

## 111898 - Muslim taking part in elections with non-Muslims

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### the question

Is it permissible for a Muslim who is living in a non-Muslim country to take part in their elections?.

### Detailed answer

This issue is one that is subject to ijtihaad. And we must weigh up the interests and benefits that we hope the Muslims may attain from this participation and the harm that may result from it.

If the benefits outweigh the harms, then it is permissible to take part, but if the harms outweigh the benefits, then it is not permissible to take part.

Based on this, the ruling differs depending on the country, the system of voting and the people involved. Taking part may be beneficial to the Muslims in one country, and not in another. The same applies to individuals.

The Fiqh Council has issued a statement on this issue: Participation of Muslims in elections with non-Muslims, the text of which is as follows:

alone, and blessings and peace be upon the one after whom there is no Prophet, our Prophet Muhammad, and his family and companions.

The Islamic Fiqh Council in its nineteenth session, which was held in the headquarters of the Muslim World League in Makkah al-Mukarramah between 22 and 27 Shawwaal 1428 AH (3 to 8 November 2007 CE) has examined the issue of “Participation of Muslims in elections with non-Muslims in non-Muslim countries.” This is one of the topics on which discussion was deferred in the sixteenth conference which was held between 21 and 26 Shawwaal 1422 AH in order that it may be examined more thoroughly.

After listening to the research that was presented and the discussions concerning it, the Council has determined the following:

1.

Muslim participation in elections with non-Muslims in a non-Muslim country is one of the shar'i political matters in which the ruling is determined in the light of weighing up the pros and cons, and fatwas concerning it differ according to time, place and circumstances.

2.

It is permissible for a Muslim who enjoys the rights of citizenship in a non-Muslim country to take part in elections and the like because it is more likely that his participation will bring benefits such as presenting a true picture of Islam, defending Muslim issues in that country, supporting the rights of religious and other minorities, strengthening their role in circles of influence, and cooperating with reasonable, fair-minded people on a basis of truth and justice. That should be in accordance with the following guidelines:

(i) The Muslim participants should intend thereby to serve the interests of the Muslims and ward off evil and harm from them.

(ii) The Muslim participants should think it most likely that their participation will have positive effects that will benefit the Muslims in that country, such as supporting their position, conveying their requests to the decision makers and those who are in charge of the country, and protecting their religious and worldly interests.

(iii) The Muslim's participation in these elections should not lead to him neglecting his religious duties.

And Allaah is the source of strength. May Allaah send blessing and peace upon our Prophet Muhammad and his family and companions.

<http://www.themwl.org/Fatwa/default.aspx?d=1&cidi=167&l=AR&cid=17>

For more information please see the answers to questions no. [3062](#) and [107166](#).

And Allaah knows best.