

P O Box 191, Bruma, 2026

The Chairperson,  
Ms. Thoko Nonhle Mkhwanazi-Xaluva,  
Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of  
Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities,  
Ground Floor, Forum IV, Braampark,  
33 Hoofd Street, Braamfontein, 2001

12 May 2015

Honoured Chairperson,

**Religious certifications on foodstuffs, undisclosed income and expenditure of religious Certification Authorities, and the rights of non-adherents to specified religions to engage freely in basic economic activity**

1. As a Christian, I wish to raise concerns over the application of Islamic (halaal) certifications on South African food products available to the general public.
2. While the right of religious communities to observe dietary laws is not in question, measures taken for the practical convenience of those adherents must not be at the expense of, or offend against the conscience of those belonging to other religious communities.
3. I submit that the prevailing practice of halaal certifications on foodstuffs as advocated by various Islamic Certification Authorities and implemented by producers of foodstuffs in South Africa, is –
  - 3.1. intolerant of the religious convictions of Christians;
  - 3.2. disrespectful of the rights of Christians to engage freely in basic economic activity in a way that does not offend their conscience; and
  - 3.3. potentially detrimental to the interests of the Christian faith.
4. I base my submission on reasons that follow.
5. **Islam is overtly and actively anti-Christian**
  - 5.1. Whereas South Africa enjoys a high-degree of tolerance among various religious groups, and we value the cordial relations that exist between adherents of various faiths, it is deeply offensive to the conscience of any person to be forced to support a religion that is directly and fundamentally opposed to his own.

- 5.2. While Islam is diverse in its practice, and Muslims deviate to varying degrees from the apparently harsh doctrines illustrated below, the Islamic religion universally acknowledges the same two sources of authority, namely the Qu'ran, the holy book of Islam, and the Sunnah – the words and deeds of the prophet Mohammad, whose example all Muslims are required to follow.
- 5.3. The two sources of Islamic authority are congruent and mutually supporting in their vigorous persecution of Christians and opposition to the Christian faith. The citations below are taken directly from these primary sources.

**Qur'an** (Yusuf Ali's English translation):

**Surah 9:28-29: "Fight those who do not believe in Allah ... nor follow the religion of truth, out of those who have been given the Book, until they pay the tax (*jizya*) in acknowledgment of superiority and they are in a state of subjection."**

Note that 'People of the Book' is a recognized and undisputed Islamic term for Jews and Christians. Muslims are ordered to fight against all Jews and Christians who are not in a position of subservience toward Islam.

**Surah 47:4: "... when you meet in battle those who disbelieve, then smite the necks until when you have overcome them, then make (them) prisoners, and afterwards either set them free as a favour or let them ransom (themselves) until the war terminates...(as for) those who are slain in the way of Allah ... ."**

Yusuf Ali explains this verse in footnote 4821 to his translation: "In the first onset there must necessarily be great loss of life: but when the enemy is fairly beaten, which means, in a Jihad [holy war], that he is not likely to seek again the persecution of Truth [i.e. Islam, in Ali's view], firm arrangements should be made to bring him under control."

**Sunnah**

**Sahih Bukhari 1.2.24: 'Allah's Apostle said: 'I have been ordered to fight against the people until they testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and that Muhammad is Allah's Apostle, and offer the prayers perfectly and give the obligatory charity, so if they perform that, then they save their lives and property from me ... ."**

The Sunnah obligates Muslims to fight against any who do not acknowledge Muhammad. It makes a clear threat against the lives and property of anyone who do not submit to the religion of Islam.

**Sahih Muslim 19.4366: "It has been narrated by Umar that he heard the Messenger of Allah say: 'I will expel the Jews and Christians from the Arabian Peninsula and will not leave any but Muslim."**

It is still illegal today for a Jew or Christian to visit Mecca.

***Muwatta Imam Malik, p. 371: "Umar b. Abd al-Aziz reported that the last statement made by the Apostle of Allah (may peace be upon him) [before he died] was: O Lord, perish the Jews and the Christians."***

## 6. Islam potentially funds religious propagation by taxes on Christians and Jews

- 6.1. Islam seeks to impose its dominance over other religions by the imposition of a special tax on those who do not convert to Islam (this is the "jizya" tax referred to in the Qur'anic citation in paragraph 5.3 above).
- 6.2. The "jizya" was historically imposed by Islamic conquerors on particularly Jewish and Christian survivors in the conquered territories, in exchange for the privilege to continue in the practice of their own religions within a so-called Islamic State. Taxes levied against non-adherents can then be used for the further expansion and propagation of Islam.
- 6.3. In view of this practice and history, I am particularly concerned that revenue collected by the halaal industry in South Africa is motivated by a similar purpose.
  - 6.3.1. South African food producers are required to pay substantial sums of money for the right to print halaal certificates on their products;
  - 6.3.2. the income derived from halaal certifications in South Africa is estimated to be in excess of R 100 million per annum;
  - 6.3.3. there is reportedly no financial disclosure by the various Halaal Certification Authorities at present that show whether the income derived from their activities is proportionate to the cost of the service provided (i.e. that charges are levied on a strictly cost recovery basis), or not;
  - 6.3.4. there is no basis, in the absence of full financial and other disclosure, of knowing whether the income derived from halaal certifications is being diverted to (i) religious education of Muslims, (ii) the building of mosques, (iii) the propagation of the Islamic faith, (iv) militant and Jihadist organisations, or (v) causes otherwise in aid of or in the expansion of Islam.

7. Under present conditions it is impossible for me as a Christian to purchase a product that is halaal certified, in fear that the certification practice is funding the proliferation of a religion that is directly and sometimes even violently antagonistic toward my own.

8. The choice of conscience that I have exercised has had the following practical consequences:

- 8.1. I purchase more imported goods. Foreign producers have not followed the South African trend toward religious certifications, and most imported cheeses, olive oils and processed products such as mayonnaise, coffees, candies, etc. are free from these certificates;
  - 8.2. I avoid any supermarket chain that has halaal certificates on its non-branded or house-branded products – this includes Pick n Pay and Checkers / Shoprite;
  - 8.3. I try my best to determine whether any branded product is halaal certified or not (this is sometimes difficult due to the deceptively small size of the certificate, which is sometimes also hidden under a flap of the packaging);
  - 8.4. I do not purchase from any fast food outlet that serves halaal meat – this includes MacDonalds and KFC nationwide;
  - 8.5. I try within reason to determine whether a restaurant serves halaal meat before I eat there.
9. While this behaviour is sustainable and I can quite easily continue in the manner set out above if current practice continues unchanged, I note the following for consideration by the Commission:
- 9.1. I am excluded on grounds of religious conviction from approximately 80% of the food products manufactured in South Africa;
  - 9.2. My income enables me to exercise a higher degree of choice than the average South African. A person whose consumer choices are driven by price as the overriding factor, is not able to exercise the same level of freedom that I do;
  - 9.3. Muslims comprised only 1.5% of the South African population according to the 2001 Population Census. Even if the percentage has doubled in the past 14 years, it still means that 97 per cent of all products carrying halaal certificates is being marketed to non-Muslims.
10. While there is a growing number of Christians in South Africa who are adopting a stance similar to my own, I assume that the vast majority of Christian South Africans are either not aware of the issues at stake, and therefore continue for the time being to purchase halaal products without any crisis of conscience, or, alternatively, are aware of the issues, and yet have chosen to buy the products in question despite the fact that they are opposed to the certification.
11. In my view, prejudice is suffered by all three categories of consumer:
- 11.1. in the first case, the consumer is deprived on the grounds of religious conscience from a sizeable portion of the South African food market;
  - 11.2. in the second case, he or she is unwittingly contributing to a practice that is in all likelihood prejudicial to the cause of his or her faith and religious community;

11.3. in the third case, the consumer is driven by expedience to participate in an economic activity that causes him or her troubles of conscience.

## 12. Islamic meat products

12.1. In addition to the objections raised above, there is an even more fundamental objection in the case of halaal certified meat products.

12.2. The Islamic prescription from *Surah* 5.3 of the Qur'an (al-Ma'idah) reads as follows: "Eat not of that (meat) on which Allah's name has not been pronounced."

12.3. In addition, the animal must be facing the Ka'aba (Black Stone) in Mecca when it is slaughtered and its neck must be slit with a sharp knife. The animal must die from the loss of blood.

12.4. Christians are not permitted to eat food sacrificed to idols (see Acts 15:29 and 21:25, and the Book of Revelation 2:20).

12.5. The Biblical prohibition on the consumption of meat of animals sacrificed to false gods, led me to enquire in some depth whether the Allah of Islam is one and the same as the God of the Bible.

12.6. I have concluded that they are not.

12.7. The Allah of Islam and the God of the Bible are clearly distinguished on the criteria listed in the table below.

Names of God	Both the Bible and the Qur'an use multiple names and attributes for God. The most important of the Bible names is YHVH (Jehovah). The Bible mentions this name no less than 6521 times through its various books, which books span a period of at least 1300 years. The Qur'an has 99 names for Allah, but this most important and critical name (YHVH) is not one of them. If Allah of the Qur'an and the God of the Bible were one and the same, why is the most important name of God, as given in the Bible, namely YHVH (Jehovah) not once mentioned in the Qur'an?
Plural versus Singular	Another important point: the Hebrew word for God, being 'elohim', as used more than 2500 times throughout the Bible. This is a plural word on account of the "-im" at the end, just like the Arabic work 'alikum' (used in the greeting 'as-salaamu alikum') is the plural form of 'alika'. The Arabic 'Allah' is deliberately singular – even though Arabic and Hebrew share the same suffix indicator of plurality. Again, if the Allah of Islam and the God of the Bible are one and the same, then why this inconsistency?
The God of which City?	The God of the Bible was associated with the city of Jerusalem until such time that Jesus universalised access to God through the gift of the Spirit (see Deut. 12:5-7 and John 4:21-24). That the true God is identified with the city of Jerusalem was well known to the Muhammad and the early Muslims:

	<p>~ they originally faced their prayers in the direction of Jerusalem;  ~ in a mythical event known as the Miraj, Muhammad had to travel to Jerusalem in order to enter from there into the presence of God.</p> <p>in the second year of the Migration (Hijrah), Muhammad had a major fall out with the Jews, and promptly changed the direction of the prayers to Mecca. Sometime after this Muhammad got the revelation recorded in <i>Surah 27:91</i>: <b>"For me, I have been commanded to serve <u>the Lord of this city</u>, Him Who has sanctified it and to Whom (belong) all things: and I am commanded to be of those who bow in Islam to Allah's will"</b>. The city spoken of here is Mecca. From the time of this revelation onward, the god of Islam has been inextricably associated with the city of Mecca.</p>
Ultimate revelation	Both Islam and Christianity believe and agree that God revealed himself many times in history, but also that this culminates in a final or ultimate revelation. According to Islam, the final revelation is the Qur'an. According to the Bible the final revelation of God is Himself – in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. The God of the Bible is personal (relational), thus He is finally and fully revealed in a person, not in a book.
Purpose in Creation	Allah of the Qur'an created people to be His slaves ( <i>Surah 19:93</i> ), whereas the God of the Bible created mankind to become his children (John 1:12-13, 11:52, Romans 8:16, etc.).

12.8. The following additional factors are also relevant:

12.8.1. According to the Kitab al-Asnab (Book of Idols), of Ibn al-Kalbi, in the chapter on 'al-Uzza', one of the idols in the Ka'aba was called "Allah".

12.8.2. All the ceremonies performed in the Meccan Hajj (pilgrimage), including the ritual slaughter, pre-date Islam and were performed in honour of idols.

12.9. From the Christian perspective, the God of the Bible is the One True God, and the Allah of Islam is consequently a false god or idol.

12.10. From a Christian perspective, the eating of meat of an animal offered up in the name of Allah is consequently prohibited.

### 13. Powers of the Commission

13.1. The Commission is empowered in terms of section 5(1)(e) of the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities Act, 2002, ("the Act") to conduct an investigation into the effect of religious certifications on foodstuffs on the rights of the Christian community in South Africa.

13.2. The Commission is empowered in terms of section 5(1)(f) of the Act, to advise and report on its findings as these relate to the rights of religious communities.

13.3. The Commission is empowered in terms of section 5(1)(k) of the Act, to bring any relevant matter to the attention of an appropriate authority or organ of State, and, where appropriate, to make recommendation to that authority or organ of State in dealing with such a matter.

#### 14. Remedial action

14.1. If at the conclusion of an investigation, the Commission finds that current halaal certification practices are detrimental or adverse to the rights of the Christian community, I submit the following as possible remedies, for consideration:

14.1.1. the regulation of Certification Authorities with a view to full disclosure, both financial and otherwise, with the determined purpose of ensuring that operations are conducted on a strictly cost recovery basis;

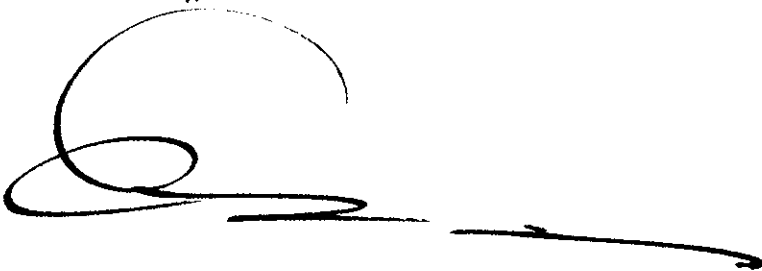
14.1.2. minimum standards for halaal certificates – ensuring that these are of a prescribed boldness and dimension and placed in an area of the packaging that is clearly visible to the consumer;

14.1.3. clear warning signs at the entrance of restaurants and fast food outlets that serve halaal meat.

#### 15. Conclusion

15.1. I trust that the grave importance of this matter will be understood by the Commission and furthermore that the scope and nature of the Commission's response will be commensurate to its importance.

Yours faithfully,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

V K Daly

cc Mr. Richard Botha, CRL Commissioner

cc Ms. Patricia Pillay, Head of Industry Affairs, Consumer Goods Council of South Africa