

At 5 PM on Thursday, February 2, 2023, the United Islamic Associations of Sweden, Bosniak Islamic Society, Swedish Muslim Federation, Islamic Shia Societies in Sweden, and the Islamic Academy met with Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson and Social Minister Jakob Forssmed at his home at Sagerska House in Stockholm. The meeting was initiated by Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson and aimed to discuss the recent anti-Muslim hate attacks against Muslims in Sweden and how Sweden's position has resulted in foreign policy consequences.

The meeting began with a short speech from the Prime Minister, who gave his view of the different dimensions of the events and how they affect Sweden. The Prime Minister was clear that no revisions of laws or proposals for modifications of laws would be examined or made in response to the Quran burnings.

Our purpose in meeting Ulf Kristersson was to convey the voice of the Muslim community and explain how Sweden has changed from a country characterized by tolerance and openness to a country that appears in international media in contexts of hate and regulations perceived to be directed at different groups. We provided several concrete examples of how racism and discrimination negatively affect individual Muslim living conditions and how the Muslim civil society's ability to act naturally in society is limited, such as refusing to insure mosques or denying Swedish banks to open accounts for Muslim associations. We also spoke about how Muslim schools have been forced to close and how micro-aggressions against Muslims have become normalized in society!

We made it clear that we are Swedish citizens and care about Sweden's interests, just like the rest of society. Muslim organizations should be seen as natural partners in the government's work with the Muslim community, and we are open to offering our support and help. At the same time, the government must take action against Islamophobia, which constitutes a societal problem and a threat to both Muslims and Sweden.

The common demand we put forward at the meeting is that the government must take these problems seriously, both in words and actions, and through inclusive language, see the issues of the Muslim community and talk about them. The current legislation is sufficient to prohibit hate speech and hate against societal groups, and the law is fundamentally established for this purpose. What needs to be added is a political will to act on the legislation and ensure its compliance.

We believe that dialogue is essential and requires a joint effort from several societal actors to stop the dangerous development and strengthen Swedish democracy by guaranteeing everyone's participation on equal terms. Tonight's short meeting gives the sitting government good conditions to address the prevailing problems and propose measures and action plans as soon as possible!

Mohamad Temsamani, United Islamic Associations of Sweden
Mustafa Setkic, Bosniak Islamic Society
Tahir Akan, Swedish Muslim Federation
Haider Ibrahim, Islamic Shia Societies in Sweden
Salahuddin Barakat, The Islamic Academy

Stockholm, Thursday, February 2, 2023