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Terrorism causes prejudice and discrimination against Muslims – the collective responsibility of Muslims

By KURANISHI Masako

Recently, it is reported that cruel acts of terrorism by Islamic fundamentalists have already brought about some harassments against ordinary Muslims in some Non-Muslim countries.   Now, social division and tension between Non-Muslims and Muslims come to be serious concerns not only in those countries but also in the international community. Where can we find the key to resolve such a delicate problem?

First of all, we should pay attention to the point that actually, there are some adequate grounds and reasons on which not a few Non-Muslims admit the justice of religious and ethical prejudice and discrimination against Muslims.   If their psychological reactions against Muslims are groundless, the present appeals by some governments and the mass media, that persuade the public to be more tolerant to Muslims, may be effective. If they have founded-grounds, however, these appeals may not contribute to wipe out their negative feelings against Muslims.   It is not far from the truth to say that Non-Muslims have the following grounds and reasons.

Firstly, in comparison with other religions that teach love of one's neighbors and to respect others' lives, Islam is a rather aggressive and intolerant religion to other peoples as symbolized by 'Jihad'.

Secondly, Islam is a religion that values especially solidarity and brotherhood among its believers sharing the teachings written in their Scriptures, the Quran, although there are several ramified competitive sects, such as the Sunni and the Shia.   Thus it is natural that the dangerous image of Islam arising from the outcomes of the acts of terrorism extends to ordinary Muslims.   This is the reason why Non-Muslims cannot help suspecting ordinary Muslim citizens to be one of members of any terrorist group, even though only fanatics who try to realize their political and/or religious ideal commit heartless crimes of terrorism.

Thirdly, worse still, some Islamic fundamentalists tend to abuse the Islamic community as the mass power backing their activities latently and in fact, they have been exploiting it effectively.   For example, they have been spreading worldwide networks by means of the Internet, through which they have been brainwashing and recruiting new members or supporters of the terrorist groups easily.   If they have had acted as only a private individual or an isolated small group and had no relation with the Islamic community, they could not have terrified Non-Muslim societies as severely as today.

Non-Muslims are daily and everywhere confronted with the dangers that 'Jihad' would be carried out by any of Muslim neighbors.   Nobody can discern precisely terrorists from ordinary Muslims by appearances.   It is clear that the terrorists strategically enhance the point of threats by the number of the Muslim population.

For reasons mentioned above, it seems to be desired that the Islamic society address the issue of Islamic terrorism by themselves in addition to efforts of the side of Mon-Muslim countries.   Although they are victims of extremists among them, Muslims look to be irresponsible for the issues of their own community.   Muslims ought to be aware of such anxieties and uneasiness of Non-Muslims and to shoulder the collective responsibility for the Islamic terrorism.

Why do they not remonstrate with terrorists about their violent acts, saying "My dear brothers, it is your merciless and brutal acts of terrorism that is bringing about prejudice and discrimination against all of us"?   Nobody else can dissuade fundamentalists from exerting the acts of terrorism as well as Muslims do.   If ordinary Muslims come to think of terrorists as deviators from the teachings of Islam, they may devote themselves to eradicate the notorious organizations and the worldwide networks of terrorism.   On the other hand, the members of the terror groups like the IS and al-Qaeda understand the situation of other innocent Muslims, they may renounce terrorism for the sake of other ordinary Muslims.

We sincerely hope that Muslims could obviously show and certify that Islam is a peaceful and safe religion for all human beings.

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