Press release: August 20, 2017

A band of criminal usurpers attack the Alāwīyya Confraternity in Morocco

The Sufi Alāwīyya International Association, an International NGO having special consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), discovered to their dismay, a scandalous and defamatory attack on its Founding and Honorary President Sheikh Khaled Bentounes.

Actually, the chief conductor of this unrest that goes back to 2010 is Said Yassin, the day that Sheikh Bentounes and the Council of Moqadems of Morocco decided to withdraw their confidence from him by officially canceling the general power of attorney that Sheikh Bentounes had given him in 1977, which allowed him to represent Sheikh Khaled at official circles in Morocco. Since that date, he has not ceased to discredit Sheikh Khaled by all means, lies, defamation, disinformation with the media and public opinion. He even went as far as creating a concurrent branch called, the tariqa alawiyya al maghribia, making fake and faulse use of it.

For more than a century, from the time of Sheikh Ahmed Ben Mostafa al-Alawī (1869-1934), the Tariqa Alāwīyya enjoys an irreproachable reputation and position of honour in Morocco as in the rest of the world. We note the decision of UNESCO, at its 37th General Conference in November 2013, which declared: “The ‘Alawī Sufi Order was founded by Sheikh al-Alawī for whom the promotion of interreligious dialogue was a priority. The order shows how we can best serve humanity and try to harmonize the world and make it a more beautiful place. It accepts and acknowledges everything that can bring us material comfort, but always in close relation with the inner dimension, in a permanent balance between the profane and the sacred. The order seeks to advance a loving brotherhood of men. It encourages us not to reject rationality at the expense of spirituality, and not to be boxed in by a tame religiosity.” (191 EX / 32, 17 April 2013, p.2). Actually, more than 25 Zawiyyas exist throughout the territory of Morocco, the oldest of which dates back to the 1920s.

Concerning the famous letter dated January 2013 bearing the seal of the Minister of Religious Affairs Ahmed Toufiq, which the press mentioned, Sheikh Bentounes was heard by the Judicial Police of Taourirt who Sheikh Bentounes asked to continue with his investigation to know exactly who was the author. In this regard, a complaint was filed by Sheikh Bentounes with the Moroccan Judicial Authorities in Tangiers against Said Yassin and the bunch of crooks around him.
Sheikh Khaled Bentounes is known across the world for his commitment to Peace and the Reconciliation of the Human Family. As the Spiritual Guide of the Tariqa Alāwiyya he is welcomed at many International events. He participated in 2016 at the first World Humanitarian Summit organized by the UN in Istanbul during which the four commitments that he proposed, on behalf of AISA International NGO, were included in the UN Agenda for Humanity. In 2017, he has participated in a considerable number of events; for example, the 13th Multaqqa, organized by UNESCO in Valencia, Spain, on June 4, during which he was awarded the "Concorde Méditerranée" Prize as was Francesco Rutelli, former Mayor of Rome and former Minister.

With AISA International NGO, he is the bearer of many projects such as the "International Day of Living Together" being drawn up for a resolution at the UN General Assembly before the end of 2017.

The extent of his action, his constant concern working for the whole of humanity on the spiritual and material plane, as well as his personality that elicits respect and repute throughout the world.

The slanderous campaign that he is under at this moment from the media is unworthy and we denounce it with all our vigor. We call on the Moroccan authorities to shed full light on the actions of this gang of criminal usurpers which is at the origin of it and who are trying to create a whole situation to put Algeria and Morocco in opposition through the members of The Tariqa 'Alāwiyya, while wanting to take control of the numerous zawiyas that form the Tariqa 'Alāwiyya in Morocco.

We warn the Moroccan press against the lies and defamation it has echoed and we also call on it to play its role in giving the floor to the opposite party to get to the truth. We put our trust in the Moroccan authorities and hope that the truth will soon be made known to all.

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