



Assalamualaikum

Respected Brother/Sister in Islam

The State has issued a paper for public comment entitled: "The Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Amendment Bill (PEPUDA) which will have far reaching consequences and implications for Muslims in particular and on all religious communities in general. The Bill seeks to amend the existing Act (i.e. the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, No. 4 of 2000, otherwise known as "PEPUDA" or "the Equality Act"). The amendments will drastically compromise freedom of religion in South Africa if passed into law in its current form.

If the Bill is adopted in its current form, the State will effectively disallow beliefs and practices that it deems to be discriminatory or against a pre-determined definition of equality. It may for example, inhibit the right of an Imam to criticize, censure or speak out against practices deemed sinful and vile in Islam like same sex marriages. In such an instance, the State will not only hold the Imam liable but also the committee responsible for the affairs of the masjid.

The Bill will allow the state to prescribe what may or what may not be said; published or propagated; it will allow the State to decide what we may or may not do as an expression of our beliefs and religious values. This is tantamount to State regulation of religion which flies in the face of the rights and freedoms guaranteed by our Constitution. It is quite foreseeable that people and institutions of faith will be dragged before Court simply because someone does not like, does not agree with, or is offended by the expression of our religious convictions and beliefs.

We appeal to your Masjid Committee/Organization to object to the proposed amendments by using the attached template. The closing date for submissions is the 30 June 2021.

We trust that you appreciate the importance of adopting a united front in the defense of Islam.

Wasalaam

Yusuf Patel (MI)

7 June 2021

For record purposes kindly forward a copy of your submission to: secretariat@uucsa.co.za