

The Beginning and End of the Month of Ramadan is with the Sighting of the Crescent, and it is not Correct to Adopt Astronomical Calculations as a Substitute for it

(Translated)

On Tuesday, March 14, 2023 CE corresponding to Sha'ban 22, 1444 AH, representatives of some mosques and Islamic associations in Denmark issued a statement announcing that they would adopt astronomical calculations as a substitute for the Shari' sighting to determine the beginnings and ends of the lunar months, including the beginning and end of the next month of Ramadan. They acknowledged this despite the fact that the statement mentioned that the basis for determining the beginnings and ends of the months in Sharia is the sighting, yet they chose astronomical calculations as a substitute for the legal sighting. This means that they excluded the method that was appointed by the Sharia and stipulated by the Shari' evidence to determine the beginnings and ends of the months and put them aside, and they adopted astronomical calculations instead.

The aforementioned statement determined the first day of the coming month of Ramadan, as well as the day of Eid, and this clearly shows that this determination was made without waiting for the legal (Shari') sighting of the crescent, and without taking into account: Will the sighting of the crescent occur on the date referred to or not? In addition, the statement mentioned that the legal sighting of the crescent this year is in accordance with astronomical calculations, and this is something that is impossible to confirm on the day the statement was issued, in addition to that it is certain that the sighting of the crescent of the month of Ramadan does not take place until after sunset on the 29th of Sha'ban. The statement did not provide any Shari' evidence for what he went to, but argued for the accuracy of astronomical calculations and the approval of contemporary scholars on this method.

In light of the above, Hizb ut Tahrir in Denmark would like to point out the following:

First: The evidence of the beginning of the month of Ramadan is not valid except by sighting the crescent, and this is the only method determined by the Sharia and indicated by the Sharia evidence related to this issue. Among these evidences is the hadith of the Messenger of Allah (saw): «صُومُوا لِرُؤْيَيْهِ وَأَفْطَرُوا لِرُؤْيَيْهِ، فَإِنْ غُبِّيَ عَلَيْكُمْ، فَأَكْمَلُوا عِدَّةَ شَعْبَانَ ثَلَاثِينَ» **“Observe Saum (fast) on sighting the crescent and terminate it on sighting it (the new moon), but if the sky is cloudy before you, then complete the number (thirty days) of the month of Sha'baan.”** [Narrated by Al-Bukhari]

Second: Although astronomical calculations can be accurate, they are not definitive regarding determining the time of the possibility of sighting, and the issue is not related to confirming an astronomical phenomenon from a scientific point of view. Announcing the beginning or end of the month of Ramadan according to the Sharia ruling does not require certainty of its birth. And there is no Shari' evidence that requires this, and what was mentioned in the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (saw) in this regard, is that Shari' sighting is the only condition in this matter, and this is the only method that must be followed to prove the beginning or end of the month.

Third: Astronomical calculations can help in knowing the time of the birth of the crescent, but they cannot prove the chances of seeing the crescent. On the one hand,

there is a disagreement among astronomers regarding determining the time when the crescent can be observed. On the other hand, weather conditions and human ability play a role in the possibility of seeing the crescent or not, in addition to that we do not fast and break the fast when the crescent is born, but rather when it is sighted. This is indicated by the aforementioned hadith of the Messenger of Allah (saw), «صُومُوا لِرُؤْيَيْهِ، وَأَفْطَرُوا لِرُؤْيَيْهِ» **“Fast when you see it, and break your fast when you see it.”** It is possible that the crescent of the month actually exists, but it is obscured by clouds, so it cannot be seen with the eye, and in this case we must complete the number of Sha’ban thirty days. The legal evidence linked the beginning of the month of fasting with sighting the crescent with the eyes and did not stipulate knowledge of the birth of the crescent.

O Muslims:

We in Hizb ut Tahrir in Denmark, and out of our love for our true Deen and our adherence to our tolerant Shariah, we would like to draw the attention of our brothers and sisters that adopting astronomical calculations to prove the beginning or end of the month of Ramadan contradicts the rules of Islamic Shariah in this matter, which states that the month begins with the Shari’ sighting of the crescent as well as its end, and not astronomical calculations. Therefore, we call on Muslims, individuals, institutions and mosques, to adopt the Shari’ method to prove the beginnings of the lunar months, including the blessed month of Ramadan.

Also, Muslims all over the world are waiting for the blessed month of Ramadan, which its entrance is proven by the Shari’ sighting of the crescent anywhere in the world. As for the sighting of the crescent, it will be after sunset on the 29th of Sha’ban. If the Shari’ sighting is established anywhere in the world, all Muslims must fast.

We ask Allah the Almighty to allow us to reach Ramadan, having relieved the Muslims of their anguish, and to bestow upon them near victory and to make this Ramadan the last Ramadan to befall the Muslims without the Khilafah Rashidah (rightly-guided Caliphate) State upon the method of the Prophethood.

In conclusion, we would like to remind our Muslim brothers and sisters that this confusion in which Muslims fall into proving the beginning and end of the month of Ramadan is caused by the absence of an Islamic state that governs by the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (saw) and is based on looking after the affairs of Muslims in accordance with the rulings of the Shariah, uniting their ranks and uniting their word in all parts of the globe.

﴿لِمَنْ لِّ هَذَا فَلْيَعْمَلِ الْعَامِلُونَ﴾

“For such ‘honour’ all should strive.” [TMQ As-Saffat:61]

25 Sha’ban 1444 AH

In correspondence to 17 March 2023 CE

Hizb ut Tahrir

Denmark