



PRESS RELEASE

The Killing Of Innocents – A statement from Lewisham Islamic Centre

In the year 2016 the Turkish state has suffered 49 deaths and 149 injured to suicide bombings. These numbers rise to over 117 deaths and 125 injured in Iraq; and to over 157 dead and countless injured in Nigeria, 22 of the deceased blown up in a mosque. Suicide bombers have blighted the lives of countless innocents across countries, including Britain, America, France, and tragically again now in Belgium. Our hearts grieve for all of the victims of these senseless atrocities and our thoughts and prayers are with all of their families and loved ones.

It continues to be incredibly disturbing that the major perpetrators of these vile actions be that ISIS, Boko Haram, or other self-styled groups claim the mantle of Islam while flagrantly violating its tenets in gross dereliction of the religion. **"Bismillah Ar-Raman Ar-Raheem"** (In The name of God, The Most Merciful, The Bestower of Mercy) is not just the mantra of Muslims the world over, but these are words universally understood and applicable to every human being and living creature on the face of the Earth. To deny innocent men, women and children these attributes of mercy and compassion is tantamount to a very denial of The Almighty himself. The Prophet of Islam is reported to have said, "Be merciful to the people of the earth and the One in the heavens will have mercy upon you".

The Holy book of Islam, The Qur'an, declares unequivocally, **"O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another (not to despise one another). Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of God is the most righteous of you"**. We declare equally unequivocally that there is nothing remotely righteous about the indiscriminate murder of innocents, which is nothing but a disavowal of the very text of the Qur'an.

We appeal to every community to see that there is a sustained agenda at play that is determined to turn non-Muslim against Muslim, Muslim against Muslim, neighbour against neighbour, and engender fear, hatred and intolerance. Our different faiths have co-existed peacefully for decades in Europe and for centuries across Africa, Asia and the Middle East, and we must remain vigilant and stand absolutely united in the face of these evil provocations.

We call on all our local, national and international leaders and prominent personalities to speak wisely in these difficult times when their words are very likely either to defuse tensions or give succour to xenophobia and religious bigotry. We appeal to their better nature and ask that they make sincere strides to unite and bring communities together.

363 - 365 Lewisham High Street, Lewisham, London. SE13 6NZ | www.lewishamislamiccentre.com

Tel: 0208 690 5090 | Registered Charity Number: 285641 | Fax: +44(0)203 137 5202

Email: info@lewishamislamiccentre.com