

*Iranian foreign minister says delay in condemning Qur'an desecration is evidence of double standards*

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**The recent insult towards the Holy Quran in Sweden was the sixth incident of its kind in European countries in 2023. (Getty images)**

Geneva, July 11 (RHC)-- Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian says any kind of delay in condemning and preventing the desecration of the Holy Qur'an bespeaks of "double standards" by the international community.

Speaking on Tuesday at the 53rd session of the UN Human Rights Council, Amir-Abdollahian said the latest desecration of the Qur'an in Sweden was the sixth incident of its kind in European countries in 2023 and described it as "an act that brazenly incites violence, hatred, discrimination and hostility against Muslims."

"Burning the Qur'an is not only a violation of human rights, but also an infringement on the rights of more than two billion Muslims across the world. Such abhorrent actions must be immediately condemned by all advocates of human rights," the top Iranian diplomat said.

Amir-Abdollahian underlined the need for identifying and eliminating the "legal loopholes" both at the national and international levels so as to prevent the recurrence of the insult to the Holy Qur'an as soon as possible. "We adamantly urge the authorities of Sweden and other European countries to take immediate and effective measures against the perpetrators of such appalling acts in order to prevent their recurrence in the future," he said.

Amir-Abdollahian also called on the world countries to combat acts of religious hatred that incite discrimination, hostility and violence. "Any kind of doubt or delay in condemning or preventing such actions will only reinforce perceptions of double standards and justify the abuse of freedom of expression," the Iranian foreign minister underlined.

On June 28, Salwan Momika, a 37-year-old Iraqi immigrant stomped on the Qur'an before setting several pages alight in front of Stockholm's largest mosque. The insult to the Muslim holy book was made under the authorization and protection of the Swedish police.

The incident, coinciding with the start of the Muslim Eid al-Adha and the end of the annual pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia, drew the anger of Muslims from across the world.

Following the incident, several thousand Iraqis gathered near the Swedish embassy in Baghdad in protest against the Qur'an burning and demanded the expulsion of the ambassador.

People in other Muslim countries also took to the streets in protest against the move.

The perpetrator of the sacrilegious move told a Swedish newspaper later that he intended to repeat his protest in July. Sweden has repeatedly permitted Qur'an burnings in recent years. In January, a Swedish-Danish right-wing extremist burned a copy of the Qur'an near the Turkish embassy in Stockholm.

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