

Poll confirms massive support for the caliphate in the Muslim world

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Striking findings came in an underreported poll published in April 2007. The poll, commissioned by the University of Maryland confirms previous research on the subject [www.css-jordan.org](http://www.css-jordan.org) . The poll conducted across four majority Muslim countries shows overwhelming:

- Support for application of Shariah law in Muslim countries
- Unification with other countries in a Caliphate or Khilafah
- Opposition to occupation and western foreign policy in general
- Opposition to the imposition of western values in Muslim lands
- Opposition to the use of violence against civilians

The levels of consensus for these ideas are in excess of 75% for some issues.

WHAT CAN BE LEARNED FROM SUCH POLLS?

1. It indicates the real views on the Muslim street
2. It blows the false myths about the political ideas of Islam and violence
3. It shows that the ideas of those who launched the global war on terror are dangerous for the whole world and deceive even their own population
4. It proves the need for a change in western foreign policy towards the Muslim world
5. It proves that Khilafah today resonates in the Muslim world and that there is a need for all to understand these ideas from their advocates

1. It indicates the real views on the Muslim street

Blair has said in many speeches that the Muslim world does not have to choose between dictatorship and a 'Taleban style theocracy'. Rather, he has argued, that the shared universal values of western democracy and liberty should be the future for Muslims.

It is true people hate dictatorship, occupation and corruption. However, it is false to think that the Muslim world feels the only way this can end is to choose a system like the one Blair, Bush and others advocate.

Muslims see the Shariah in governance as guaranteeing their authority in appointing the ruler, and giving the checks and balances of accountability. Islam, Shariah and Khilafah are what Muslims see as their

liberation from dictatorship, occupation and corruption. It is a system that comes from their beliefs and values and is in accordance with their history.

## 2. It blows the false myths about the political ideas of Islam and violence

Extremist commentators in the west argue that there is an inherent link between the political ideas of Islam and violence as a means to see Islam established. This survey proves this is a lie. People in the Muslim world want Islam but do not see political violence as a means to achieve it. In reality the overwhelming activism for the return of Islam and Khilafah in the Muslim world has been through a political method. Hizb ut-Tahrir leads the discussion today for the implementation of Islam and the establishment of the Caliphate through exclusively political means.

## 3. It shows that the ideas underpinning the War on Terror are dangerous and deceive the people in the west.

Bush, Blair, Cheney, John Reid and others have all attacked the principle of anyone working for a Caliphate and Shariah in the Muslim world.

Bush said, when referring to people that share the ideology of Al Qaeda “They hope to establish a violent political utopia across the Middle East, which they call caliphate, where all would be ruled according to their hateful ideology.”

Tony Blair also weighed in, when after the 7/7 attacks on London he said that Britain must confront – “an evil ideology”, defining this as “their barbaric ideas.” These included: “the establishment of effectively Taliban States and Shari’ah law in the Arab world en route to one Caliphate of all Muslim nations.”

Charles Clarke when Home Secretary in 2005 made a speech to the right wing neo-conservative US think tank the Heritage Foundation saying in regards to the Muslim world: “What drives these people on is ideas. And, unlike the liberation movements of the post-World War II era, these are not political ideas like national independence from colonial rule, or equality for all citizens without regard for race or creed, or freedom of expression without totalitarian repression. Such ambitions are, at least in principle, negotiable and in many cases have actually been negotiated. However, there can be no negotiation about the re-creation of the Caliphate; there can be no negotiation about the imposition of Sharia law”.

They lead people in their own population to believe these are ideas of a fringe group of Muslims and most Muslims disagree with the idea of Shariah, Caliphate and any political manifestation of Islam. It is this thinking that deludes people into believing that they can ‘solve’ the problems of the Muslim world by bombing some groups, banning others and changing a couple of regimes.

The reality is that Islam, Shariah and Caliphate are the political ideas of the majority. Therefore, the war that these politicians launched is one that is against the ideas that are the majority mainstream ideas of the Muslim world – the ideas that people see as their liberation from tyrannical oppression, economic dependency and political slavery.

They are fooling their own population into a false idea that is a war that can be won. They say it is to be a ‘long’ war. If they are trying to fight the ideas of approximately 1 billion people this is to be a never ending war.

## 4. It proves the need for a change in western foreign policy towards the Muslim world

The late Robin Cook said, after the Iraq war was over, that the challenge for the west is to reform its foreign policy with the Muslim world – meaning that he recognised that a colonial relationship was no longer tenable. The sad reality is that Bush and Blair interpret the alternative to ruling through proxy dictators as direct rule via occupation. The unfortunate reality is that the likes of David Cameron and his small circle of neocon advisors agree with this analysis. The Gordon Brown analysis is like that of the Iraq Study group in the USA – that is that the policy of intervention to suppress the expression of these political ideas of Islam is essential, but that the military option is a last resort.

The hopeful sign is that the mainstream populations in Britain, Europe and America were against the Iraq war, and do not support these politicians in their desire to intervene, interfere and invade. They are sceptical about the arguments about liberal interventionism – seeing it as a hypocritical excuse to intervene for material gain. They are sceptical about the scare mongering about terrorist threats. Even where they see the need to take security measures at home they see this foreign policy as worsening the problem. They recognise that heightening anger in the Muslim world and destroying civil society does not make the world a safer place.

5. It proves that Khilafah today resonates in the Muslim world and that there is a need for all to understand these ideas from their advocates

Above all this survey reflects the emergence of the return of the Khilafah as a majority desire. It proves that the Muslim masses want to live by the Shari'ah. It proves that the west has lost the battle of ideas. And it proves that Islam has won the battle for hearts and minds.

Given that this is the case, this shows that there is an urgent need for people to understand these ideas from those who carry them and believe in them. Many ordinary people in western countries see past the lies and spin of politicians. There is currently no effective voice that is countering these government inspired lies with the real facts about what Muslims the world over want. There is a huge burden on the Muslim community to advocate Islam as an alternative for the Muslim world.

The poll can be viewed here

Highlights of the poll

Support for Islam, Shariah and the Caliphate  
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Views on Islamization and Western Cultural Influences

Most respondents express strong support for expanding the role of Islam in their countries—consistent with the goals of al Qaeda—but also express an openness to outside cultural influences. Large majorities in most countries support the goals of requiring a strict application of sharia, keeping out Western values, and even unifying all Islamic countries into a single Islamic state. On the other hand, majorities in all countries regard the increasing interconnection of the world through trade and communication as positive and strongly support democracy and religious freedom. Majorities or pluralities also reject the idea that violent conflict between Muslim and Western culture is inevitable and say that it is possible to find common ground.

Attitudes to violence against civilians

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### Attacks on Civilians in General

Large majorities in all countries opposes attacks against civilians for political purposes and see them as contrary to Islam. Attacks on civilians are seen as hardly ever effective. Politically motivated attacks against civilian infrastructure are also rejected as not justified

### Attacks on American and European Civilians

Consistent with the opposition to attacks on civilians in principle, and in contrast to the significant support for attacks on US troops, majorities in all countries disapprove of attacks on civilians in the United States as well as civilians in Europe. Nearly as many disapprove of attacks on Americans working for US companies in Islamic countries. In all cases the Egyptians are the most opposed, while the Pakistanis are the least.

### Foreign policy and occupation start\_apr07\_graph2

In all countries large majorities have a negative view of the US government. The United States is perceived as having an extraordinary degree of influence over world events, with majorities in all countries saying that the United States controls most or nearly all of what happens in the world

### Perceptions of US Foreign Policy Goals Related to the Islamic World

Very large majorities believe the United States seeks to undermine Islam and large majorities even believe it wants to spread Christianity in the region. About the same numbers think a key US goal is to maintain access to oil. While majorities perceive the United States as seeking to prevent terrorist attacks, this is not seen as the primary purpose of the war on terror

### Getting the US Military Out of the Muslim World

Majorities in all countries endorse the goal of getting the United States to remove its military bases and its forces from all Islamic countries. Consistent with this goal, support for attacks on US troops in the Muslim world is quite high in Egypt and Morocco. But Pakistanis are divided about such attacks and Indonesians are opposed to them.