Islam has no Room for Terrorism

By **HASSAN SHIBLY**   July 07, 2011   / Tampa Bay Online

(Hassan Shibly is Tampa Executive Director of CAIR Florida)

There are two groups promoting the concept that Islam is tolerant of terrorism. The first is those wishing to hijack Islam for their political purposes and who have distorted and misquoted religious text to justify their abhorrent actions. The second are those who wish to spread fear and hatred of Muslims to suit their political or economic agendas, and similarly distort and misquote religious text to claim that Islam condones such abhorrent actions.

However, mainstream traditional Muslims are and always have been very vocal in condemning both such extremist groups.

There is no room for terrorism in Islam. One does not need a religious text to know such acts are reprehensible; nonetheless, the Islamic tradition is clear that there is no room for terrorism. The prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) expressly forbade aggression and the killing of women and children and unarmed men in combat. Maulana Abdul Shakoor writes in his book, *A Brief Account of the Prophet's Life*:

> Physical *Jihad* is permissible only for the persecuted and as a defense against tyranny. In other words, *Jihad* is another name for defense of independence. To look upon the battles of the time of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) as not conditioned by self-defense and self-preservation, is not only un-Islamic but also ignorance.

Even when defending against persecution, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) gave the commands, "*Do not be embittered. Do not be treacherous. Do not mutilate. Do not kill children or those in covenants.*"

And it is also testified to by the Prophet's companion Umar and third caliph of Islam, who said in authentic traditions, "*The Holy Prophet has forbidden the killing of women and children.*"   Likewise, the Prophet Muhammad's chief commander and first caliph Abu Bakr ordered:

> *Do not betray or be treacherous or vindictive. Do not mutilate. Do not kill the children, the aged or the woman. Do not cut or burn trees. Do not slay a sheep, a cow, or a camel, except for food.*

Islamic law even forbade the destruction of nature, not to mention absolutely the taking of any innocent human life. The Qur'an holds all human life so sacred, irrespective of race or religion, that it says:

> If anyone slays a human being—unless it be (in punishment) for murder or for spreading corruption on earth—it shall be as though he had slain all mankind; whereas, if anyone saves a life, it shall be as though he had saved the lives of all mankind. *Q* 5:32

It is thus undoubtedly clear that there is absolutely no room for terrorism in Islam. In response to those who wish to justify terrorism based on their political grievances, the Qur'an very clearly says:

> And let not your hatred of certain people who would bar you from the Inviolable House of Worship lead you into transgression (and hostility on your part); but rather help one another in furthering righteousness and God-consciousness, and do not help one another in furthering evil and enmity; and remain conscious of God... . *Q* 5:2

Even where the Qur'an permits self-defense, it clearly forbids aggression and injustice:

> Fight in God's cause against those who wage war against you, but do not commit aggression — for God loveth not aggressors! ...
> *Q* 2:190

It breaks my heart to hear that people commit such disgusting acts in the name of religion. Those who murder unarmed men, women and children anger God and His Messenger.

Religion and humanity have no room for such evil destruction. While political grievances may explain what nourishes terrorism, terrorism is never justifiable and never an answer. Both those who twist Islamic texts to justify such abhorrent actions, and those who twist Islamic texts to claim that Islam supports such abhorrent actions, are hijacking my faith.

The bloodshed must be stopped.

From: http://www2.tbo.com/news/opinion/2011/jul/07/MEOPINO2-islam-has-no-room-for-terrorism-ar-242240/