

Lahore Ahmadiyya Islamic Society's Statement on Boko Haram Schoolgirl Abductions

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The U.S. based Lahore Ahmadiyya Islamic Society condemns in the strongest possible terms the heinous actions of Boko Haram, which claimed responsibility for the abduction of hundreds of schoolgirls in Nigeria. In a recently released video message, a Boko Haram leader characterized the girls as “slaves” and claimed “Allah says I should sell them. He commands me to sell them.” Boko Haram’s actions are an attack on all persons of conscience and its justifications in the name of Islam is a vile attempt at self-promotion by exploiting the uninformed.

Contrary to Boko Haram’s perverted interpretations of Islam, the Holy Quran states that the “uphill road” (i.e. the path of striving for goodness) entails liberating people from all forms of oppression and slavery:

*“And what will make thee comprehend what the uphill road is?
(It is) to free a slave,
Or to feed in a day of hunger
An orphan nearly related,
Or the poor man lying in the dust.” (90:12-16)*

Despite the grief over the uncertainty of the schoolgirls’ safety that is shared by all at this time, this tragic event offers us motivation for continued vigilance in promoting the true, peaceful teachings of Islam throughout the world. We genuinely believe that education is the key to eradicating extremist ideologies and preventing the radicalization of the impressionable. The Lahore Ahmadiyya Islamic Society works tirelessly towards this goal, primarily through its international translation and publication projects. In particular, as part of this campaign, we shipped thousands of copies of our publications, mostly authored by the respected scholar Maulana Muhammad Ali, to Nigeria and neighboring countries. The literature published by the Lahore Ahmadiyya Islamic Society is recognized for its inspiring, spiritual lessons and its effective rebuttal of misinterpretations of Islam that are the basis for extremists’ violent and criminal actions. As the famous British Muslim Marmaduke Pickthal commented while reviewing Maulana Muhammad Ali’s scholarly treatise *The Religion of Islam*:

“Such a book is greatly needed when in many Muslim countries we see persons eager for the revival of Islam, making mistakes through lack of just this knowledge.”

Likewise, the esteemed Sheikh Muhammad Sayyid Tantawy, the late Grand Imam of Al Azhar Al Shareef, Cairo, Egypt, endorsed the same book with a personal Foreword and regularly quoted from it when explaining commonly misunderstood topics in widely circulated manuscripts. The chapter of the book titled “Jihad”, which also addresses issues concerning war, slavery and apostasy, is published as an independent booklet and may be viewed at: muslim.org/bookspdf/jibadinislam.pdf.

We continue to pray for the families of the abducted schoolgirls and we urge the Nigerian authorities to take all steps possible to ensure the safe return of these innocent children to their families. We also hope that our efforts, and those of many other Muslims, will one day result in the religion of Islam never being associated with such disgraceful acts against humanity.

*The Lahore Ahmadiyya Islamic Society is headquartered in Columbus, Ohio
and is the U.S. branch of the international Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement.*

*For more information about the Lahore Ahmadiyya Islamic Society and its work,
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