

In the Name of Allâh, the Compassionate, the Merciful

## **Comment of the AUASS about the Change of Date of the `Îd of Sacrifice**

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The High Court of Justice in the Kingdom of Sa`ûdi-Arabia issued a communiqué on Wednesday, 12 January 2005, in which was mentioned that there is no evidence of sighting the crescent of the month Dhû-l-hijja on Monday, and that Wednesday, 12 January 2005 be the First of days of the month Dhû-l-hijja 1425. Thus, Friday [21 January 2005] be the First of days of the blessed `?d of Sacrifice, and we were really very happy on the occasion of this correct announcement, being in accordance with the scientific facts. But on Friday evening, 14 January 2005, we were surprised by another communiqué of the High Court of Justice in the Kingdom of Sa`ûdi-Arabia, which began with a confirmation of its first communiqué, but then mentioned the following information:

“Considering that on Friday evening, 3 Dhû-l-hijja according to the Ummu-l-qurâ calendar, several witnesses of a sighting of the crescent (of Monday) appeared in the night to Tuesday, they were from al-Sayh in the East of the Province of al-Rayn; and that the Court of Justice of al-Rayn was informed about this, where the honourable judge of al-Rayn summoned them; and two out of them appeared, witnessing their sighting of the Dhû-l-hijja-crescent after sunset on Monday, 29 Dhû-l-qa`da, and each single one of them saw it still after they had performed their Maghrib prayer, and each single one of them mentioned that he saw it in the night to Wednesday high and remaining visible until the `Ishâ' prayer...”

As a result, the [High] Court announced that Tuesday [11 January 2005] be the First of days of the month Dhû-l-hijja, and Thursday [20 January 2005] be the First of days of the `Îd of Sacrifice. But in fact, this announcement demands objection, because on Monday [10 January 2005] the moon set in all Islamic states already before sunset, thus a sighting of the crescent on Monday was void and impossible, as the moon was no longer present above the horizon after sunset! In Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia, the moon set already 5 minutes before sunset; in Makka al-Mukarrama and in Rabat, 3 minutes. In the region of al-Sayh, where some witnesses claimed a sighting of the crescent, the sun set on Monday at 6:57 p.m. and the moon at 6:53 p.m., i.e. the moon set already 4 minutes before the sun; but we are surprised that someone there on this day claimed a sighting of the crescent after his performance of the Maghrib prayer (i.e. about 20 minutes after sunset)! What a marvel! Have the scientific calculations been false to such a degree? Has it ever happened during the entire history of mankind that the astronomical

calculations pointed out that the sun will set at 6 p.m., and later someone appeared witnessing that he saw the sun from 6 p.m. until 6:20 p.m.? Are the astronomical calculations exact with regard to all the celestial bodies, but false to the amount of at least 20 minutes with regard to the moon? Why do we trust the astronomical calculations concerning the moment of sunset, for we are performing the Maghrib prayer and we are breaking the fasting of Ramadân on their basis, whereas they are ignored to the worst amount with regard to the moon? After all, we wish that the responsible persons in the Islamic states began the month Dhû-l-hijja based upon a correct sighting of the crescent, and not based upon assertions that are inconsistent with the simplest scientific facts, and whose acceptance is indicating nothing else but a complete ignorance of these simple facts. Numerous Islamic states announced the beginning of the month Dhû-l-hijja based upon a correct sighting of the crescent, and they don't follow Sa`ûdi[-Arabia] with its announcement, moreover when it was wrong, and among these states are Indonesia, Malaysia, Iran, Morocco, and numerous other Islamic states. Shaykh Ibn `Uthaymîn confirmed that the Islamic states are not obliged to follow the announcement of Sa`ûdi[-Arabia] when defining the beginning of the month Dhû-l-hijja! In fact, [only] the pilgrim is bound to what Sa`ûdi[-Arabia] announces to him, whereas the Islamic states are beginning the month Dhû-l-hijja based upon their [own] sighting of the crescent, as this was the valid practice in the era of the Messenger (pbuh) and in all Islamic states; only of late, some Islamic states began to follow the Sa`ûdi announcement, even if it was clearly and blatantly wrong! It is truly a pity that an authority announces the evidence of a sighting of the crescent 20 minutes after sunset, whereas the moon at this moment actually was already a while below the horizon; [this] on the same day when the American Space Agency NASA and the European Space Agency informed about the success of landing one of their space vehicles on the surface of the planet Saturn's moon named Titan! How well the West is mastering the application of astronomical calculations, as they land with it upon the surface of the planet Saturn's moon, while sadly, we are still discussing with each other whether the astronomical calculations are exact or not!

Translation: Ahmad Kaufmann – ICOP Member – Germany