

U.S. Muslims Feel Discriminated Against by Barack Obama



Washington, December 9 (RHC)-- U.S. President Barack Obama's call for American Muslims to help "root out" extremism in their communities has drawn criticism from Islamic centers and mosques. Earlier this week, Obama called on Muslim community to help confront extremism in their midst following the terrorist attack in San Bernardino, California, which killed 14 people.

"If we're to succeed in defeating terrorism, we must enlist Muslim communities as some of our strongest allies, rather than push them away through suspicion and hate," the president said. "That does not mean denying the fact that an extremist ideology has spread within some Muslim communities. It's a real problem that Muslims must confront without excuse."

Mustafa Kamel, the imam of the West Coast Islamic Center in Anaheim, southern California, told reporters: "It is unfair to speak about the Muslim community in this way." He pointed to an incident where two 24-year-old men, who had worshiped in mosques in that part of California, were arrested and accused of conspiring to aid the Daesh (ISIL) terrorist group. Imams and mosque workers said the arrested men were victims of biased law enforcement.

The Islamic Shura Council of Southern California also criticized Obama's request, arguing it singled out Muslims. The council's executive director, Shakeel Syed, questioned why U.S. leaders did ask Christian churches to self-police for white supremacists after nine African-Americans were shot to death at a church

in Charleston, South Carolina in June.

At the Islamic Institute of Orange County in Anaheim, the mosque's imam, Mohammed Faqih, said he also found Obama's comments offensive. Faqih said: "In these cases such as San Bernardino, the mosques did not play a role. They are loners who got radicalized at home, in front of the Internet."

The U.S. has been gripped by a new wave of Islamophobia, fueled to a large degree by anti-Muslim rhetoric in the presidential campaign. Republican presidential front-runner Donald Trump provoked a firestorm Monday by calling for a "total and complete" ban on Muslims entering the United States.

Muslims across the country say they are experiencing a wave of death threats, assaults and vandalism unlike anything they have experienced since the September 11, 2001 attacks.

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