

**The General Secretariat of the European Council for Fatwa and Research**

**A statement Re. the commencement of Shawwal 1437 HJ**

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds and may Allah's peace blessings and mercy be upon our prophet Muhammad, his family, his companions and those who follow his guidance until the Day of Judgment.

The General Secretariat of the European Council for Fatwa and Research would like to take this opportunity and appeal to all the Muslims to hold fast to Allah's religion together and not to be divided in full conformity with the verse in which Allah states:

وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ  
3:103

“Hold on firmly together to the rope of God, and be not divided among yourselves, and remember the favours God bestowed on you when you were one another's foe and He reconciled your hearts, and you turned into brethren through His grace. You had stood on the edge of a pit of fire and He saved you from it, thus revealing to you His clear signs that you may find the right way perchance.”

The general secretariat ECFR would like to take this opportunity to make an announcement regarding sighting the crescent of Shawwal 1437h/2016. According to the specifications adopted by the ECFR in its resolution issued in its 19th ordinary session held in Istanbul in the period 08-12 Rajab 1430 corresponding to 30th June- 04th of July and based on what is confirmed by the international Fiqh academy in its 18th resolution issued in its third conference

held in 1986, the conclusion of the first session of the United Hijra calendar held in Istanbul in the period 26-29 Dhulhijja 1389h corresponding to 27-30 November 1978, the outcome reached by the international conference of verifying the lunar months attended by Islamic scholars and astronomers that was held by the Fiqh academy, Islamic world league in the period 19-21 Rabi Al-Auwal 1433 corresponding to 11-13 February 2012 Mecca, and what is issued by the scientific seminar held in Paris where a number of Fiqh and astronomical papers were submitted in the period 12-13 Rabi Al-Auwal 1433h corresponding to 4-5 February 2012 to deliberate on the commencement of the lunar months that was attended by a number of scholars of Fiqh and astronomy. It also stresses what has recently been issued by the conference of unifying the international Hijra calendar held in Istanbul in the period from 21-23 of Sha'ban 1437 corresponding to 28-30 of May 2016. This conference seventy countries were represented by officials, ministries of religious affairs, Ifta' officials, scholars, jurists, astronomers and others. This conference was also attended by representatives of Fiqh academies all over the world. It confirmed a number of fundamental issues: In essence the commencement of the month is proved by sighting the crescent by the naked eye or modern appliances and that the theory of different location is irrelevant since the Prophet's address is expressed in general terms: "Fast when sighting the crescent and break your fast when sighting the crescent." Agreed upon And Also the Prophet, peace be upon him, says: "The day of fasting is the day you fast and the day of breaking the fast is the day you break your fast and the day of sacrifice is the day you offer your sacrificial animals." Reported by Abu Dauud and Ibn Majjah. At-Tirmithi ranked it as Sahih.

Based on the above-mentioned the General Secretariat of the European Council for Fatwa and Research announces that:

- 1- According to accurate astronomical calculations Shawwal's crescent 1437 Hijri appears in the horizon at 11.01GMT on Monday 04<sup>th</sup> of July 2016 corresponding to 13.01 Meccan time.
- 2- According to astronomical calculations sighting the crescent is possible after sunset on Monday, July 4, 2016 in West and South America.

**As a consequence, the month of Shawwal 1437 commences on  
Tuesday, July 5, 2016.**

May Allah accept our and your good deeds.