



Association ASIDCOM
Maison des associations
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To the attention of :
Mr Francois Fillon, Prime Minister
Mr Bruno Le Maire, Minister of Agriculture,
Food, Fisheries, Rural and Regional
Development,
Mr. MICHEL MERCIER, Attorney General,
Minister of Justice and Freedom,

Grenoble, On February 21, 2012

Copy for: Declared Candidates for President

Subject: Rejection of the Decree No. 2011-2006 of 28 December 2011 concerning restrictive conditions for ritual slaughter

Mr. Ministers

Since the early seventies, the French food industry has benefited from a domestic market that sells Halal labeled products. Since then the demand has been increasing and this market is becoming increasingly important. Similarly, these types of product are increasing exponentially in the international markets.

To accompany the development of this market, the French government has intervened by enacting a number of statutory instruments:

- 1980: A decree enabling the slaughtermen to be approved by religious organizations, or by the prefects of departments, if such a religious organization does not exist,
- 1994: A decree enabling the Paris Mosque to issue cards to slaughtermen,
- 1996: A decree ending the monopoly of the Paris mosque for approving Muslim slaughtermen by extending this privilege to the mosques in Evry and Lyon,
- 1997: Established a duty to used mechanical restraint in the religious slaughter of any animal species.

All health issues, the protection of animal and the approvals associated with traditional and religious slaughter on French soil can be found in the Rural Code. No further action is required to ensure that France complies with the new European regulations coming into force January 1, 2013.

ASIDCOM and the French Muslim Community are surprised, therefore, at the terms of the Decree No. 2011-2006 of 28 December 2011 setting down additional conditions for slaughterhouses wishing,

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to perform religious slaughter for the Jewish or Muslim community, i.e., for the process of waiving the requirement to stun animals prior to exsanguination. Nothing in the new European regulations could justify the new measures being imposed on the Jewish and Muslim communities, which will complicate and restrict the exercise of their religious freedom, thus impacting their daily lives. Also nothing in the new regulations justifies the increasing penalties for illegal slaughter even if we disapprove of such illegal practices. Apart from pandering to certain electoral lobbies for animal welfare and to the Islamophobic extreme right nothing can explain the motivation for this new decree that creates new obstacles to the carrying out of religious slaughter in French slaughterhouses.

ASIDCOM condemns any electoral demagoguery pandering to any community whatsoever, and formally requested the withdrawal of these texts that violate the fundamental rights of religious communities.

We rather have hoped and expected that the French government would use a more constructive approach in this specific area of religious ritual slaughter, at least with respect to the need to meet the needs of the consumers of Kosher or Halal products in France and internationally, including elsewhere in the European Union. In France, 97% of Muslim consumers (out of 462 surveyed by our association in 2011) calling for their meat to be religiously slaughtered without any type of stunning. Instead of facilitating entrepreneurs running small slaughterhouses to create local jobs while meet the growing consumer demand of French Muslims, it is regrettably to note that even before the publication of the last decree that these projects have been thwarted. Apart from intentional discrimination, there is little explanation for the fact that at this time Muslim consumers often may not obtain meat products that meet their requirements, that is to say coming from religious slaughter without stunning, and second that many religious slaughterhouses are being forced out of business if they do not equip their slaughterhouse with electrical stunning devices (electrical stunning) recommended by the veterinary services as has been reported to us by these slaughterhouse owners. . This is really unacceptable!

Given the information presented above, we strongly request your intervention to negate Decree No. 2011-2006 of 28 December 2011.

Remaining at your disposal for any further information on our work relating to Halal, please accept, MrMinisters, the expression of our respectful greetings.

The Office of ASIDCOM

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