



مہینہ وار کنالہ

POSITION PAPER # 19

Unity in the Muslim Community

October 20, 2021

secretariat@majlistt.com

ABOUT THE MAJLIS UL ULAMAA (MAJLISTT)

The Majlis ul Ulamaa is a forum to facilitate the collaboration of Islamic Scholars resident and active within Trinidad and Tobago. It seeks to define the authentic Islamic position as it relates to Islam and the Muslim community of the country, considering the various scholastic positions and schools of law. To this end, it deliberates on issues of importance, and defines the Islamic position. The due process is meticulous, spanning the issuing of a draft position paper, inviting stakeholders and public comment and consultations before a final position is issued.

SHARIAH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

Maulana Dr. Waffie Mohammed

SHARIAH COUNCIL MEMBERS*

Mufti Asrar ul Haque

Maulana Atif Majeed

Maulana Azhar Ali

Maulana Junaid Ahmad

Maulana Kavir Mohammed

Sheikh Munaf Mohammed

Dr. Musa Mohamed

Maulana Siddiq Ahmad Nasir**

**(in alphabetical order of first name)*

*** Associate member*

Prepared and released on October 20, 2021

© Majlis ul Ulamaa 2021

San Fernando, Trinidad and Tobago

<http://majlistt.com>

secretariat@majlistt.com

Bismillaahir Rahmanir Raheem
Allahumma salli alaa sayyidinaa Muhammadin wa baarik wa sallim

UNITY IN THE MUSLIM UMMAH

MajlisTT heeds the call of the community in seeking a position on achieving and preserving Unity in the Muslim Ummah, especially in the context of the Muslim community of Trinidad and Tobago.

From the inception stages of the MajlisTT, the focus has been on unity, with the MajlisTT slogan espousing One Position, One Voice, One Ummah. Repeatedly there has been the recognition that the *“Muslim community of the country is a single community, and are too integrated a body, with too small a population and geographic space, for any divisions... to be justifiable or justified.”* (Extract from Moon Sighting – Local Sighting paper at Majlistt.com, August 15th, 2015).

While unity of the Muslim community may represent a popular ideal, we recognize that differences manifest throughout the community, across physical characteristics (e.g. race), ideological differences (e.g. modernization), and theological understanding (e.g. variance in aqeedah), which may result in divisions.

Many of the bases for differences warrant individual attention, and would be treated with thusly as required, falling outside the scope of this paper. For the purposes of this paper, the issue of Unity in the Muslim Ummah relates to unity of those who call themselves Muslims, and treats with the theological matters that are used as the basis for division (whether directly or indirectly), specifically within the confines of Trinidad and Tobago.

While influences and influencers may originate from overseas, the existence of same may or may not affect the cohesion of the Muslim community locally, unless it is allowed to. Nevertheless, where there is need to reference issues originating or manifest overseas as they affect the community of Trinidad and Tobago, they will be referenced.

In this paper:

1. Understanding of Unity
2. Understanding of Disunity
3. Understanding of Who is a Muslim
4. The concept of Unity in Islam
5. What does unity of the Muslim community look like
6. Theology and its Direct and Indirect Effects on Disunity
7. Common bases for Disunity in Islam
8. Conflict and Cohesion
9. Concluding Remarks

1. Understanding of Unity

MajlisTT understands the term ‘unity’ to refer to:

1. the quality or state of not being multiple (divided) (Mirriam-Webster);
2. continuity without deviation or change (as in purpose or action) (Mirriam-Webster);
3. the state of being united or joined as a whole. (Oxford)

2. Understanding of Disunity

MajlisTT recognizes disunity in its simplest form as the absence of unity (Mirriam-Webster), and understands it as disagreement and/or conflict within a group (Oxford). Cambridge Dictionary qualifies the definition as *“a situation in which people disagree so much that they can no longer work together effectively”*.

Important to note here is that disunity can manifest in different forms within a continuum based on tension – in one part differences of opinion maintained by different bodies within the group with little tension manifest; on another part differences in practices based on the variance in opinions with moderate amounts of tension that may manifest constantly or at different times, and on yet another outright conflict among the various groups, with severe tension manifest, either constantly or at different times.

 Degrees of Disunity that Manifests within the Community 		
Low Tension	Moderate Tension	Severe Tension
Differences in opinions Groups may or may not maintain distinct identities, and differences may manifest only in their interaction around specific topics	Differences in practices Groups may maintain distinct identities, or maintain distinct identities in different ways at different times	Open or outright conflicts among the groups Groups may maintain distinct identities over a protracted period, and may even operate in closed circles with little to no interaction

3. Understanding of who is considered a Muslim

Consistent with International Fatawa, and with previous MajlisTT positions, we consider someone to be a Muslim who:

- Believes in 1 God – Allah, and the Finality of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) as the Last Messenger of Allah. This, contained within and as the Shahada, means that anyone who recites the Shahada cannot be called a non-Muslim.

This fundamental assertion immediately excludes some persons who identify as Muslims but contravene this fundamental requirement, including some within the Qadiani, Ahmadi and Shia sects.

- Further to and building on this, we recognize that the Qur’an informs us of a believer in Chapter 2:3-5:

“Who believe in the Unseen, are steadfast in prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them; And who believe in the Revelation sent to thee, and sent before thy time, and (in their hearts) have the assurance of the Hereafter; They are on (true) guidance, from their Lord, and it is these who will prosper.”

These fundamental beliefs in Islam, popularly termed in one part the ‘Pillars’ of Islam, and in another part ‘Articles of Faith’ (Amantu), encapsulate the bases on which belief as a Muslim is established:

Pillars	Articles of Faith
Shahada (Declaration) Salaat (Worship) Zakaat (Charity) Saum (Fasting) Hajj (Pilgrimage)	1. To believe in Allah, 2. To believe in His angels, 3. To believe in His books, 4. To believe in His prophets, 5. To believe the Day of Judgment (life after death), 6. To believe in destiny (qadar), that the good and the evil are from Allah. 7. To believe in life after death (and resurrection).

In other similar considerations, other scholars have articulated complementary bases for fundamentals of faith. For example, Imam Tahawi (May Allah be pleased with him) of the Hanafi Madhab defined Muslims as the People of the Qibla.

From this fundamental classification, we acknowledge that Muslims all share fundamental beliefs:

- 1 God Allah
- 1 Final Messenger of Allah – Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him)
- 1 Final Book of guidance – The Qur’an which is the message of Allah and guidance to everyone, everywhere for all times
- 1 Qiblah – Makkah to which we all turn for prayer

4. The Concept of Unity in Islam

4.1 Unity in Islam

Islam places emphasis on preserving unity within the Muslim community – at different levels.

At the family level we are told:

“... and fear Allah through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship)...” (Qur’an 4:1)

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, “It is not lawful for a Muslim to forsake his (Muslim) brother beyond three days; and whosoever does so for more than three days, and then dies, will certainly enter the Hell.” [Abu Dawud]

“Does not enter Paradise he who breaks up his family ties”. (Bukhari)

At the community level, we are told in the Qur’an:

“Indeed this Ummah of yours is a single Ummah and I am your Lord, so worship Me alone.” [Soorah al-Anbiyaa 21:92].

“And hold fast altogether to the rope of Allah and do not be divided. And remember the favour of Allah upon you, in that you were once enemies to one another, but He joined your hearts together, so that by His Grace you became brothers.” [Soorah Aal-‘Imraan 3:103].

“And obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not dispute (with one another) lest you lose courage and your strength departs, and be patient. Surely, Allah is with those who are As-Saabiroon (the patient)” [al-Anfaal 8:46]

“...And do not be like those who differed amongst themselves after the clear proofs had come to them; for them is a painful punishment.” [Soorah Aal-‘Imraan 3:105].

“Indeed, those who have divided their religion and become sects, You, O Muhammad are not associated with them in anything. Their affairs are left to Allah and He will inform them of what they used to do” (Qur’an 6:159)

In Ahadith, we are told:

“The parable of the believers in their affection, mercy, and compassion for each other is that of a body. When any limb aches, the whole body reacts with sleeplessness and fever. (Bukhari & Muslim)

“The Believer to the Believer is like a building, one part supporting the other.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

The Messenger (peace be on him) said: "Allah is pleased for you with three things: "that you worship Him (alone) and not to associate anything with Him; and that you (all) hold unto the Rope of Allah and not to be divided; and that you give sincere advise to the one placed in charge over your affairs (i.e. the Muslim Ruler)"

"None of you will have faith until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself." [Bukhari]

Anas bin Malik (May Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (peace be on him) said, "Do not desert (stop talking to) one another, do not nurse hatred towards one another, do not be jealous of one another, and become as fellow brothers and slaves of Allah. It is not lawful for a Muslim to stop talking to his brother (Muslim) for more than three days." [Bukhari & Muslim]

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (peace be on him) said, "People's deeds are presented before Allah on Mondays and Thursdays, and then every slave (of Allah) is granted forgiveness (of minor sins) if he does not associate anything with Allah in worship. But the person in whose heart there is rancour against his brother, will not be pardoned. With regard to them, it is said twice: 'Hold these two until they are reconciled'." [Muslim]

The Messenger of Allah (peace be on him) said, "Togetherness is mercy and division is punishment [Ahmad]

4.2 Disunity in Islam

In the Qur'an we are told

"... if thy Lord willed, all who are in the earth would have believed together. Wouldst thou (Muhammad PBUH) compel men until they are believers? It is not for any soul to believe save by the permission of Allah..." (Qur'an 10:99-100).

In a Hadith, we are told:

"Jews were divided into 71 sects. One of them is in Heaven, seventy of them are in Hell. Christians are split into 72 sects. Seventy-one of them are in Hell, the one is in Heaven. I swear to Allah whose mighty hands hold the Muhammad's will, beyond any doubt, my ummah will be divided into 73 sects. One will be in Heaven, seventy-two will be in flames.

Said: 'Oh the Messenger of Allah! Who are they?'

Thus he spoke: 'They are al-jamā'a (the community)'." (Ibn Majah; Al-Tirmidhi)

From these, we understand that persons will establish (and by this time, have established) differences that create divisions within the Muslim Ummah, which serve to delineate groups within the community

– as with any society – typically on the basis of ideological, theological, socio-economic and human diversity (such as gender, race, etc.) factors.

5. What does Unity look like in the Muslim community today?

The theological scholars work together to air their differences on matters affecting Islam and the Muslim community. Where they disagree on matters, it is done respectfully and not with castigation of other valid interpretations and rulings of the scholars. The organisations each has a role they play within their respective communities. Organisations complement each other, instead of compete. Jamaats are not split or splintered according to the various groups present in a community, and the Imaamat are respectful to all. Individuals acknowledge the differences of others, are tolerant and understanding of the validity of other groups, and there is recognition of the leadership of the Imaamat and the proceedings. Emphasis is placed on Muslims working together to uplift the station and situation of those less advantaged, and the Muslim community is known locally and internationally as a model of cohesion, camaraderie and mutual support and upliftment, so that each individual can benefit from the best in this world, and the hereafter.

6. Theology and its Direct and Indirect Effects on Disunity

The core focus of this paper being limited to that of theological matters, we recognize that some aspects of the theology is, in itself, a basis for some differences among the various groups.

On one part, theology has a direct impact on unity, and on another part is used as a justification to perpetuate divisions for other purposes, or alternatively influences other facets of life that result in disunity, having as a result an indirect impact. These different relationships among the variables are illustrated as follows for reference:

(A) refers to the situations in which theological differences lead to divisions within the Muslim Community, directly. Divisions are based on the differences in theological understanding.

For example, some persons may hold the position that the Qur'an is open to interpretation across different times in the evolution of humankind, and turn to the Qur'an to interpret Islamic guidance that informs an emerging situation. Others may maintain 'the doors of interpretation are closed', and therefore we are not permitted to seek to interpret, but rather follow the guidance of those who were authorized to interpret Qur'anic verses.

(B) refers to the situations in which theological issues are used as the basis for perpetuating divisions within the community to further other causes or realise other objectives, such as access to or control of resources, or span of influence.

For example, some may say this person is a better or more qualified leader of the community, and use specific Islamic references to justify their position; on this basis breaking away to create their own distinct group so as to follow the person they align to.

(C) refers to those situations where theological differences lead to differences in other facets of life, and those differences in other facets in turn are used as the basis for promulgating division in the community.

For example, some may define acceptable dress code or forms of entertainment differently, and based on this align themselves to different groups who maintain different positions and practices, which may eventually lead to disunity.

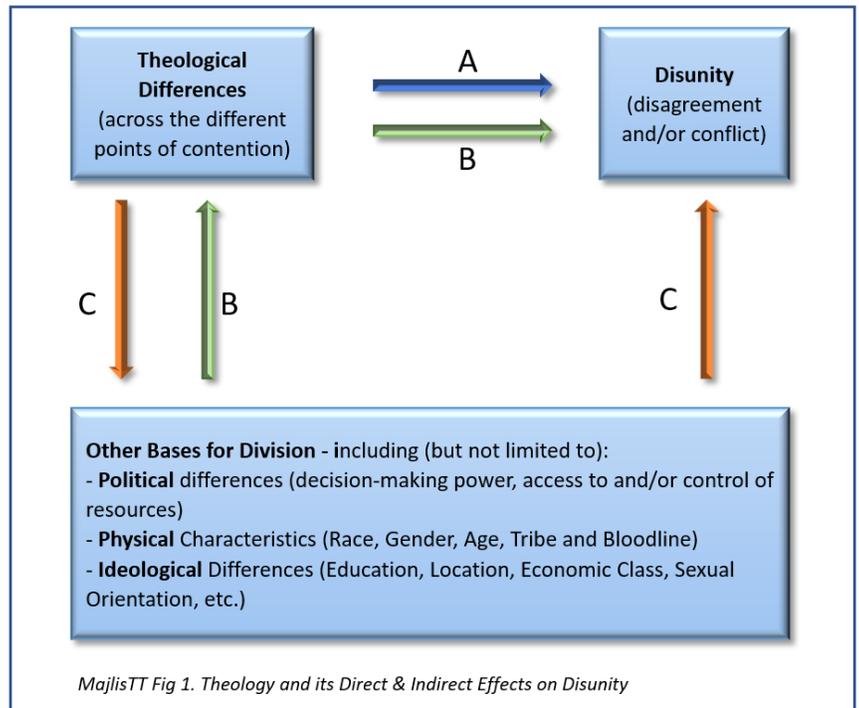
7. Common bases for disunity

All Muslims agree on the major aspects of Islam, and among the groups there are differences on minor aspects of belief. It is not uncommon for these minor differences in the Muslim community to be amplified by persons who are either zealous about their belief and/or have an ulterior motive or agenda.

In some cases, what can appear to be conflict and high tension among groups of Muslims in the media may be an exaggeration of the reality on the ground. In such 'low-tension' instances, the groups may co-exist peacefully and even have close inter-relations, for example through marriage, business dealings, living in close proximity, etc. with little discord, if any at all.

In other instances, neither is it uncommon for zealots from one group or another to be enthusiastic and/or emotional in engaging other groups within society. MajlisTT recognizes that such behaviors may be driven by any number and nature of motivators – from genuine concern for the beliefs and ideologies of other Muslims, to individual search for meaning, purpose and significance, to access to, and control of resources with embedded quest for personal gain of money, power, fame or status... the list is not exhaustive. In such cases, whatever the driving force, persons can appear castigating, aggressive, adversarial or hostile, in both public gatherings or in online forums, with little regard for others.

It appears to be the strategy of some institutions, internationally and within Trinidad and Tobago, to win influence in society by targeting the marginalized or other market segments in society, and to this end castigate other groups in an apparent quest for differentiation and strategic positioning. Typically, the accompanying narrative bears the logic – *“these people have gone astray, on such and such a basis*



MajlisTT Fig 1. Theology and its Direct & Indirect Effects on Disunity

[amplifying a minor difference] *and are of the 72 groups that will go to Jahanam. Follow us, we are on the correct path...*". The resulting accusations, castigations, defenses, justifications and counter-arguments, labelling of Haraam, Bid'ah, Shirk, Extremist, Fundamentalist, Traditionalist and so on are neither from the Sunnah nor are they constructive.

Admittedly, these are all difficult situations to deal with, since they range in their manifestation, diagnosis and treatment from organizational aspirations to individual psychology to personal ethics and values.

What then are more specific aspects of divisions that manifest within Muslim Society?

- **Sunni vs Shia:** Essentially at its root, this is political difference in religious authority and leadership of the Muslims, sometime after the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him). Some in the community (i.e. Shia) thought Hazrat Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) should have been the leader of the community, being amongst the very first Muslims, as well as the cousin and son-in-law of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him). Others accepted other companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) as leaders of the community (Sunni).

This ultimately led to conflict in Muslim society (for e.g. Battle at Karbala), and divisions compounded by the compilation of Ahadith in the 9th century CE, and later by the Iranian Revolution of 1979 – the latter giving rise to the Shia theocracy.

Today, some maintain the distinction is valid, while others do not. Shia-dominated governments have orchestrated violence against Sunnis in places like Iraq and Syria; Sunni have marginalized Shia movements in countries like Saudi Arabia; even as some institutions recognize and accommodate both groups – (for example Al-Azhar University (Cairo) recognizes both in its curriculum).

Sunni Muslims account for approximately 90% of the Muslim world. Other groups, although not considered Sunni Muslims, are accepted as Muslims. (See the Amman Message, in Section 8 following)

- **Creed (Aqeedah):** Generally, it is accepted that the sources of guidance in Islam follow the adherence and consideration of the sources of knowledge, in descending order:
 - Qur'an
 - Sunnah (the statements and practices of Prophet Muhammad peace be on him)
 - Ijma ul Ulama (consensus of scholars of Islam)
 - Qiyaas (analogical deduction)
 - Ijtihad (reasoning or opinion based on Qur'an and Sunnah)

All Muslim scholars advocate a strict adherence to Qur'an and authentic Ahadith to inform legal judgements. Other forms of discerning guidance are valid across the spread of schools of jurisprudence. The primacy of Qur'an and Ahadith and their interpretations are the basis for legal reasoning, followed by consensus of the scholars, analogical deduction, and interpretation of the ayat by persons qualified to do so.

It is important to note that it is accepted by all Muslim scholars that the Qur'an and Hadith text are in Arabic, and it is the Arabic that must be used for reference. No translation can capture the essence and nuances of the meanings that are contained in the original Arabic text. In addition to this, there are established principles that guide interpretation and understandings (Usul) which must be mastered by persons attempting such. Therefore, it is misguided for one to read an English translation, and espouse or adopt a practice, interpretation or draw some definitive conclusion on a matter relating to Islam, only on that basis.

The Sunni Muslims (Ahlul Sunnah wal Jamaat) are aligned to various recognized and established schools of aqeedah (creed), which have differences in their interpretation of the Qur'an and Ahadith.

- **Schools of Fiqh (Madhaa-hib):** refer to differences in legal rulings and practices derived from Qur'anic Verses and Ahadith, derived from different scholars in the early period of Islam. There are four major Sunni schools of fiqh– Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali, each school bearing the name of the scholar who established the Madh-hab.

Different schools represent differences in usul (principles) that guide practices and rulings of Islamic law, based on differences in their interpretations (ijtihad) of source references. These schools recognize and acknowledge the others, and accept debate on variances in interpretations and justifications.

Muslims must bear in mind that in addition to the fact that all of the scholars from whom rulings were derived were superior in knowledge. They were either students of the companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) (called Taabi'een) or students of the Taabi'een (Taabi' Taabi'een) and derived rulings based on the situations faced at that time, and at their locations. All scholars mentioned words to the effect that if at any point their rulings contradicted authentic Ahadith, then the Ahadith should be followed. Add to this the validation and authentication over the past 1200 years by subsequent scholars with considerably greater access to information, means that these rulings by these schools are not to be taken lightly, nor belittled.

There are some matters that are differences of opinion that are relegated to debate among the scholars – which will continue. All of the rulings are valid – and the position of the MajlisTT is that whichever Madh-hab you follow, it is right and does not contradict Islam. While the scholars have agreed to disagree, it does not mean their conduct to each other needs to be disagreeable. The existence of these differences, and their presence in society cannot and should never be the basis for disunity. Leaders of groups who promulgate disunity based on these are misguided, and such suasions should not be supported or entertained by or within the community.

8. Conflict and Cohesion

There are some ways in which the divisions manifest within the Muslim community:

- The same calendar event being commemorated on different days by different groups within the community. Related to this are differences in the acceptance of moon-sighting reports by different bodies.
- The variance in interpretations given to the same principles – for example what qualifies as Halaal foods (for e.g. use of stunning or mechanical slaughter – see past MajlisTT papers); the permissibility of religious gatherings (Mawlid), congregational du’a (especially after fard), and observance of Tazeem (sending salaam and salaam on the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) standing or sitting, typically in a group context).
- The fragmentation / duplication of the community mosques based on variance in the different interpretations of Islamic source references (in particular Qur’an and Ahadith), where some are of the position that what these ‘Muslim’ groups practice puts them outside the fold of Islam. (for e.g. Bid’ah)
- Differences in interpretation of dress code – especially for womenfolk. Some maintain women’s faces should be covered, others say the face itself need not be covered, just the hair.

These are differences that manifest even among the scholars of the different madhaa-hib, and are not unique to the Muslim community of Trinidad and Tobago.

These differences and others which may arise have led to key issues within the Muslim community globally.

1. Fragmentation and in some cases conflict among followers of various groups: Families and jamaats have become divided in some cases, and conflict and tension have manifested among the various divisions within the Muslim community: Sunni/Shia; Aqeedah and Schools of Fiqh.
2. Takfir (declaring a Muslim a non-believer or apostate): in some instances, groups have pronounced other Muslims as non-believers, thereby justifying violence, atrocities and warfare against them.

The justification for these divisive acts and paradigms has largely been centered on the hadith of 73 groups (see section Understanding of Disunity above), where proponents of each division advocate that they are the ‘chosen’ group.

It is recognized that different groups, in aspiring to gain influence in their respective societies and communities, have emphasized differences in practices, and used these differences to gain influence, or where unsuccessful, split communities in order to gain a following.

These practices have been very visible in global affairs with the emergence of militant extremist Islamist and Islamic terrorist groups, who have imposed their particular theology and ideologies on entire communities (for e.g. ISIS/ISIL/Daesh in the Iraq-Syria conflicts of 2004-2019).

As a counter measure to these divisions, the global Muslim community came together and refuted the bases for divisions within the community, in what is popularly known as the ‘Amman Message’.

Facilitated by King Abdullah II bin Hussein of Jordan, the 3-point ruling by leading Muslim scholars from around the world established the following:

1. "Whosoever is an adherent to one of the four Sunni schools (Mathahib) of Islamic jurisprudence (Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali), the two Shi'i schools of Islamic jurisprudence (Ja'fari and Zaydi), the Ibadi school of Islamic jurisprudence and the Thahiri school of Islamic jurisprudence, is a Muslim. Declaring that person an apostate is impossible and impermissible. Verily his (or her) blood, honour, and property are inviolable. Moreover, in accordance with the Shaykh Al-Azhar's fatwa, it is neither possible nor permissible to declare whosoever subscribes to the Ash'ari creed or whoever practices real Tasawwuf (Sufism) an apostate. Likewise, it is neither possible nor permissible to declare whosoever subscribes to true Salafi thought an apostate. Equally, it is neither possible nor permissible to declare as apostates any group of Muslims who believe in God, Glorified and Exalted be He, and His Messenger (may peace and blessings be upon him) and the pillars of faith, and acknowledges the five pillars of Islam, and does not deny any necessarily self-evident tenet of religion."
2. "There exists more in common between the various schools of Islamic jurisprudence than there is difference between them. The adherents to the eight schools of Islamic jurisprudence are in agreement as regards the basic principles of Islam. All believe in Allah (God), Glorified and Exalted be He, the One and the Unique; that the Noble Qur'an is the Revealed Word of God; and that our master Muhammad, may blessings and peace be upon him, is a Prophet and Messenger unto all mankind. All are in agreement about the five pillars of Islam: the two testaments of faith (shahadatayn); the ritual prayer (salat); almsgiving (zakat); fasting the month of Ramadan (sawm), and the Hajj to the sacred house of God (in Mecca). All are also in agreement about the foundations of belief: belief in Allah (God), His angels, His scriptures, His messengers, and in the Day of Judgment, in Divine Providence in good and in evil. Disagreements between the 'ulama (scholars) of the eight schools of Islamic jurisprudence are only with respect to the ancillary branches of religion (furu') and not as regards the principles and fundamentals (usul) [of the religion of Islam]. Disagreement with respect to the ancillary branches of religion (furu') is a mercy. Long ago it was said that variance in opinion among the 'ulama (scholars) "is a good affair"."
3. "Acknowledgement of the schools of Islamic jurisprudence (Madhaa-hib) within Islam means adhering to a fundamental methodology in the issuance of fatwas: no one may issue a fatwa without the requisite personal qualifications which each school of Islamic jurisprudence determines [for its own adherents]. No one may issue a fatwa without adhering to the methodology of the schools of Islamic jurisprudence. No one may claim to do unlimited Ijtihad and create a new school of Islamic jurisprudence or to issue unacceptable fatwas that take Muslims out of the principles and certainties of the Shari'ah and what has been established in respect of its schools of jurisprudence."

MajlisTT endorses these points established in the Amman message.

Fundamentally, and at the very core, we note that whatever the reason and the manifestation, any behavior by a Muslim to belittle, embarrass, castigate or judge another believer is against Islam and the example of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him), and in Islam there are established protocols and procedures to advise, admonish, correct and enlighten others.

Otherwise, whether persons guilty of divisive conduct are sufficiently concerned about conformity with Islam or not, the general Muslim population should not allow such persons, personalities or institutions to divide the community. When persons attack part of the Muslim body, the body must become closer than before, and disengage from conversations that further divisive agendas. The splitting of families, jamaats, and society should be seen as completely unacceptable.

9. Concluding Remarks

There are some matters that are differences of opinion that are relegated to debate among the scholars – which will continue. These should not be used in the wider Muslim community in a manner to disrespect, belittle or castigate other groups. All groups who are Muslims should aspire to, and must find a way to work together and maintain peace and a spirit of brotherhood.

MajlisTT condemns the practices of and strategies for creating or forcing divisions in the communities; avoiding interaction among Muslims; or justifies aggression of one group to others; and equally condemns any use of Islamic theology as the basis for perpetuating these practices. We call on those who seek to perpetuate these actions to cease and desist from such. We call on the general Muslim community to reject such narratives of division and accusation of superiority / inferiority by different groups against each other.

MajlisTT further recognizes that unity of the Muslim Ummah is its strength, and persons may want to create or engender differences and disunity to achieve their own objectives. We as the Muslim community must repel these efforts to divide us, and band together to create a community of individuals who can represent Almighty Allah here.

We pray that Almighty Allah keeps us united in peace and harmony, for the benefit of His Deen and for the benefit and welfare of the future generations of Muslims, In shaa Allah. Ameen.