

## PROTECTING THE VALUES THAT MAKE US WHO WE ARE



### Dear Muslims,

The goal of our sublime religion, Islam, is to construct a Muslim identity on the basis of the Qur'an and Sunnah. In constructing this identity, the basic measure of Islam is the moral principles that were introduced by the Messenger of Allah (saw). It is the Islamic culture and civilization that has emerged through these principles.

### Dear Believers!

The loftiest value that constitutes the Muslim identity is faith, which reminds us of the purpose of our creation, teaches us our responsibilities, and allows us to develop a personality. It is the acts of worship that enables us to earn the approval of our Lord (swt), and good morals that are the source of peace and happiness.

### Dear Muslims!

Muslims who preserve their identity are expected to respect and protect the principles of Islam, that is, the signs and symbols of Islam. Allah the Almighty (swt) states, **“Whoever honors the symbols of Allah, it is certainly out of the piety of the heart.”**<sup>i</sup>, and informs us that protecting these symbols and signs is a requirement of our piety.

<sup>i</sup> Hajj, 22/32.

<sup>ii</sup> Abu Dawud, Libas, 4.

### Dear Believers!

We live in a time when moral values, customs and traditions are deteriorating, and cultural alienation is rapidly increasing. One of these cultural degenerations is the New Year celebrations. However, the festivities organized under the name of New Year's Eve, the symbolic figures in these festivities and the cutting down of pine trees have nothing to do with our history and culture. Our sublime religion, Islam, forbids alcohol, which is the mother of all evil, and gambling, which destroys homes and families and causes murders. Lottery, bets and all games of chance, which are different types of gambling, are also forbidden and sinful acts according to our religion.

### Dear Muslims!

Societies are known and remembered for their values. They live and keep standing by their values. Our Prophet (saw) warns his 'ummah about this issue as follows: **“He who imitates any people (in their actions) is considered to be one of them.”**<sup>ii</sup> So, let us hold fast to our values, which make us who we are, sustain us and are our strongest refuge. Let us not reflect on our lives superstitious customs and traditions that are incompatible with our faith, history and culture.

I would like to conclude this Friday's khutbah with our Lord's (swt) following verse: **“Your only guardians are Allah, His Messenger, and fellow believers—who establish prayer and pay alms-tax with humility.”**<sup>iii</sup>

<sup>iii</sup> Ma'fidah, 5/55.