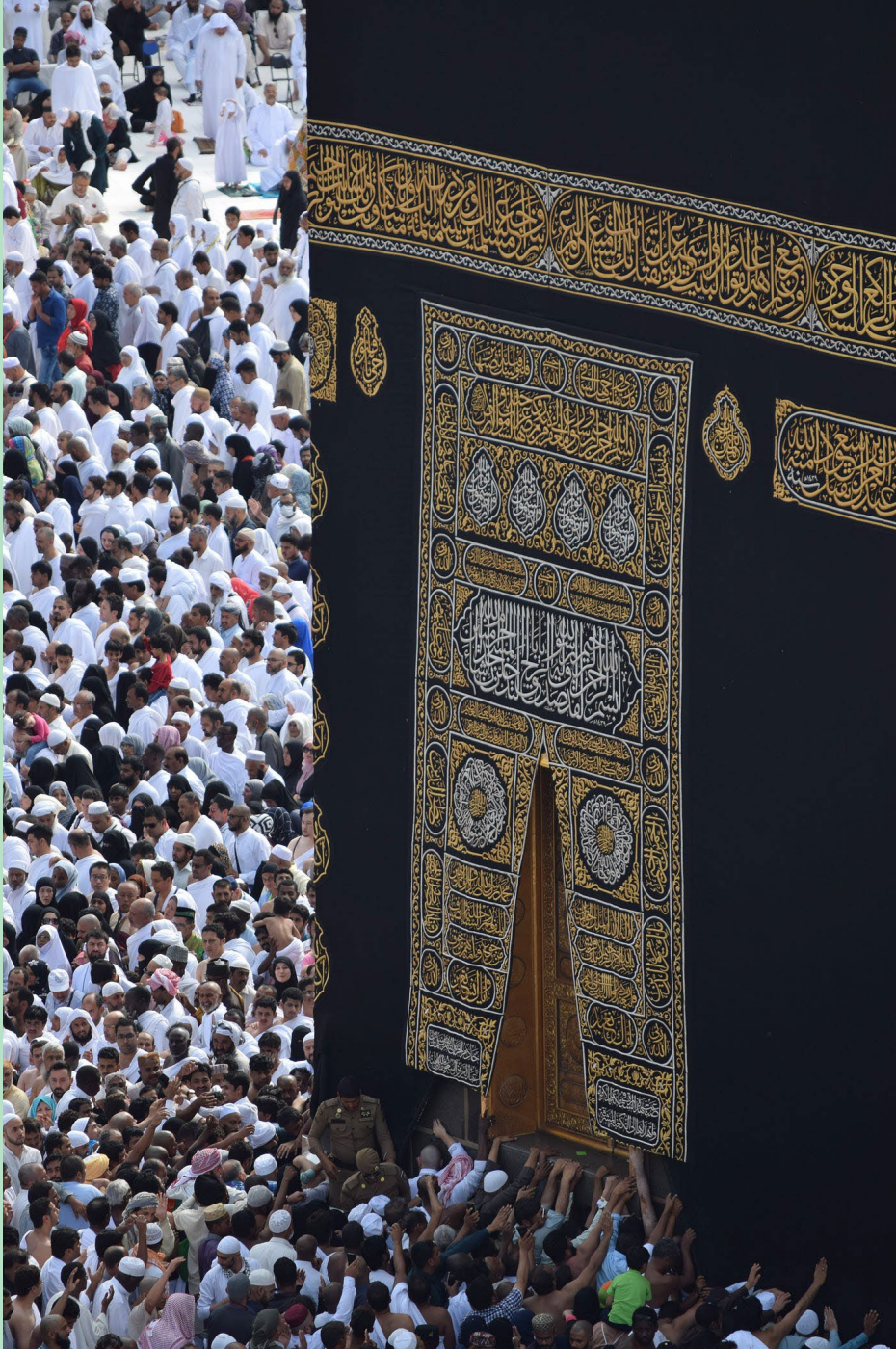
Another verse is the blessed verse in Surah Al-Hajj, "And proclaim the Hajj to all the people: they will come to you on foot and on lean camels, coming from distant places, that they may witness the benefits for them" (22:27-28). the people, the nation, the Islamic nation, should come to Hajj from all over the world so that they can see its benefits with their own eyes. "Witness" means they should watch, see, and be present in the place where these benefits exist. Imam Sadiq (pbuh) was asked if these benefits are benefits that one receives in the afterlife. He said that no, the benefits are for this world and the hereafter. The





Islamic nation benefits from Hajj in a way that cannot be gained by any other factor like this international meeting. It is only possible with this global meeting. The worldly benefits from it include improvements in the Islamic world's level of civilization due to the mutual understanding and harmony that exists in it. There are some things that are

“And proclaim the Hajj to all the people,” Hajj belongs to all of humanity. Prophet Abraham’s call was addressed to all of humankind. When the Almighty God revealed to Abraham (pbuh) that he should invite the people [to Hajj], Abraham went to Mount Abu Qubays and said, “O people!” He did not address only the believers or those who accepted him. He invited all of humankind to Hajj. Throughout history, throughout time, and as long as the world exists, Abraham’s invitation will remain. The Almighty God has invited all of humanity to gather together on certain days, in a certain period of time, and in a certain place. “... in the appointed days” has been mentioned in Surah Al-Baqarah, and “... during the known days” has been mentioned in Surah Al-Hajj. The Almighty God has invited all of humanity to come to a specific location.



Of course, it is clear that those who believe in this invitation will accept it, come, and act on it. Thus, they are the believers. It is for the Muslims. Those who do not agree with it will not accept this invitation and will be deprived of it. The fact that all the people from around the world gather together on a certain day, on a certain date, and in a certain place is not a coincidence. It is a calculated matter. It is clear that they are being invited for something.

You see, if an invitation is given to a certain group of people or to a certain city of a country or all the people of a country to be present on a certain day, in a certain place, and at a certain point, what is the meaning of this? It means that their presence is for a purpose and a goal. It does not mean that you should just go there and then leave. [It means], come here so that something can be done. Come, so a goal can be achieved. That is what Hajj is about.

very apparent but remain hidden from human eyes. This is one of them.

The Sacred Lawmaker (God) [addresses] all the members of the Islamic Ummah, “And proclaim the Hajj to all the people” (Quran 22:27). There are also points to be understood in the word “people” that I do not wish to go into right now. Some verses of the Quran speak about “the people” instead of “the believers.” One of these verses is,

The invitation had one goal. What is that goal? It is the advancement of the Islamic Ummah. It is to bring the hearts of the Islamic Ummah closer together. The goal is the unity of the Islamic Ummah. In facing what? In facing unbelief, oppression, Arrogance, and in the face of human and non-human idols. The goal is to stand up to all the things that Islam came to eliminate. The goal is for the Muslims to gather together and stand up to these things.



For example, the issue of Israel, the Zionist regime, is a matter of discussion today. The entire Islamic world should gather together, and their gathering should have a message in opposition to the Zionist regime. The problem in the world today is the influence of the Arrogant Powers. Everyone must gather together to show their presence and their strength and to stand up to the Arrogant Powers. This is the case. These are the worldly benefits [of Hajj]. Of course, [if] we want to count the worldly benefits, we need to write tens of pages about them. But I have just mentioned a few words about this.

As for the benefits [of Hajj] in the hereafter, the benefits in the hereafter are mixed with these worldly benefits. Hajj affects people's hearts. It allows people to come closer to the Almighty God. It strengthens one's relationship with the Almighty God. It brings sincerity to our actions. It cleanses the heart of everything that conflicts with the remembrance of God. Hajj is these things. These things need to take place. The rituals that are a part of Hajj — the Ihram, Tawaf, prayer, Sai, Arafat, Mashar, the rituals in Mina, and other such rituals — each one of these is a door, a window of enlightenment to the world of meaning and the unseen world, a window that your heart uses. This is how you should go to Hajj. This is how you should perform the Hajj rituals.

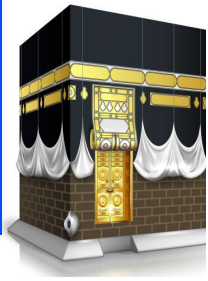
An important issue regarding Hajj is the global and extraterritorial outlook of all the Muslims. This should not be ignored. Islam has asked all Muslims to have an

extraterritorial outlook. There is no doubt that people are naturally faced with long-term, short-term, and daily issues in their lives. There is no escaping this. But we should not be limited to this. While you are thinking about your personal life, your family life, your children, your future, your career, the future of your country, and the advancement of your country, you should also be thinking about the world. This is what Islam teaches. I have written down a quote here from Imam Sadiq (pbuh) which is about Hajj. Of course, the complete hadith is longer than this. This hadith is in the book Wasail in the chapters on "Wujub Al-Hajj." Keep in mind that Imam Sadiq (pbuh) said these words about the wujub [obligation] of Hajj.

One of the sentences of this hadith is as follows, "If every community or nation only focuses on themselves, on the issues of their own country, and on the issues of their own city, if they rely only on themselves and only consider themselves important, they will perish." If you do not know what is happening in the world, you will become weak. "They will perish" is the way that Imam Sadiq (pbuh) has said this. Your own country, the region you are in, will perish. It will be destroyed. There will also be a reduction in your nation's income. You must know what is happening in the world. The hadith continues, "Or you will remain unaware of the world." You need to look at the world. You need to see what is going on in the world.

This is why I keep repeating the subject of knowing the

Ambassador's Hajj message



At the onset, May I take this opportunity to thank the Almighty Allah for giving us (pilgrims) the opportunity to be among the “Hujjaj” of this year’s Hajj rituals.

Secondly, this annual practice delivered a strong message of Unity, firm Muslim Brotherhood as well as solidarity among Muslims across the Globe.

I call upon the Muslim fraternity in Kenya and all over the World to Unite in other religious affairs with one Voice of “Labbayk Allahumma Labbayk” as demonstrated during the Hajj period without affiliating themselves to a group, sect, or even a country.

As it has been recently seen, the world of Islam needs to turn to wisdom and reason and to get used to thinking, to gaining a correct understanding of issues and

interpreting them in the right way. Today, the world of Islam needs to gain a true understanding of the camp of the enemies of the Islamic Ummah. We should know our enemies and friends.

I deeply wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for serving the guests of God with such an honor, dedicates vast manpower and financial resources to the proper conduct of the pilgrimage.

H.E. Dr. Jafar Barmaki
Ambassador
Embassy IR of Iran
Nairobi-Kenya



enemy. Know the enemy, their methods, the way they function, the extent of their progress, their weaknesses, and their strengths. What I am saying is not just directed to the country's officials, but to everyone. If a country's population, both the young and old people, the scholars, students, and merchants all pay attention to global issues, they will never be deceived. We have been deceived in many places in global affairs because we did not pay attention to global issues. [For example], what intention did the other party have when they entered the scene? What intention did they have when they said this and that? Why are they insisting on a certain issue? What are their problems? How much do we need something? How much do they need something? We need to know these things. If we know these things, we will not be deceived. Whenever we have been aware of these things and acted accordingly, we have made progress.

We are now making good progress at the global, international, and regional levels. What the US is mainly angry about is our progress. This progress was due to the fact that those who were responsible for the work that needed to be done were vigilant. They understood what was going on in the world. Hajj is the main place where you can find this.

In Hajj, people come from Europe and Africa. They come from all over Asia and from countries that are inclined toward certain policies. All kinds of people come [to take

part in Hajj]. You have the means, you have the opportunity to get to know the world's issues from close up, not through some bogus, lying newspaper or some mendacious, wicked news agency that distorts the truth and spreads such news and false rumors around the world. You can understand from close up. That is how Hajj is. Hajj should be viewed in this manner.

An important point about Hajj is that Islam shows in practice there that it does not accept these discriminations that exist in the world in different countries. It does not accept racial discrimination, geographical discrimination, discrimination between social classes, etc. This is a very important point. The countries that claim to be civilized yet, in my opinion, have no trace of civilization in them — the same countries that you know who consider themselves to be civilized and the rest of the world to be savages — are still caught up in the issue of black and white, European and non-European races. They are still caught up in the issue of migrants.

Even if thousands of migrants drown in the sea, they do not care at all about it. They don't care. It is as though they don't consider them to be human beings. They don't consider them to be something significant. They value their pets more than they value a foreigner living next door. These are events that we see in the world on a daily basis. They are stuck. They have not been able to solve this problem. Islam has solved this problem. And not just in words. Now, the Holy Quran states in words, "The faithful are indeed





brothers” (49:10), and there are other such verses. These kinds of words are also plentiful in the narrations and in the words of the great personages of Islam. But in practice, Islam is a language that eliminates discrimination in action. Where? In Hajj. There are black people, there are white people, there are people from all parts of the world there, from all civilizations, and from different parts of history. They all gather there together without any discrimination. There are no disparities between them. They walk together, they perform the Tawaf, they do the Sai together, and they stay [in Arafat] together. This is very important. These are some of the secrets of Hajj. These need to be done with understanding.

Now, about this matter that I would like to mention, and I have said these things many times before, I insist the respected Hajj officials create social norms in these areas. Work in such a way that when today’s young people hear the words “Hajj” or “the Holy Kaaba,” these concepts come to their mind: the concept of building civilization, the concept of global unity, the idea of having a transborder, international outlook, the concept of eliminating disparities. These things should come to their minds. Awareness needs to be created in these areas. This is the responsibility of the clerics who accompany the Hajj groups. This is the duty of the Hajj officials. This is the responsibility of the Bithah (Leader’s representative office in Hajj and Pilgrimage Organization) officials. It is everyone’s duty. Whoever can do so should spread awareness in these areas regarding Hajj. Do something so that people perform the Hajj with this intention.

If we are able to instill this in people’s minds, no one will be worried anymore about some pilgrims shopping for low-quality products as souvenirs. That is a worry that exists. It is one of the things that people worry about. If it becomes like that [where people have those correct concerns], we won’t have these worries anymore.

This is the reason the magnanimous Imam [Khomeini] insisted, and I am following him in insisting on this, that you should participate in the [congregational] prayers — the prayers with the Sunnis — in Masjid al-Haram. Otherwise, if a crowd numbering in the millions gathers together in Masjid al-Haram to pray and you pray with 50 other people in your hotel, that’s not good. Participate in gatherings, talk to each other, communicate with each other, and be in touch with each other.

Yes, there is opposition to these. I know that. There are hindrances. However, the one who is creating a hindrance is a human being, and you are a human being too. You can [talk]. You should gain these benefits. There are spiritual benefits, which consist of prayer and supplications. Pray as much as you can. Supplicate as much as you can. In Masjid al-Haram and in Medina [Masjid al-Nabawi], repeat and increase those deeds that the Almighty God loves, which is sincere action, sincere view, and beseeching God. “Oh

God, feed me with Your love and the love of whomsoever loves You, and the love of all those actions that help me get closer to You” (Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 91, 149). Those actions are the ones that bring us closer to God, like beseeching God, paying attention to God, and the supplications that have been narrated. Or there are the supplications that are not specific to those places [Masjid al-Haram and Masjid al-Nabawi], such as the Kumayl Supplication. It is very good to read the Kumayl Supplication together in a group. Our respected officials should talk with the officials in that country [Saudi Arabia] and come to an agreement with them in order to ensure that this is done. This getting closer to God is the positive part. There is also the Disavowal of the Polytheists ritual, which is a huge movement [in Hajj]. It must continue.

One of the things that the Islamic Republic takes pride in is that it has recognized these capacities. Now, that is not to say that we have completely revived this ritual. We have not revived it completely, but we should. However, we have succeeded in informing people about this potential. Prior to the [Islamic] Revolution, these things were not discussed. Neither the people nor the clerics like myself who preached to the people were aware of these things. We were not aware of these things either. It was the Revolution and the revolutionary movement that taught us these things. It showed us the great potential of Hajj. So we should introduce these capacities to the people and then try to act accordingly.

May God grant you success and accept your Hajj pilgrimage. May God accept the Hajj of all the pilgrims from all over the world, grant them success, and give them honor and respect. May God bless the pure soul of Imam [Khomeini] and the souls of our dear martyrs.

May God’s greetings, mercy, and blessings be upon you.

Abrahamic Hajj; A Global Congregation for Practicing Ethics and Tolerance



Muhammad Mehdi Imanipour, Head of Islamic Culture Relations Organisation (ICRO)

Peace and tranquility within the context of ethical coexistence is the most outstanding issue that has always been man's concern. The formation of the United Nations Organization and the extraterritorial international institutions affiliated with it, has been one of the measures adopted by the modern world to break and transcend geographical, religious, class, etc. boundaries so that humanity can achieve peace and tranquility and a world free from violence. However, after the passage of years and despite the formation of numerous extra-territorial international institutions, we continue to witness the outbreak of conflicts and fierce wars in different geographical regions. It, thus, seems that today's man, more than anything else, is in need of the restoration of spirituality and the growth of religiosity in order to reach a certain level of peace and tranquility on planet Earth.

When we take a close look at the cultural, social, religious, and historical customs of the nations, we can confidently say that the gigantic Abrahamic Hajj Congregation - which is several thousand years old and the religion of Islam considers it an obligation and duty for Muslims with physical, financial and territorial capabilities - has a special superiority with regard to promoting peace and tolerance, avoiding violence, and a collective practice for faithful living with the aim of achieving tangible and intangible peace and tranquility in the human world.

Every year, this civilizational model provides a field of maneuver for the Muslims of the world, in which paying attention to the rights of fellow human beings and all surrounding living beings is one of its basic and very important principles, and committing any act - by the pilgrim - that violates the right of a human being or an animal involves fine and compensation.

In fact, during this experience of faithful living,

people learn that irrespective of skin color, ethnicity, land, level of knowledge, wealth, social status, gender, etc., they must be virtuous, moral-oriented, and adhere to the principles of servitude and that the violation of these principles and standards will result in a kind of (financial) punishment that must be paid willingly over a certain time period so that they can remain a pilgrim and finally get a passing grade.

What distinguishes the Abrahamic Hajj of Muslims from other national-religious rituals and ceremonies is the focus of this rite on training ethics-oriented and responsible people who have a sense of responsibility towards their fellow human beings and other living beings. In fact, in addition to paying special attention to respecting the rights of other individuals, one of the most outstanding features of the Abrahamic Hajj is the important issue of protecting the rights of other creatures and living beings.

The fact that every year and at a specific time the people who can afford it must travel to the land of divine revelation from all over the world and perform a set of rituals around a sacred axis is a means to remind them of the necessity of implementing the two principles of ethics and tolerance towards other beings in all social atmospheres. This is the reason that all those who have had the experience of being present in this sacred ceremony talk about having the feeling of lightness, calmness, and peace, and like a newly born person their conscience is clear for being free from any sort of obligation towards others. All that has been described about the essence of the Abrahamic Hajj is a reminder for thinkers, scholars, statesmen, and influential people in Islamic societies to take more effective steps toward the globalization and introduction of this precious heritage of the Prophet of mercy and compassion, Muhammad (PBUH). Because, unfortunately, the Islamic world has not made the necessary efforts in introducing this great human heritage and its great capacities for promoting peace and peaceful coexistence, and has not defined a mechanism to introduce it to other nations, religions, and communities.

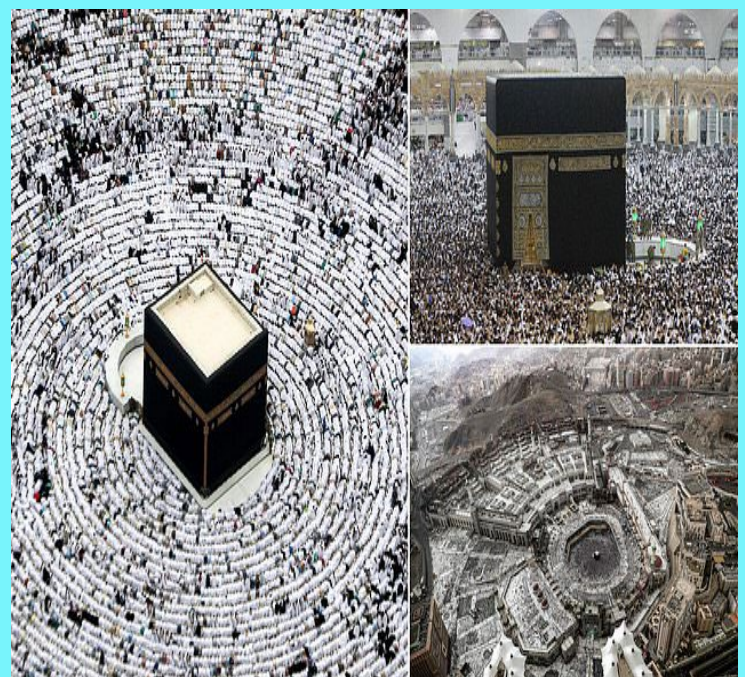
Hajj is the arena for abiding by the real Islamic lifestyle and submission and attention to the origin of existence. All the reformers of the contemporary world, at least in the past century, have continuously emphasized peace and tolerance as a necessity to achieve salvation.

The emphasis of all dimensions and rituals of this enormous congregation is on the negation of servitude to other than God Almighty and attention to the rights of all living beings, especially fellow human beings. To put it in other words, after going through hundreds of years of war, bloodshed, and violence this is what

today's world emphasizes. Abrahamic religions and all divine prophets, especially Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), have notified this important issue throughout human history. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) considered the main philosophy of his religion to be the perfection of ethical and moral values.

Of course, what has been emphasized in the words of the two imams of the Islamic Revolution regarding Hajj is the development of the "social" and "political" dimensions of these rituals along with their "mystical" and "spiritual" dimensions. Imam Khomeini's emphasis on the "Abrahamic" Hajj and the introduction of the term "Abrahamic-Mohammedan Hajj" was an attempt to explain the importance of making a return to the true essence of Hajj. Struggle against the enemies of humanity and those who trample on the rights of nations and having compassion and empathy towards the oppressed people are the characteristics of the Abrahamic Hajj. Therefore, Hajj must become the center of unity and awakening of the Islamic world against global arrogance.

To conclude, it seems that designing and implementing a mechanism for presenting a correct image of Hajj and the benefits and advantages of this gigantic congregation at the world level is very necessary and one of the important responsibilities of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). It is also incumbent upon independent activists, government institutions, and non-governmental organizations of Islamic countries to put in all their efforts to globalize the model of a faithful life derived from the rituals of the Abrahamic Hajj and make the implementation of this global mission possible.





Muhammad Mehdi Imanipour, Head of Islamic Culture Relations Organisation (ICRO)

Ritual Hajj, explanatory Hajj

The arrival of the blessed and spiritual days of Hajj has gathered pilgrims from the house of God from all over the world to the land of revelation.

The hajj is a religious ritual practiced by certain prophets before Islam. Even polytheists in Mecca practiced Hajj and the circumambulation of the Kaaba before Islam and had their own traditions, some of which were not approved by Islam.

Muslim thinkers have attempted to explain the existential philosophy of Hajj by citing Quranic verses and hadiths.

Undoubtedly, “to arrive at the truth of monotheism and the negation of polytheism” is one of the most important reasons for the formation of the Abrahamic Hajj, but the Hajj, in addition to its religious aspect, had a particular political importance. For the nascent Islamic government of the time of the Prophet Khatam (PBUH) and the role of Mecca and Medina in the publication of important Muslim news at the forefront of Islam had turned the Hajj into a political event.

In describing this dimension of Hajj, we are confronted

with key words such as “the need to know the affairs of Muslims”, “knowledge of hostility and innocence” and “the need to explain the facts of Islamic Societies”, which in a brief sentence we call “Explanatory Hajj”.

In this approach, the Hajj has a capacity beyond a simple religious ritual. Regarding what is the reality of the “explanatory pilgrimage” and what are its meanings and examples, there are a few points to which we must pay attention:

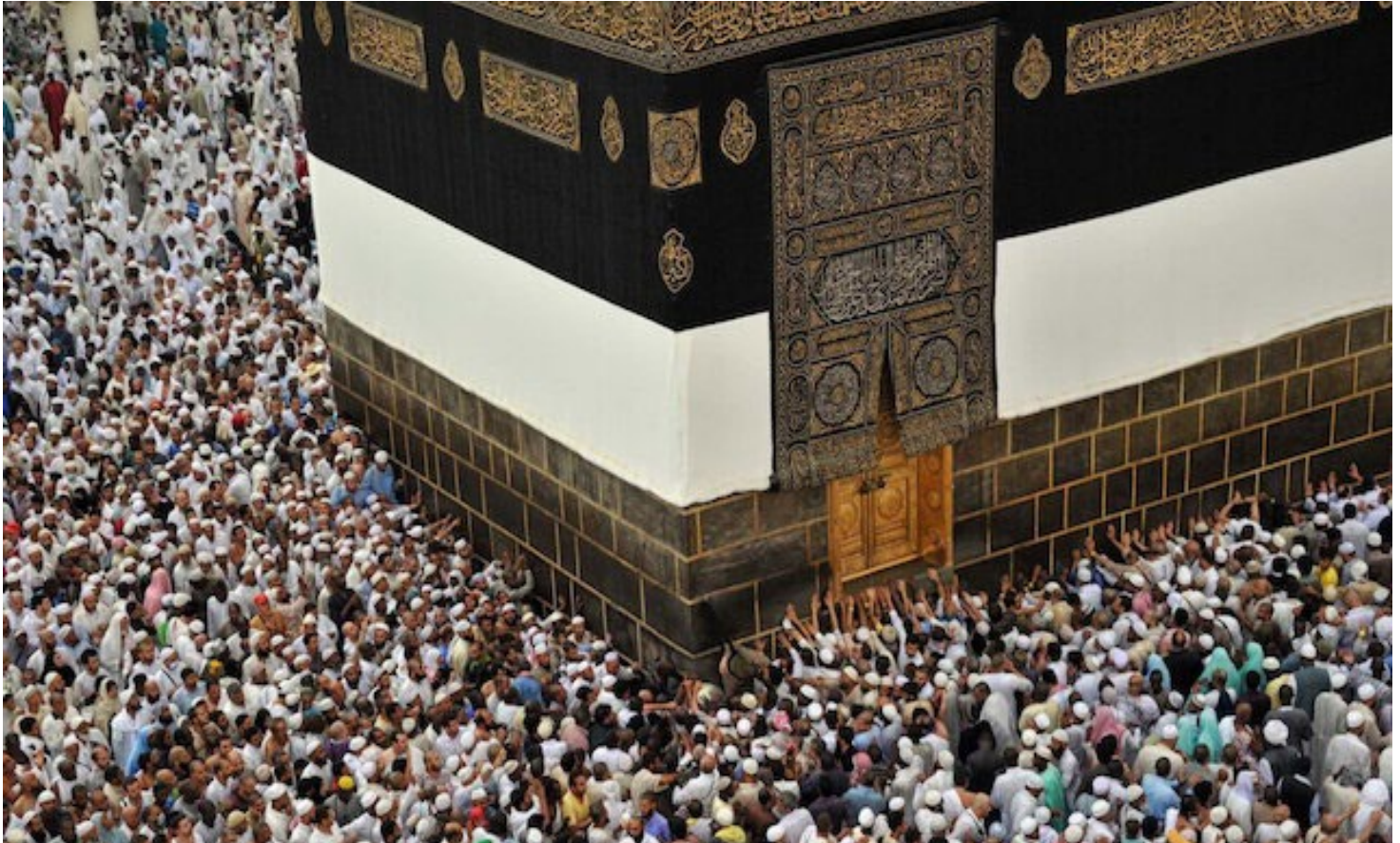
First of all; The interpretation of the Holy Quran in verse 28 of Surah Hajj is that “call people to Hajj...so that they may see their interests (worldly and future)”.

The word “benefits” in the above verse is plural and has a general meaning and includes all worldly and future benefits. According to this verse, Hajj is a place of gathering and communication for Muslims to consider and observe their material and spiritual interests.



Abrahamic Hajj and Its Role in New Islamic Civilization

By: Mojtaba Heidari



The concept of “New Islamic civilization”, which has been raised in recent decades is considered one of the central issues in the intellectual system of Grand Ayatollah Khamenei. Although some written works have been published about the essence, nature, dimensions, elements, and characteristics of this concept, many of its dimensions and aspects have not yet been analyzed and there is room for many research works on this subject. Similarly, there are certain factors that can contribute to the establishment and expansion of the New Islamic Civilization and it deserves the need to be pondered upon and analyzed.

On the other hand, Hajj is of an outstandingly privileged position in Islam. Hajj is one of God’s eternal reserves, the center of Islamic awareness, and an exceptional duty that comprises a set of Islamic values that cannot be collectively found in any other duty. A civilizational approach to Hajj can depict a new manifestation of this obligatory act of worship for

Muslims and increase its influence on the Islamic Ummah. As regards the definition of civilization, two approaches can be taken into consideration; a material approach and a two-dimensional approach. The material approach considers civilization to be more or less a material phenomenon and highlights an objective image of it. From this point of view, civilization is basically an objective phenomenon that manifests itself in such forms as art and architecture, techniques and industries, and administrative and political organizations. However, the two-dimensional approach takes into consideration both material and non-material dimensions to be necessary for civilization. From this point of view, the main foundation of civilization is based on non-material elements, especially religion, ethics, and culture, and material progress are considered the manifestations of civilization. This approach prevails mostly among Muslim thinkers. Thus, it can be said that civilization is a platform for mankind to progress both materially and spiritually



and achieve his desired divine goals (See Mahdinejad, Seyyed Reza, "An Analysis of the Relationship between Hajj and New Islamic Civilization from the Viewpoint of Grand Ayatollah Khamenei, Periodical on Researches on the Civilizational Discourse of the Islamic Revolution, Vol. 2, No.3, PP. 181- 182)

The Concept of New Islamic Civilization

The idea of the New Islamic Civilization put forward by the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution, is, on the one hand, rooted in the ancient Islamic civilization and, on the other hand, it is somehow in confrontation with the new Western civilization. Grand Ayatollah Khamenei considers the ancient Islamic civilization to be a source of pride and honor for Muslims and believes in the possibility of such a civilization in the contemporary era to be more than in the past. (August 1, 2016) In his words: "The Islamic Ummah can, through meticulous and diligent efforts, design and lay the foundation of an Islamic Civilization suitable for this era and present it to mankind." (December 29, 2015) Based on such a view, the position of a comprehensive religious rite like Hajj will be very prominent in the realization of the New Islamic Civilization. The Effects that Hajj Can Have on New Islamic Civilization Keeping in view the importance of Hajj in Islam, there arises the question "In what ways

can Hajj have an effect on the realization of New Islamic civilization?". Some of these ways are discussed hereunder.

1. Hajj is a manifestation of both spiritual and material aspects of human life

It may be appropriate to consider the most important characteristic of the New Islamic Civilization to be its comprehensiveness from the viewpoint of spirituality and materiality. Of course, the twodimensionality of the New Islamic Civilization does not mean that there is no priority between the two. Rather, spirituality is the main pivot of this civilization. In other words, although there is material progress in the New Islamic Civilization, this progress is spirituality-oriented and is in pursuit of the ultimate goals of spirituality and not just the creation of unlimited material prosperity and hedonism. On the other hand, Hajj is the source of spirituality that continuously pours out its blessings on the Islamic world and Muslims so that everyone and every group can benefit from it to the extent of their capacity and capability. When people are attracted to the center of performing the divine duty of Hajj, they leave the boundaries of material life and enter a completely spiritual space where man can get truly purified and return. Hajj begins by responding positively to the Divine invitation. In the words of the Supreme Leader: "All the rites and rituals of Hajj, such





as the state of Ihram, clothing, and prohibitions of Ihram, Tawaf, Sa'y, Salat, and Wuqufain (staying in Arafat, staying in Mash'ar al-Haram) somehow attract a part of our being to spirituality and getting close to God Almighty (April 5, 1995).

2. Unification of the Ummah in Hajj;

A fundamental step in the realization of New Islamic Civilization is the product of the collective and coherent efforts of a group of people. Therefore, the formation of civilization is impossible without coherence and solidarity among human beings. The most important precondition for the realization of the New Islamic Civilization in the world is, in the first step, to create bond and unity among its constituents, that is, Muslims and the realization of such solidarity and cohesion can take place in various ways. Hajj is one of the most important and unique platforms for creating social association and solidarity among the Islamic Ummah. This association can create a large and unified Islamic society in the form of the Islamic Ummah, which will, in turn, be the basis for the realization of the New Islamic civilization. Hajj is a unique opportunity to resolve differences and wrong perceptions and mindsets and create greater understanding and cognition between Muslims by resorting to common principles. The solidarity of the great Islamic society is one of the social goals of Islam, which can be objectively learned during Hajj. It is as if they all practice and experience unity by wearing similar outfits, performing the same acts, uttering the same words, and pursuing the same

goal. By relying on the common elements of Muslim identity such as one God, one Qibla, one prophet, and one book, practicing common social life within a specific time frame, and performing the same rituals, Hajj serves as a platform for the greater unity of the Islamic society. It provides room and space for the elimination of sectarian, cultural, and political differences and this social unity can become the basis for the creation of a New Islamic civilization. In fact, the strengthening of the religious identity of Muslims in the form of the Islamic Ummah can lead to the creation of a common religious identity and the realization of the new Islamic civilization in the next step.

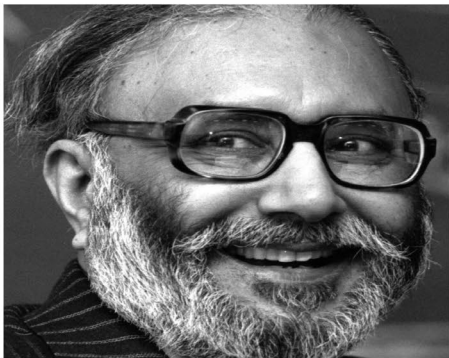
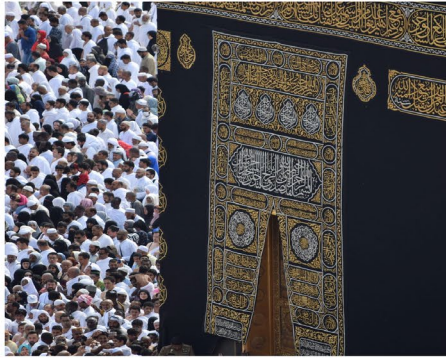
3. Determining identity and otherness of civilization in Hajj

Determining one's identity is a two-way issue, i.e., defining one's own self and defining the other and the existing difference. This point is also applicable to the issue of civilization in the sense that a part of civilizational identity is the outcome of determining civilizational otherness. One of the characteristics of Hajj, which is considered to be a determining factor of unity among Muslims and in a way determines the boundaries between Islamic and non-Islamic society is the issue of repudiation of the common enemy, namely infidels. Islamic civilization is inherently incompatible with a civilization that is based on infidelity. It is not easy to talk about Islamic civilization in its true sense, but do not believe in the distinction between it and the civilization that is fundamentally in conflict



Abrahamic Hajj from the Viewpoint of Contemporary Islamic Scholars

By: Reza Taghizadeh Naini



Hajj from the Viewpoint of Muslim Elites

The Muslim elites who have paid serious attention to the issue of Hajj and its tremendous effects on Muslims have expressed their thoughts and ideas on it; some of which are quoted hereunder:

Sheikh Mahmud Shaltut, the former president of the Al-Azhar University

Commenting on the Qur’anic verse “that they may witness the benefits for them” he said:

“The benefits, where Hajj is the perceptual and

acquirable channel for that and which has been set forth as the foremost philosophy of Hajj, is having a wide and comprehensive meaning which cannot be concluded in any special forms. Rather, this sentence, with all the universality and commonness it possesses, contains all personal and social benefits. If purification of the soul and seeking proximity to Allah are benefits, then seeking advice, too, is a benefit. If these two are reckoned to be benefits then, inviting the Muslims for centralizing their forces for the spread of Islam too is a benefit. Therefore, according to the necessities of time and the conditions of the Muslims, these benefits differ in every era.

“It is worthy that people from all walks of life make



haste towards this divine House. It is worthy that people of knowledge, insight, ijihad, and faith and the ones possessing lofty aims gather over there so that it is seen as to how Mecca spreads its wings of mercy over them and how it collects their slogan of tawhid in and around the House and (so that) they finally engage in seeking recognition, advice and help from each other and then they leave for their respective countries as one nation and with a single heart and united goals and outlook.”

Malcolm X

The late American Muslim leader has expressed his Hajj experience in these words:

“Never have I witnessed such sincere hospitality and overwhelming spirit of true brotherhood as is practiced by people of all colors and races here in this ancient Holy Land, the home of Abraham, Mohammad, and all the other Prophets of the Holy Scriptures. For the past week, I have been utterly speechless and spellbound by the graciousness I see displayed all around me by people of all colors.

I have been blessed to visit the Holy City of Mecca. I have made my seven circuits around the Ka’ba, led by a young Mutawaf named Muhammad. I drank water from the well of the Zam Zam. I ran seven times back and forth between the hills of Mt. Al-Safa and Al-Marwah. I have prayed in the ancient city of Mina, and I have prayed on Mt. Arafat.

There were tens of thousands of pilgrims, from all over the world. They were of all colors, from blue-eyed blonds to black-skinned Africans. But we were all participating in the same ritual, displaying a spirit of unity and brotherhood that my experiences in America had led me to believe never could exist between the white and non-white.

America needs to understand Islam because this is the one religion that erases from its society the race problem. Throughout my travels in the Muslim world, I have met, talked to, and even eaten with people who in America would have been considered ‘white’—but the ‘white’ attitude was removed from their minds by the religion of Islam. I have never before seen sincere and true brotherhood practiced by all colors together, irrespective of their color.

You may be shocked by these words coming from me. But on this pilgrimage, what I have seen, and experienced, has forced me to re-arrange much of my thought-patterns previously held, and to toss aside some of my previous conclusions. This was not too difficult for me. Despite my firm convictions, I have always been a man who tries to face facts, and to accept the reality of life as new experience

and new knowledge unfolds it. I have always kept an open mind, which is necessary for the flexibility that must go hand in hand with every form of intelligent search for truth.

During the past eleven days here in the Muslim world, I have eaten from the same plate, drunk from the same glass, and slept in the same bed (or on the same rug)—while praying to the same God—with fellow Muslims, whose eyes were the bluest of blue, whose hair was the blondest of blond, and whose skin was the whitest of white. And in the words and in the actions in the deeds of the ‘white’ Muslims, I felt the same sincerity that I felt among the black African Muslims of Nigeria, Sudan, and Ghana.

We were truly all the same (brothers)—because their belief in one God had removed the white from their minds, the white from their behavior, and the white from their attitude. could see from this, that perhaps if white Americans could accept the Oneness of God, then perhaps, too, they could accept in reality the Oneness of Man—and cease to measure, hinder, and harm others in terms of their ‘differences’ in color.

With racism plaguing America like an incurable cancer, the so-called ‘Christian’ white American heart should be more receptive to a proven solution to such a destructive problem. Perhaps it could be in time to save America from imminent disaster—the same destruction brought upon Germany by racism that eventually destroyed the Germans themselves.

Each hour here in the Holy Land enables me to have greater spiritual insights into what is happening in America between black and white. Racism leads America up the suicide path, turn to the spiritual path of





truth—the only way left for America to ward off the disaster that racism inevitably must lead to.

Yahya Christian Bonaud

French Islamologist, philosopher, writer, translator, and commentator of the Qur'an in French describes Abrahamic Hajj as follows:

“Imam Khomeini (RA) was the first person who revived the Abrahamic Hajj and repudiation of infidels. Unfortunately, some Muslims consider politics to be separate from religion and do not consider the issue of repudiation to be a part of Hajj. It is true that Hajj is dhikr; the dhikr of God and Prophets came for establishing monotheism and not government, but repudiation is also a part of Hajj and like other obligatory elements of Hajj, it is obligatory for Muslims. Those who say that repudiation was merely for the time of the Prophet and it is not an obligation when revelations from God have stopped are making a mistake. All Abrahamic qualities must be displayed and no one is closer to Abraham than the Prophet of Islam. He is the Messenger of God and the one who dealt with the infidels with severity and with the friends of God with mercy...”

Ahmed Shalaby

This Egyptian thinker and historian points out the following about his experience in performing Hajj:

Hajj is a congregation in which no one represents and has superiority over other pilgrims. One of the effects of Hajj is the creation of closeness among the people who perform it from different parts of the world and who share the problems of the world of Islam.”

Mohammad Farid Wajdi

He describes Hajj in the Encyclopedia Islamica in the following words:

“If the heads of the Islamic states take advantage of this rite to create Islamic unity among the Muslim nations, they will achieve full result because the congregation of tens of thousands from different parts of the world in a particular place and their concentration on a single objective cause convergence and empathy among them and on their return to their homelands they can spread the message of Hajj.”

Yusuf al-Qaradawi

In his book “Al-Ibadah f’ al-Islam” he writes:

“Hajj can be the most important factor for Islamic awakening and for this reason, some of the puppet governments or occupiers of Islamic lands prevent Muslims from going to the House of God. Because they

know that if a movement starts among Muslims, no factor can stop it from advancing.” Elsewhere he writes: “Hajj is a means of getting to know Muslims with each other and the reason for the emergence of interest and connection between them.”

Allamah Husain al-Mustafa

This Shiite scholar from the Qatif region of Arabia defines Hajj as under:

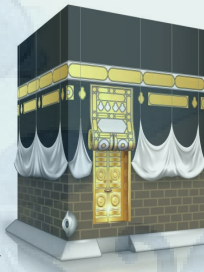
“The most important philosophy of the Hajj is creating unity, empathy, and humility before the Oneness of God Almighty, and it is appropriate that Muslims who perform the rites of the Abrahamic Hajj should be heralds of the call to brotherhood, friendship, and peaceful coexistence in the world. Hajj is a great opportunity for the Islamic world and should not be used as a means of division. This is because Hajj is not a place to discuss ethnic issues, but is an opportunity for strengthening relations between countries. Hajj provides the best opportunity to spread divine knowledge and convey the message of the Qur'an to the people of the world. It was for this very reason, the Holy Prophet of Islam and the infallible Imams (peace be upon them) also took advantage of this opportunity to propagate the teachings of Islam.

Sheikh Abdul Salam Muhammad of Al-Azhar University

In his interview with Al-Kawthar TV Sheikh Abdul Salam Muhammad stated: “Prophet Ibrahim supplicated to God Almighty and said: “Our Lord! I have settled part of my descendants in a barren valley, by Your sacred House, our Lord, that they may maintain the prayer. So make the hearts of a part of the people fond of them, and provide them with fruits, so that they may give thanks.” (Surah Ibrahim, Verse, 37.) It is due to this supplication of Prophet Ibrahim that God has placed the desire of visiting His house in our hearts. Adhering to the principles of Hajj and being careful and focusing on its rituals create peace in the heart of the believers and adorns them with good morals.”

Syed Salman Chishti, the Head of the Chishti Sufi Foundation of India

“Hajj is considered as a manifestation of unity among Muslims, and today unity is an important necessity of the Islamic society for which all sections of the Islamic Ummah, especially thinkers, and scholars, should take steps. By resorting to the morals and noble character of the great Prophet of Islam, empathy and love can be created among all Muslims, and by serving and helping fellow human beings selflessly, this unity can be created among all Muslim groups throughout the world.



Parvez Shabbir Mandiwala, Representative of the Indian Institute of Islamic Studies and Member of the Jamaat-e-Islami, Maharashtra Branch

“Hajj is the manifestation of unity and empathy among all Islamic schools of thought. In Hajj, all Muslims, rich and poor and black and white, sit next to each other and prostrate before the Almighty God. This is the manifestation of unity and solidarity among Muslims.”

Hojjat al-Islam Azhar Husain Abedi, Member of the Board of Trustees of Waqf Committee of Karnataka, India

“The house of Ka’ba is the house of blessings and a safe house. In the religion of Islam, there is a law even for the smallest of issues. Islam is a universal religion, and Hajj is a congregation in which Muslims from all countries must participate in Ihram clothing and perform its special rituals.”

Dr. Salim Khan, Deputy of the Jamaat-e-Islami, Maharashtra Branch

“God Almighty invites all Muslims to participate in it without any discrimination and everyone, regardless of the color of their skin or the amount of their wealth, stand next to each other in a white dress and pray and supplicate to their God and Lord to purify their hearts from sins and bad qualities.”

Sheikh Ezzedin Abdel Aziz; President of Jam’iat

al-Ulama of Addis Ababa

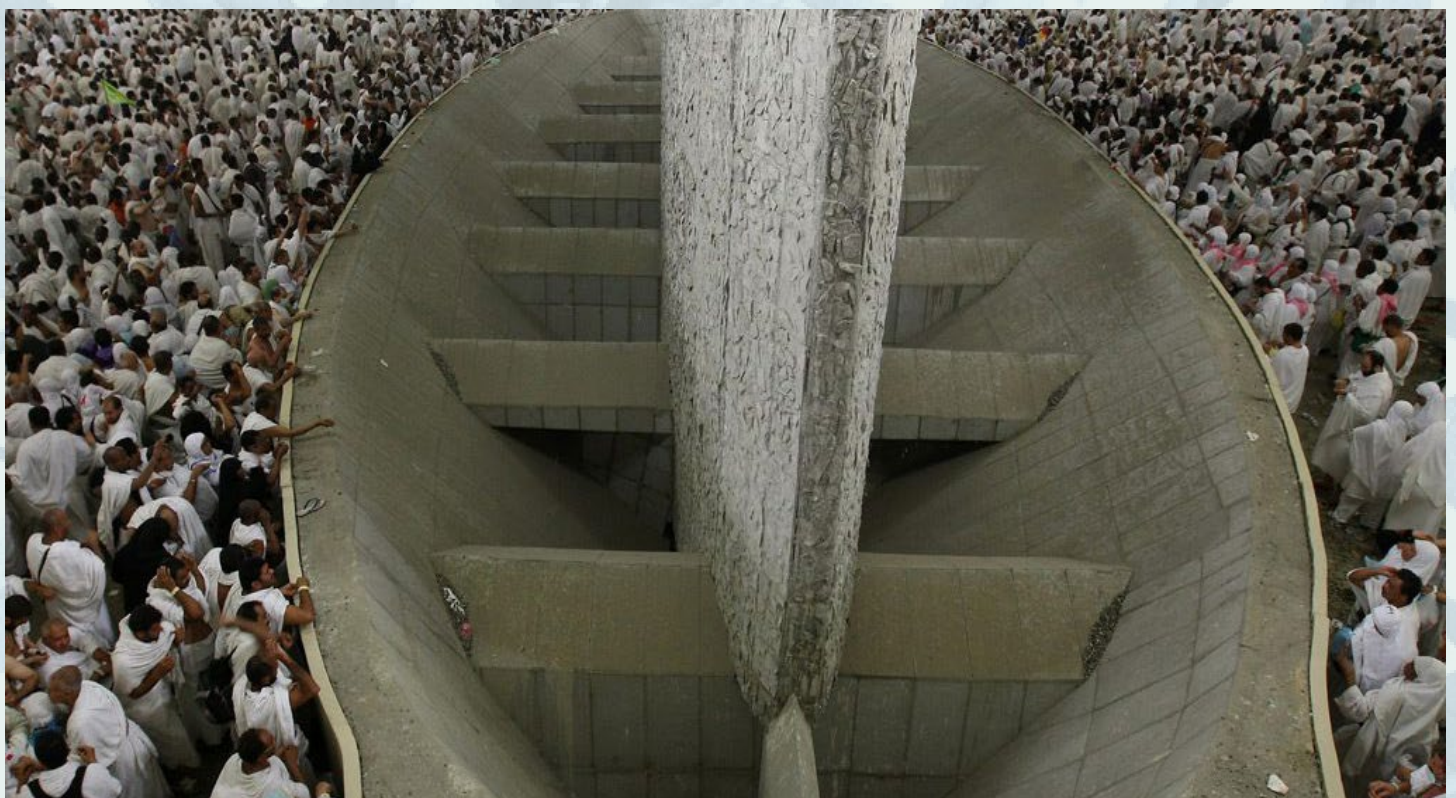
“At the time of Hajj, a large part of the world’s Muslims, from different ethnicities, nations, and races and with different colors, move with great enthusiasm towards the center of revelation and regardless of differences in appearance, ethnicity, and race, wear similar white clothing and start a unique congregation.”

Prof. Elias Gitti Tarai, Thailand

“God’s House is a safe place that even non-Muslims feel at ease when they enter this holy place. Every year, more than three million pilgrims perform this divine duty in Mecca during the Hajj days, which reflects upon the greatness of God Almighty.”

Seydina Oumar Sy, the former Foreign Minister of Senegal

God Almighty says: Do not create differences because you will become weak. Isn’t the separation and irrational divisions of the Islamic Ummah a reason for the weakening of the Islamic Ummah? Hajj is a call to regain all our strength and unite with each other again. We must form a strong Islamic Ummah, and only when this Ummah is united, it will regain its strength. Islam is the religion of God and goodness, brotherhood, and peace for all, and Muslims can have an important role in the world, provided they are united.





The Role of Hajj in Objectifying Proximity Among Islamic Schools of Thought

By: **Mohammad Hadi Fallahzadeh**
Research Scholar and University Professor

Today, the main weapon used against Islam and Muslim nations is to create differences between Muslims and Islamic societies. Meanwhile, sectarianism is the best vehicle for ill-wishers of Islamic societies through which they can spread disputes and enmity among Muslim nations. Keeping this in view, creating proximity and unity among Muslims has been and is the biggest concern of Muslim reformers. As the greatest congregation of Muslim nations, in the form of the Islamic Ummah, Hajj can play a very colorful role in creating solidarity and proximity among Muslims. The simultaneous presence of Muslims with racial, religious, cultural, and appearance differences under the banner of Islam and Hajj and based on authentic Islamic values has made Hajj be regarded as the manifestation of a real opportunity to practice Islamic unity and form the Islamic Ummah.

Concepts:

- **Unity:** the state of being in agreement and working together; the state of being joined together to achieve a common purpose.
- **Convergence:** In political science, convergence is said to be a process in which societies give up their will and power to independently guide their major and fundamental policies and try to reach common decisions. (Smit, Peter H, 1992)
- **Proximity:** This means to bring closer and it is a means for creating closeness among Shiites and Sunnis while preserving the integrity of both sides and focusing on knowledge and wisdom instead of fleeting emotions and feelings. (Biazar Shirazi, Abdul Karim, "Islam, the Religion of Solidarity, 1975) The aim of proximity is to revive the Qur'anic principle of brotherhood and remove the artificial mental barriers between Shiites and Sunnis, which are mentioned in various forms in the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah: "Mankind were a single community..." (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 213); "He ordained affection and mercy between you..." (Al-Rum:21); "The faithful are indeed brothers" (Al-Hujurat:10); and "Hold fast, all together, to Allah's cord, and do

not be divided..." (Aal-e Imran:103).

It seems that from among the three concepts of Islamic unity, Islamic convergence, and Proximity of Islamic Schools of Thought, the concept of proximity is closer to the objective of peaceful coexistence in the form of the formation of the Islamic Ummah. In this regard, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution has stated: By Islamic unity, we do not mean that all beliefs and Islamic denominations should become identical. The clash of Islamic denominations and beliefs, the clash of philosophical and fiqhi beliefs is an arena for scholarly work, an arena for fiqhi debates, and an arena for philosophical debates. After all, each sect will have its own set of beliefs, but it is possible to keep philosophical and fiqhi differences away from the arena of daily life and politics. What we mean by unity of the world of Islam is that we should avoid disputes. If we say that Shiites and Sunnis should be together, it means that Shia will remain Shia and Sunni will remain Sunni. When did we tell the Sunni world that what we mean by Islamic unity is that you become a Shiite? We have not said such a thing... We are not saying you should change your school of thought. What we are saying is that Shia and Sunni should always be reasonable; something that was, by the grace of God, observed during the Islamic Revolution in our country." (International Conference on Islamic Unity, 2006)

Hajj Represents the Islamic Ummah (The Platform for the Transformation of Muslim Nations into the Islamic Ummah)

As emphasized in the Holy Qur'an, Islam, is a comprehensive and complete religion that has not neglected any important issue and has provided guidance and wisdom in all areas of human life. However, among all religious duties and orders, there are few duties that have been emphasized by the Holy Qur'an, the Prophet, and the infallible Imams as in the case of Hajj. This is because, in addition to having religious, social, political, and cultural functions, Hajj is the manifestation of unity in all aspects of human life. In this regard, the late Imam Khomeini had stated: "Hajj is the best meeting place for Muslims to get to know their religious brothers and sisters



from all over the world. The congregations in the House that belongs to all the Islamic communities and followers of Prophet Ibrahim by putting aside their personality, color, nationality, and race and by observing Islamic ethical values and avoiding controversies they demonstrate the purity of Islamic brotherhood and the perspective of the formation of the unified Ummah all over the world.” (Saifeye Noor, Vol. 20, P. 13) As regards the importance of Hajj, Imam Ja’far Sadiq (AS) has been quoted saying: “If people do not have the money for Hajj, their travel expenses will be paid from the Muslim treasury.” (Furu’ al-Kafi, Vol. 4, P. 268)

The Key Components of Objectification of Objectifying Proximity Among Islamic Schools of Thought

1. Hajj is the manifestation of the Islamic brotherhood

In Hajj, people connect with God because of their human nature and not because of their ethnic, tribal, and sectarian identity. In other words, all human beings are the creation of the same Creator and are actually brothers and sisters of each other, and Hajj is the headquarters of the presence of these brothers and sisters in the presence of God. As stated by Imam Khomeini (RA): “This (Ka’ba) is the house of all people. No person or persons or group or certain clan has priority over others with regard to the House of God. All people, those who are all over the world, in the east and west of the earth, are obliged to become Muslim and to congregate in this house that has been made a sacred place for pilgrimage of people.” (Saifeye Noor, Vol. 8, P. 172)

2. Hajj is the venue for getting to know about Muslims’ affairs

One of the fundamental functions of this congregation is getting to know religious brothers and sisters in faith. In such an atmosphere, it is possible to share the opportunities, threats, potentials, and weaknesses of Muslim nations and promote sympathy, cooperation, and unity among Muslim nations with the context of the three elements of recognition, commitment, and understanding. Reaching a common understanding based on recognition and common interests, in addition to having common values, is not an impossible expectation. In this regard, Imam Khomeini (RA) had said: “Given that the hypothesis of Hajj is one of the biggest religious-political duties in Islam and the Hajj congregation is one of the biggest congresses in the Islamic world, the respected pilgrims of the world should be gathered to exchange opinions on the interests of Islam and the problems of Muslims,

to make the necessary decisions for solving problems, to reach the sacred goal of Islam. The ways and means of creating unity between all Islamic schools of thought should be explored, find solutions for common political problems that have been created for the Muslims of the world by the enemies of Islam, the most important of which is discord between the ranks of Muslims.” (Saifeye Noor, Vol. 19, P. 191) By the same token, Ayatollah Khamenei has stated “What is important is to know that Hajj is one of the strengths of the holy religion of Islam. Although the strengths of the Islamic Sharia are not one or two, Hajj has certain prominent qualities - which we are more or less familiar with. In fact, it can be said that Hajj is the source of the authority of the Islamic society, it is the source of the authority of the Islamic Ummah. The day when we Muslims from different countries and different schools of thought, from the far east of the world to the far west of the Islamic world, succeed and attain the intellectual maturity - which has not, unfortunately, happened so far - to actually form the ‘Islamic Ummah’ in the true sense of the word - even though under different governments - on that day, we will understand how Hajj is a source of authority, strength, elevation, and dignity of this Ummah.” (Meeting with Hajj authorities, 2013)

3. Common enemy

One of the serious issues regarding the non-realization of proximity among Islamic schools of thought is the existence of a common division-creating enemy. In order to exploit the resources and position of Islamic countries, the colonial states have adopted the strategy of divide and rule. This is the reason that many Western countries do not approve of the reestablishment of relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia and have overtly and covertly expressed their disapproval. Imam Khomeini had rightly said: “The entire Islamic Ummah are the followers of the Prophet and the followers of the Holy Qur’an and have common treacherous enemies who by creating differences through their wretched agents, mass media, and divisive propaganda, throughout history, and especially in the recent centuries and present era, have kept all the Islamic states and nations in captivity. They have looted the rich resources of Muslim countries and oppressed their people. They intend to make the governments blindly serve them, spread the culture of consumerism, and prevent the human development and industrial innovation of the oppressed countries with evil tricks and conspiracies.



Thus, now that the pilgrims from every nation and sect have gathered in the center of life-giving Islam at the command of God and His Messenger, they should think of a solution for this deadly cancer. They should know that the basic solution is the unity of all Muslims in cutting off the hand of superpowers from Islamic countries.” (Saifeye Noor, Vol. 20, P. 16)

Proximity and compassion among Muslims is of great value in recognizing the common enemy. Because one of the issues that the enemy invests in and pretends to be benevolent is exaggerating about ethnic and sectarian differences. Repudiation of infidels during the Hajj congregation is a move for identifying the enemy and if actualized its impact can be witnessed among all Muslim nations. It must be noted that repudiation of the common enemy must follow the identification of the enemy. And this important issue can be realized through the accumulation of experiences and thoughts of Islamic elites and rulers during Hajj. Therefore, Hajj is also an important platform for identifying and defining the common enemy of Islamic society, and this highlights the

necessity of proximity of thoughts.

Concluding Remarks

Unity among Muslims has been one of the topics of discussion among the fair elites of Islamic societies since ancient times, but it seems that differences in the interpretation and perception of Islamic unity and the role of effective actors in the field has been one of the causes of non-fulfillment of this important. For unity to be actualized among Muslims the concepts of convergence and proximity must be resorted to by Islamic scholars and the Islamic government so that the basis for a better understanding of Islam and Muslims towards each other is provided for and the ground for brotherhood between Muslims is paved. Therefore, if Hajj is performed within the framework of authentic Islamic values, it will definitely be the basis for consolidating the three main aspects of the formation of the Islamic Ummah, namely, brotherhood, mutual understanding, and identification of common enmity, and it can be a platform for the realization of unity, the proximity of Islamic schools of thought, and the orientation of Muslim nations towards the Islamic Ummah.





