

Outrage across Muslim world at Quran burning in Europe



Tehran, July 27 (RHC)-- Muslim-majority nations have angrily criticized the governments of Denmark and Sweden for repeatedly allowing the burning of the Quran during protests in their capitals. The latest incident, during which the Muslim holy book was trampled on and destroyed, took place in Copenhagen on Monday.

Türkiye condemned the protest, which was staged in front of the Iraqi embassy by an ultra-nationalist group called Danish Patriots. The Turkish foreign ministry called the protesters' actions "vile attacks against our holy book" and urged the Danish authorities to "take the necessary measures to prevent these outrageous acts."

Baghdad slammed both the burning on Monday and a previous demonstration by the same group, which took place last Friday. "These systematic actions expose societies to the infection of terrorism and hatred and threaten peaceful coexistence," the Iraqi foreign ministry said in a statement on Monday.

Last week's event in Copenhagen, which the Danish Patriots live streamed on Facebook, triggered mass protests in Baghdad. Bridges to the Green Zone, which houses several Western embassies, were closed off on Saturday and security measures were increased by the government.

Danish diplomatic staff left Baghdad on the same day, the Iraqi ministry reported on Monday. Denmark said its embassy was closed for summer holidays, but denied withdrawing personnel. Just days earlier the Swedish embassy in Baghdad was overrun by angry protesters, who were protesting a demonstration during which a Quran was burnt in front of the Iraqi diplomatic mission in Stockholm. In response Iraq expelled the Swedish ambassador and recalled its own representative to the country.

Algeria, another Muslim-majority nation, summoned the Danish ambassador and the Swedish chargé d'affaires on Monday to issue formal protests over what it called a string of "immoral and uncivilized acts."

Saudi Arabia issued a condemnation on Sunday, before the latest episode in Denmark took place, saying that the desecrations of the Quran were "inciting hatred and violence between religions."

Riyadh's long-term regional rival, Tehran, took the same position, with the Iranian foreign ministry reportedly summoning the Danish ambassador on Sunday. The statement expressed condemnation of "any defiling of Islamic sanctities anywhere in the world."

Muslim critics of the politically-charged Quran burnings in Europe say the perpetrators are abusing freedom of expression in order to incite hatred.

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