

Together against anti-Semitism and radical Islamism

Call against the international "Al-Quds Day" on November 12, 2004*

In 1979, the Iranian leader Ayatollah Khomeini declared the last Friday of the Muslim month of Ramadan as an international day of struggle for the "liberation" of Jerusalem (Arabic: Al-Quds) and against Israel. Henceforth, on "Al-Quds Day", Muslims all over the world were to demonstrate against the existence of the state of Israel. Annually, the Iranian regime organizes a central demonstration in Teheran, the Hizbullah holds a military parade in Beirut and all over the world, from Manila to Jakarta, from Berlin to London or Toronto, demonstrators demand the destruction of Israel.

We – the undersigned – do not agree on all issues related to the Middle East conflict. But we do join in protest against the anti-Semitic hatred expressed on international "Al-Quds Day," on which the Iranian dictatorship instrumentalizes the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in order to stabilize its own power. By practically and ideologically supporting Islamist terror groups, such as Hizbullah, Islamic Jihad and Hamas, the Iranian government also systematically destroys any prospect of peace within the scope of a political solution.

But the international „Al-Quds Day“ is far more than a day of anti-Semitic propaganda. It is a day when the doctrine of Ayatollah Khomeini is propagated and the Islamist dictatorship in Iran is hailed – a dictatorship that has cost the lives of hundreds of thousands members of the opposition or of ethnic or religious minorities in Iran. In Iran, gender apartheid is the rule; homosexuals and female „adulterers“ are threatened with stoning. Even in exile, members of the Iranian opposition are murdered by regime agents or threatened by "Death Fatwas" – the famous writer Salman Rushdie is only one prominent example. Therefore, we empathically show our solidarity with these victims of the Iranian dictatorship and support all emancipatory forces in Iran that strive to overturn this regime –today rather than tomorrow.

With our protest, we also criticize a widespread approach to Islamism in the Western societies, where racist and culturalist views of Islam prevail. On the one hand, migrants with Muslim background suffer discrimination as potential terrorists and are subjected to expeditious deportation. On the other hand, many people perceive Islamism as merely one of many cultural expressions of Muslims. Accordingly, there is a great willingness to consider Islamism as an influential movement in so-called Islamic countries and to enter into a "dialogue of civilizations" (a project of Iran's president Kathami).

We explicitly object to any form of racist stigmatization of Muslims in Western societies and advocate a liberal migration policy. At the same time, we demand a confrontation with Islamist ideology and all its representatives. In particular, the endeavors of some Muslims to fight against Islamism – a political and partly militant attack on universal human rights – should be supported.

Thus, the political tenets of Ayatollah Khomeini and other representatives of Islamism are of concern to all of us – no matter where we come from, or whether we are religious or not. It is against this backdrop that, last year for the first time, a broad coalition of German and non-German activists publicly protested against the Al-Quds demonstration in Berlin, Germany.

We call for international protests against this year's Al-Quds.

More information about the Berlin campaign and events against the Al-Quds Day are available at: www.aktion-november.de/en

This call is available in English, Persian and German language.

* In Europe, the „Al-Quds Day“ demonstrations take place mostly on Saturdays. In London, this will be 11/6, in Berlin 11/13, 2004.