

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate

The Islamic ruling on Participating in Elections in USA and Western Countries

Now a days some individuals have raised a serious misconception by claiming that participation in democratic election constitutes shirk (associating partners with Allah), particularly for Muslims residing in the Western countries. According to this view, Muslims are not allowed to participate in these elections and as a result, some have called upon Muslims to boycott elections. However, a number of contemporary Muslim scholars and recognized Islamic jurisprudential councils have adopted a different view. They have permitted Muslims participation in political and civic life, subject to Islamic principles and the circumstances of the society in which Muslims live. By participation in elections and public affairs may provide opportunities to protect religious freedom, uphold justice for all, prevent harm, promote the common good of all people and contribute positively to the society at large. Among these councils that have addressed this subject are: The Islamic Fiqh Council of Muslim World League, the Assembly of Muslim Jurists of America (AMJA), and the European Council for Fatwa & Research. Their discussions reflect the importance of considering the circumstances, benefits and potential harms associated with political; participation. The question of participation in elections is therefore a matter of Islamic jurisprudential reasoning (Ijtihad), in which scholars consider the relevant evidence , objectives of Islamic law and consequences of different courses of action. Voting does not mean that a person has abandoned his /her Islamic beliefs or committed shirk.

A Muslim may participate in civic and political life while remaining committed to belief in Allah is the ultimate source of religious guidance and moral accountability.

Participation in public affairs may take many forms, including voting, engaging in political discussion, contacting elected representatives, participating in community organizations, advocating for justice and seeking public office.

From Islamic perspective, these activities may serve legitimate purpose when conducted within the Islamic boundaries. Such participation may be understood in light of the objectives of Islamic law, including the promotion of justice for all, the prevention of harm, the protection of rights and pursuit of common good for all. One important principle in Islamic jurisprudence is the consideration of benefits and harms (al-masalih wa al-mafasid).

When evaluating political participation, Muslims may consider whether it can help protect religious freedom, prevent discrimination, improve public safety, support fair treatment, and address issues affecting their families and communities.

Muslims who participate in public affairs should remain committed to Islamic ethics and their religious obligations. Political involvement should not lead a person to neglect prayer, family responsibilities, honesty, or other Islamic duties.

Muslims should seek knowledge about the political system in which they live to engage in civic life with wisdom, integrity and respect. Every eligible voter must remain free to make an independent decision and make their own judgment.

Responsible civic participation can help Muslim communities communicate their concerns, protect their institutions and advocate for religious freedom and equal treatment under the law. When we participate in elections will be able to have our concerns heard.

We should encourage qualified and capable Muslims to consider public service at every level of government through such service we will contribute positively to the community at large and ensuring that our concerns & rights as Muslim Americans are represented alongside with other fellow citizens.

Our aim should be to uphold justice protect religious freedom, prevent harm, contribute to the common good and maintain a positive and constructive presence in the societies that we live in.

We ask Allah to guide us toward what is right, grant us wisdom and help us serve our families and communities.

And Allah knows best.