

## Calling for a Global Caliphate

### International Conference in Ramallah

by Nissan Ratzlav-Katz



An international movement that has made the Islamic call for a worldwide Caliphate its trademark held a conference in Ramallah on Saturday. With this conference, Hizb Ut-Tahrir Al-Islami (the Islamic Liberation Party) has formally established a branch in the Palestinian Authority. PA media reported that the event was attended by thousands of participants under the banner, "**Caliphate: The Coming Force**".

The movement said that the establishment of a Caliphate, a global Muslim empire, is the only way to liberate Muslims from "racism," "degradation," and "occupation." Hizb Ut-Tahrir leader Ata Khalil Abu Al-Rashta said that the Ramallah gathering was the first of its kind in the PA. Al-Rashta is a civil engineer from Hevron region.

According to the PA-based Ma'an news agency, the first of two lectures delivered at the conference addressed the many conflicts around the world that involve Muslims. The speaker set forth the idea that Caliphate is the only solution to "rescue" Muslims from their various local predicaments.

The second lecture, titled "Media and the Issue of Caliphate," suggested that Muslims should make sure the Caliphate and discussion of global Islamic rule is the first priority of the media. The Caliphate, the speaker argued, was imperative to Muslim unity.

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According to the Hizb Ut-Tahrir website, "Hizb Ut-Tahrir is a political party whose ideology is Islam. Its objective is to resume the Islamic way of life by establishing an Islamic State that executes the systems of Islam and carries its call to the world." The organization was founded in 1952 in Jerusalem.

Ultimately, Hizb Ut-Tahrir wants to see a Caliphate, accepted by the Muslim masses, that spreads Islam in the world through da'wa (persuasion) and jihad. Until that point, the group focuses on educating Muslims about its goals, spreading these views among others in their countries and causing un-Islamic governments to disintegrate.

Arab regimes thus consider Hizb Ut-Tahrir a particular threat, as the group's ideology states that "the reality is that all the Islamic lands are currently a House of Faithlessness, for Islam is no longer implemented over them; thus, Hizb-ut-Tahrir adopted the transformation of this House into a House of Islam. With regard to determining whether a household is Islamic or not, this is not dependent on whether its inhabitants are Muslims or not, but rather on what is implemented in terms of rules and on whether the security of the House is in the hands of the Muslims or the infidels."

In Iraq, Jordan, Syria, Egypt, Tunisia and Libya, the regimes have killed or imprisoned dozens of Hizb Ut-Tahrir members. The group is banned completely or partially in several Arab and Central Asian countries, as well as in Russia and Germany. In the United Kingdom, a ban has been proposed due to Hizb Ut-Tahrir's anti-Semitic teachings from Islamic sources.

Hizb ut-Tahrir, active worldwide, now has its main base in Western Europe with large contingents operating in central Asian Muslim countries and in China's Xinjiang province.

**The message of a global Caliphate has been promoted by other Islamic groups and individuals in Israel in the past. In March of 2007, while addressing a mass rally, senior Hamas leader and former PA official Mahmoud A-Zahar reiterated his organization's fundamental position advocating the complete obliteration of Israel and the worldwide rule of Islam.**

In February 2006, chairman of the combined United Arab List and the Ta'al parties in the Knesset, Ibrahim Sarsour, said, "Rule on earth, at least in Arab and Muslim land, should be by the Caliph. We believe in Islam and in the Caliphate and not in separation between state and religion." In September of the same year, the leader of the northern branch of the Islamic Movement in Israel declared that a new Caliphate will soon arise, with its capital in Jerusalem.