

## **Considering it a Step of Dangerous Significance, Sayyid Ammar Al Hakim Calls on the Parliament to Reject the Collective Resignation of the Board of Commissioners**



The head of the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq, Sayyid Ammar Al Hakim, called on the Council of Representatives to reject the collective resignation of the election commission board, stressing the need to provide the legal and legislative protection that the commission needs to perform its work independently without pressure from any party. His eminence insisted on the importance of stopping any interference in its work and preventing it from turning into a battlefield among political wills or legislative and judicial authorities. He expressed his surprise for the resignation 35 days before the elections, warning again against illogical procedures that would entail exceptional circumstances. His eminence insisted on the need to hold elections on time no matter what the circumstances, as no one should bet on postponing them under any excuse because without elections, there is no legitimacy and without legitimacy, everyone would become outlaws. Sayyid Al Hakim explained that peoples participate in elections to choose not just their governors but also their country, to develop and reinforce their country and to attain their desire of living a decent life amidst coexistence and forgiveness. He indicated that the message of the Martyr of the Niche to everyone is as follows: It is not allowed to "bend the arm of the people" nor manipulate its sentiments or fears; the people is not a hostage but the holder of a full will to choose and decide, and we should all submit to this will. His eminence wondered who protects the commissioners, and whether there were any pressures exerted on the commission to make it resign at this critical time? He considered that the commission is the body in charge of holding the elections in Iraq and indicated that elections are the only legitimate way through which the people can express its will by choosing its representatives in the Council of Representatives and forming the government that will rule Iraq for the four coming years.

This came at the cultural forum held at his eminence's office in Baghdad on Wednesday, March 26, 2014.

### **We Warn Against Intimidating, Blackmailing and Insulting Citizens by Buying or Counterfeiting their Vote**

His eminence pointed out that every movement or party has the right to highlight its achievements, explaining that the political parties and forces are competing to show what they have provided or what they are able to provide to citizens, so that they can choose out of will and conviction the candidates they see credible, in line with their ambitions and capable of assuming the responsibility of their decisions. He warned against intimidating, blackmailing and insulting citizens by buying or counterfeiting their vote, assuring that this is an abnormal procedure that endangers the future, unity and social peace of Iraq to get electoral profits. His eminence thus called to compete by means of the presented programs not through

threats and defamation.

#### The Martyrdom of Badiwi is a Big Loss of a Great Mind and Human Potential

The head of the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq considered that the martyrdom of the journalist and academician Mohammad Badiwi is a big loss of a great mind and human potential, explaining that the incident was painful in two ways; first, in the sense that death is following the people of this country everywhere and that access to death has become easier than access to life. As if it is not enough that Iraqis die on the hands of terrorists, they also die on the hands of some security forces members who are supposed to protect people. His eminence warned against being a State of officials not a State of citizens, as this deepens further the gap between citizens and officials. He wondered in a second sense how cheap Iraqi blood is considered when an officer kills a journalist and academician in this regretful manner no matter what the circumstances and justifications. Sayyid Al Hakim stated that when arguments end with the use of bullets, it is a dangerous intellectual and human decline, adding that this also shows the poor selection of officers assigned to assume delicate tasks. His eminence said that if this officer was disciplined, he wouldn't have acted with such carelessness, calling on the competent authorities to reconsider the ethics and training of security forces. He added that if there is no more trust between citizens and security men, the country would lose confidence in itself, in its future and in its entire security work system. He insisted on sanctioning the officer in order to reinforce the concept of commitment to law without deceit or delay, underlining the importance of restricting the issue to its personal frame and legal limits without any exaggeration and of not pushing some naïve persons to commit mistakes whose impact and repercussions are not known to them, like what happened in some unacceptable racist slogans that were written on the walls. His eminence wondered where were the wise men? Where were the authentic Arab ethics? Where were the national passion and feature? He expressed his appreciation of the national, human and moral position taken by the martyr's family and how his relatives refused to politicize the issue and kept it within its personal and legal limits, indicating that this is proof of this family's high morals, Arab belonging and nationalist affiliation.

#### An Integrated Strategy to Reexamine the Situation of Checkpoints in Iraq

Sayyid Ammar Al Hakim expressed his support to the last decisions taken by the general commandment of armed forces to address some deficiencies in checkpoints and facilitate the circulation of citizens. He insisted on not handling this deficiency as being "premeditated" by all soldiers and officers and thus holding them accountable. He explained that security men do not wish to delay people at checkpoints nor make them wait or hinder their business, but they have to obey the incoming orders, and when the orders were to open and expand the paths of checkpoints, they obeyed the orders. His eminence called to develop an integrated strategy that would reexamine the situation of checkpoints in Iraq on correct scientific bases, in parallel with endeavors to promote the intelligence competence and use of modern devices that would

reduce the checkpoints as much as possible. Sayyid Al Hakim pointed out that there is an inverse relationship between the accuracy of a security information and the reduction of the number of checkpoints; the more accurate is the first, the less we count on the second. He stressed the need to conduct a comprehensive review and identify the reasons that make this country teeter in the brink and witness, with every event, a crisis and bone-breaking battle. His eminence indicated that partners should establish an essential and solid basis that we all agree on as Iraqis, not as sects and ethnic groups, underlining the importance of setting national red lines that no one can trespass so that no statement or event is turned into a threat endangering the foundations of social coexistence and undermining the rules of justice, equality, citizenship and law.

#### Opportunities for an Inclusive Regional Consensus Have Not Been Completely Wasted

His eminence expressed his hope that Arab leaders would realize the challenges that Iraq is facing, wishing that they support the path Iraq is taking and that their higher policies address Iraq as an essential partner towards reaching a common goal, which is to confront terrorism and put off the fires devastating the region. He assured that the Middle East has witnessed in the past few years big events and changes, and that Iraq was not away from being influenced by the repercussions of many of those changes. His eminence stated: we have lost so many precious souls, saw the chances of economic growth hindered and witnessed an internal political division because of these influences. He added that the summit is held during highly extraordinary circumstances that the Arab nation is going through, where political stability in most Arab countries is no longer to be found on one hand, and Arabs are caught in internal divisions on another hand, hence the selection of the name "solidarity and future". His eminence maintained that Iraq has always considered that its role in the new phase of democratic construction is to be a center for the agreement, not the intersection, of regional wills. He considered that the Iraqi foreign policy should be built on the basis of good neighborliness, mutual interests and good relations with everyone, clarifying that Iraq's approach is based on establishing good relations and narrowing any spaces for disagreement with the foreign countries, especially with the Arab and Islamic countries close to Iraq. His eminence stated that he believes that opportunities for an inclusive regional consensus that takes into account the security challenges of Iraq and its daily war against trans-border terrorism have not been completely wasted. He wished that the Arab brothers would embody this vision through maintaining dialogue with the neighboring countries, strengthening brotherly relations, eliminating pending disagreements or wrong impressions regarding the Iraqi orientations and reinforcing Iraq's role as a center of gravity and a point of meeting and regional and international cooperation, not as a threat to the interests of anyone. His eminence described the policy of Kuwait, the country hosting the summit, as moderate and balanced, its leadership being characterized with its calm handling of thorny issues. He hoped that the summit would result in concrete steps and not just be limited to the delivery of

speeches, assuring that Arabs are in dire need for solidarity to face together the decisive challenges they're facing and to seek a secure future for their peoples. His eminence reminded that the political environment in the Arab countries has significantly changed, as many have got rid of the totalitarian regimes that were governing them but have not till now found the stability we aspire to, and Arab societies are still in a complicated labor for a long awaited birth.

#### "The Citizen Wants": A Foundation for the Culture of "Contract"

His eminence mentioned "The citizen wants" initiative, stressing that Iraqi citizens demand peace, equity, services, decent life, social welfare and national coexistence, which is not a secret and was known all along by the Martyr of the Niche movement. He indicated that the purpose of "the citizen wants" campaign is to lay the foundations of the culture of "contract" between the people and the candidates, and between the people and politicians. The campaign also aims, he added, to turn the signature of each Iraqi citizen into a commitment taken by the candidate and to make the candidate understand how to handle his responsibility of being the speaker and translator for the people's will. His eminence affirmed that candidates do not have a will independent from that of their voters, but they are a means to convey and promote the popular will and a way to turn this will into a work program and implementation mechanisms. He called on the election candidates from the Citizen Bloc and other blocs to consider the demands, complaints and needs of people as debts they have to pay, debts that they should keep on carrying until they liquidate them. Sayyid Al Hakim explained that Iraqis cannot stand a candidate who uses multiple languages, one before the elections, one after, a third one for political agreements and a fourth one for discussion with the outside world. He addressed the candidates saying: What you say and promise during the electoral campaign is a religious, national and moral obligation that is not less important than the legal commitment, adding that the electoral campaign should not be an opportunity to mislead people by making fake promises, but they should be an occasion to get closer to the people and reach every province, city, village and house to understand their needs, have a direct contact with citizens and make their commitments to them.

#### The Execution of a Big Number of Egyptian Politicians Will Deepen the Political Crisis

His eminence warned the Arab Republic of Egypt from the decision to execute his big number of politicians all at once after a short trial, insisting that the Egyptian law has always had its place and history. We were surprised by this shocking decision, he said stressing the need not to interfere in the internal affairs of countries. He added however: Our warning is one coming from one brother to another as it is our duty to warn. His eminence pointed out that this sentence, no matter what its causes are, might deepen the political crisis in the country, giving Iraq as an example as murderers and terrorists have filled Iraqi streets with blood, but no collective verdict has yet been issued for all the criminals. He expressed his worry from the effects of such decisions as they may undermine rights and wished that these decisions get reconsidered.

## Teach Your Children to Buy Books Like They Buy Candy and Gifts

His eminence called on Iraqi families to visit the book fair held at Baghdad international exposition center and to teach their children to buy books like they teach them to buy candy and gifts. He wondered who is responsible for this cultural decline today, while there are in Baghdad thousands of college students, and even more students in primary and intermediate schools, not to forget the scholars, employees and academicians. He stated that there should be tens of thousands of visitors to the fair every day, and expressed his regret in view of the small number of visitors. Sayyid Al hakim finally wondered if the reasons were related to security or livelihood or to the general environment which is tending to be careless? He insisted on not losing hope and keep on moving forward as the best nourishment of all is knowledge, and no future is possible without knowledge and reading.