

NATIONAL PACT FOR AN ITALIAN ISLAM, EXPRESSION OF AN OPEN AND INTEGRATED COMMUNITY, ADHERING TO THE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE ITALIAN LEGAL SYSTEM

Drawn up in collaboration with the Council for Relations with Italian Islam
Adopted by the Italian Ministry of Interior

The representatives of Islamic Associations and Communities called upon to participate in a round-table discussion at the Ministry of the Interior,

- Recalling the supreme principle of secularity of the State as a "guarantee to safeguard freedom of religion in a context of cultural and religious pluralism";
- Having regard to Articles 2, 3, 8 and 19 of the Constitution aimed at:
 - recognizing and guaranteeing "the inviolable rights of the person, both as an individual and in the social groups where human personality is expressed" and requiring "the fulfilment of the fundamental duties of political, economic and social solidarity" (Art. 2);
 - establishing that "all of citizens are equal before the law, without distinction of sex, race, language, religion, political opinion, personal and social conditions" (Art. 3);
 - stipulating that "all religious denominations are equally free before the law" and "have the right to organise themselves in accordance with their own statutes, provided that these are not conflict with the Italian law" (Art. 8);
 - stating that "anyone is entitled to freely profess their own religious faith in any form, individually or in association, to disseminate it and to worship in private or public, provided that the religious rites are not contrary to public morality" (Art. 19);
- Having regard to Law No. 1159/1929, laying down "Provisions on the practice of a religious faith admitted by the State and on the marriage celebrated before a religious minister" and to Royal Decree No. 289 of 28 February 1930, establishing "Rules for the implementation of Law No. 1159/1929 on religious faiths admitted by the State and for its coordination with the other national laws";

- Considering the significant presence, in Italy too, of a "new religious pluralism", which includes numerous associations, citizens and residents that refer to the Islamic religion, in full respect of the Constitution;
- Stressing the need to contribute to fostering the harmonious and constructive coexistence of the different religious communities with a view to consolidating social cohesion and promoting integration processes;
- Bearing in mind the important role played by Islamic associations in countering any form of religious radicalism implemented through propaganda, actions and strategies contrary to the national legal system;
- Considering that the long-established dialogue with the Italian institutions and, in particular, with the Ministry of the Interior has been fruitful;
- Taking note of the preliminary work carried out at the Ministry of the Interior by the Council for Relations with Italian Islam;

undertake to:

1. Encourage the development and growth of dialogue and debate with the Ministry of the Interior, with the contribution of the Council for Relations with Italian Islam;
2. Continue to counter religious radicalism, also through forms of cooperation that provide authorities and institutions with suitable instruments for interpreting a phenomenon which poses a threat to the community's security, including citizens and residents professing the Islamic faith;
3. Foster a process of legal organization of Islamic associations under the existing legislation on religious freedom and in accordance with the principles of the State legal system;
4. Promote the training of Imams and religious leaders that - given the specific and delicate role they play in their communities and the functions they are called on to perform in places such as hospitals, reception centres, penitentiary institutes, etc. - can also take on the role of effective mediators to ensure the full implementation of civil principles of coexistence, secularity of the State, legality, equality of rights between men and women in a context characterized by religious and cultural pluralism;
5. Continue to organize public events attesting to the effectiveness of intercultural dialogue by valuing the contribution of the spiritual and cultural heritage of

Islamic tradition to the life of Italian society as well as by building pathways for the integration of Muslim migrants and against radicalism and religious fanaticism, acting in synergy with the Italian institutions. In this perspective, the role of younger generations will be of particular importance;

6. Favour the conditions for starting negotiations aimed at reaching agreements pursuant to Art. 8, par. 3 of the Constitution;
7. Continue efforts to ensure that the places of prayer and worship maintain decent standards in compliance with the existing legislation (on security and building) and that these sites can be accessible to non-Muslim visitors, including through programmes envisaging the opening of and guided visits to Islamic centres by persons with teaching and communication skills, who are inclined to value the opportunities for exchange and dialogue with the local civil community;
8. Facilitate contacts and relations between institutions and civil society and Islamic associations, publishing the names and addresses of Imams, religious leaders and personalities able to effectively play a mediation role between their community and the existing social and civil reality;
9. Making concrete efforts to guarantee that Friday sermons are delivered or translated into Italian, without prejudice to the original ritual forms in the celebration of the rite, as well as the communications concerning the life of the community or association;
10. Ensure utmost transparency in the management and documentation of funds, received from Italy or abroad, to be earmarked for the construction and management of mosques and places of prayer.

The Ministry reaffirms its commitment to:

1. Support and promote, in collaboration with Islamic Associations, public events aimed at strengthening and deepening dialogue between Institutions and the Islamic community, valuing the contribution in terms of spiritual, cultural and social heritage made by Muslim communities to the Country, fostering pathways for the effective integration of Muslim immigrants and countering radicalism and religious fanaticism;
2. Value the programmes and actions initiated by the Department for Civil Liberties and Immigration - Central Directorate for Religious Affairs;

3. Encourage specific pathways to support Islamic associations in putting in place statutory models consistent with the Italian legal system, also in view of possible requests for their legal recognition as legally responsible religious bodies by the Islamic associations themselves (ex Law No. 1159/1929 and Royal Decree No. 289 of 28 February 1930) or requests for the recognition of Islamic religious Ministers, pursuant to Art. 3 of Law No. 1159/1929;
4. Consider the importance of the new religious pluralism, in accordance with the national and community regulatory framework and the current jurisprudential guidelines of the European Court of Human Rights;
5. Consolidate the training experiences for the religious Ministers professing faiths that are not included in any agreement, in line with the ones initiated by the Department for Civil Liberties and Immigration - Central Directorate for Religious Affairs;
6. Foster the organization of training courses for Muslim religious Ministers, in concert with the Islamic associations and communities participating in the round-table discussion, the Council for Relations with Italian Islam and some Universities;
7. Disseminate across the territory the experience - already positively tested in some areas - of setting up "interreligious tables" within the Immigration Territorial Councils of the Prefectures, thus providing Italian Islam with a forum for exchanging views with local institutions;
8. Start a programme for preparing and distributing basic information kits, available in different languages, on the rules and principles of the Italian legal system as well as the existing legislation on the freedom of religion and worship;
9. Plan one or more national and public meetings between institutions and young Muslims on the theme of active citizenship, intercultural dialogue and fight against Islamophobia, fundamentalism and violence, etc.;
10. Promote a conference with the National Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI) on the issue of Islamic places of worship, in order to recall the right to religious freedom, which is also guaranteed through the availability of adequate premises and areas suitable for building or opening places of worship, in compliance with the urban planning rules on security, public health and hygiene, and in accordance with constitutional principles and European guidelines on religious freedom. In this respect, similar initiatives at the territorial level will be encouraged, especially in the most critical areas.

The Minister of Interior:

For the Council for the Relations with Italian Islam:

The Islamic Organizations:

C.I.I. (Italian Islamic Confederation)

C.I.C.I. (Islamic Cultural Centre of Italy)

U.CO.I.I. (Union of Islamic Communities and Organizations of Italy)

CO.RE.IS. (Italian Islamic Religious Community)

U.A.M.I. (Union of Muslim Albanians in Italy)

A.D.M.I. (Association of Muslim Women in Italy)

CHEIKH AHMADOU BAMBA ASSOCIATION

ASSOCIATION OF SOMALI MOTHERS AND CHILDREN

ISLAMIC ASSOCIATION OF IMAMS AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS

PAKISTANI ISLAMIC ASSOCIATION "MUHAMMADIAH"