MB statement commenting on the statements attributed to Burkina Faso's President concerning Islam and slavery in Africa

The Muslim Brotherhood (MB) has followed up on the unfortunate statements attributed to H. E. the transitional president of Burkina Faso, Ibrahim Traor , in which he claimed that Arabs were the ones who spread slavery in Africa.

In fact, this statement involves an unfair generalization, contradicts historical facts, contributes to stirring up discord among the peoples of the African continent, and distorts the image of Islam and its message based on liberating people and preserving their dignity.

Slavery was never an invention of the Arabs or Muslims; rather, it was a deeply rooted global system known to humanity from ancient civilizations through the Middle Ages and later periods – that is, for centuries before and after the mission of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Islam made combating slavery an integral part of its social and economic systems, directing its legislation and objectives toward restricting its avenues and expanding the means of slave liberation, even elevating the freeing of slaves to one of the noblest acts of charity.

Allah Almighty said in Surat Al-Balad: ﴿ But he has not broken through the difficult pass. And what can make you know what is [breaking through] the difficult pass? It is the freeing of a slave. ﴾ (Al-Balad: 11-13).

And He Almighty made freeing a slave an expiation for unintentional killing, zihar (when a husband says to his wife: "you are, to me, like my mother". Although it is invalid divorce, a husband who utters these words must make recompense by freeing a slave among some other options.), and oaths. The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings

be upon him, also encouraged freeing slaves by saying: "If anyone emancipates a Muslim slave, Allah will set free from hell a member of the body for every member of his, even his private parts for his." (The Hadith was reported by Abu Huraira –may Allah be pleased with him– and narrated by both Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim).

Islam established the principle of human equality, and made piety the basis of distinction, as Allah Almighty said in Surat Al–Hujurat: ﴿ O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted. ﴾ (Al–Hujurat: 13)

In doing so, He Almighty eliminated discrimination based on color, race, and lineage, and opened the way for Muslims in Africa to become scholars, judges, leaders, and sultans, and to make an authentic contribution to building Islamic civilization.

If there is to be talk about the history of slavery in Africa, then scientific honesty requires talking about the transatlantic slave trade, which was led by European colonial powers since the fifteenth century.

More than 12 million Africans were forcibly transported, and about 10.7 million of them reached the Americas, while a huge number of captives died during the capture, marching, and sea transport operations.

Then the survivors were exploited to work as slaves in farms and mines, and from their suffering, wealth and colonial empires were formed for the Western countries.

While the Brotherhood rejects such statements that are offensive to Arabs and to the message of Islam, it calls on the world to learn about Islam and its history in liberating peoples, from reliable scholastic sources.

The Muslim Brotherhood also stresses that Africa's renaissance and liberation require spreading Islam and its values, not fighting it. It also requires confronting all forms of Western influence on the African continent and the exploitation of its resources.

Islam came so that people could enjoy freedom, dignity, and equality in their homelands, and be happy with the justice in the distribution of their resources without oppression or injustice.

Muslim Brotherhood
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