

## MB Bloc: Calling for Visiting Jerusalem Is Calling For Normalization



The call of Egyptian Minister of Religious Endowments, Hamdi Zakzouk, for Muslims to visit Al Aqsa Mosque in Occupied Jerusalem stirred various reactions.

It is worth noting that this is not the first time in which Egyptian Minister of Religious Endowments issues such a call. In 2001, a spate of public criticism and anger emerged inside and outside Egypt after a similar call from Zakzouk. Many public figures— including the Association of Palestinian scholars— saw the call as a call for normalization and recognition of Israel and its ownership to Jerusalem.

Hussein Ibrahim, a member of parliament and deputy chairman of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) parliamentary, commented on Hamdi Zakzouk's call, saying :  
"Entering Al Aqsa Mosque with an Israeli visa is a propaganda for the Israelis, and a call for normalizing relations with the Israeli entity, something we fully reject.

"The members of parliament will convene to hold the Minister of Religious Endowments accountable for what he said— if it is true. The Minister of Religious Endowments issued a similar call a few years ago, but he denied it at that time".

Hamdi Zakzouk called on all Muslims from all over the world to visit Occupied Jerusalem, giving a blind eye to the political map in the region and ignoring some legal and political parts in this issue.

"The Minister of Religious Endowments is a politically influential figure and he shouldn't speak about something that may trigger seriously unknown repercussions", said Hussein Ibrahim.

"He shouldn't have issued such a call because it will undoubtedly have serious consequences. To call for visiting Jerusalem which is currently under Israeli occupation, he is calling for a flagrant normalization with Israel, which is rejected by Islam" he added.

"We refuse such normalization while Israel is still occupying Jerusalem and is still maintaining its hostile actions that include killing Muslims, shedding blood and spreading fear."

For his part, Islamic intellectual and writer Fahmy Huwaeidi has earlier described this call to visit Jerusalem as "a political coma". He added in an interview to Aljazeera.net that such a call is a sign that it is a clear absurdity. Officials should avoid such risky call.

Hussein Ibrahim sees that the Minister of Religious Endowments should "if he wants to call for something" call for liberating Jerusalem instead of calling for visiting it while it is under occupation.

He also raise his eyebrows at the logic of Zakzouk call.

"Israel prevents Palestinians everyday from visiting Al Aqsa Mosque. How come that you call other Muslims to go to Jerusalem to visit it. This mosque is for all Muslims everywhere, and it is in Palestine. No one should recognize that Israel owns it", he said.

Asked about a comment for what Abdullah Al Ashal, the previous Assistant Foreign Minister, said about visiting Occupied Jerusalem and that it is allowed if a visa is given from any authority other than Israel "like Egypt or the United Nations or the Palestinian Authority, Hussein Ibrahim: "Unfortunately who has the actual control in Occupied Jerusalem?, who is the authority that gives and denies access. We reject entering Jerusalem while it is still occupied by the Jews."