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FATWA:

Literally, a juridical verdict, legal opinion, legal ruling, scholarly opinion, giving an answer or a reply or stating the decision of law, answer or reply to a question relating to a dubious judicial decision. Those who issue *fatwa* (pl. *fatawa*) are called *mufti*, jurists. The *muftis* issue *fatwa* in their respective cities and countries. The source of *fatwa* is Qur'an and Sunnah.

SUNNAH:

Literally, a clear path or beaten track. It also means rubric, norm, rule, law, custom, practice, usage, convention, tradition, mores, mode of life. It refers to whatever the Prophet Muhammad said, did, agreed to, remain silent, condemned, approved or disapproved. The Sunnah is a source of the Shari'ah and a legal proof next to the Qur'an. As a source of the Shari'ah, the Sunnah may corroborate a ruling which originates in the Qur'an. Secondly, the Sunnah may consist of an explanation or clarification of the Qur'an. Thirdly, the Sunnah may also consist of rulings on which Qur'an is silent.

SHARI'AH:

Literally, a watering place or a way to a source of water for humans and animals. It refers to God's law or a moral code of life for the society. Muslims believe Shari'ah to be God's plan for the ordering of human society. It is understood not as an abstract system of ethics or moral philosophy, but a practical way of life. Within the framework of the Divine Law, human actions are divided into lawful (*halal*) or obligatory, commendable (*mustahabb*) or recommended, neutral (*mubah*) or permitted, reprehensible (*makruh*) or disliked and unlawful (*haram*) or forbidden. The two domains of shari'ah are acts of worship (*ibadat*) and human interrelations or transactions (*mu'amalat*). The former can be seen as liturgical and ritual actions upon which most of the jurists have close agreement. The later have differences in most part due to the interpretation of shari'ah. The *mu'amalat* include regulations governing personal conduct regarding food and drink, dress, general behavior, family and social relationships, business transactions, and international as well as inter-religious relations.

SHI'AH:

Literally, sect, party or partisan. The term *Shi'ah* is short for *Shia't 'Ali* or Sect of 'Ali. They believed that 'Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad, should have succeeded him after the Prophet's death as a Leader (Imam) or Vicegerent (Caliph, Steward) of the Muslim Community. For Sunni Muslims the imam simply is one who has been chosen to lead prayers and conduct religious education. For Shi'ah, imam is a rightful, divinely mandated leader of the Muslim Community whose lineage goes back to Hasan and Hussain the two children of 'Ali. Significantly, Islam's historic divisions began as practical conflicts over community leadership, though over time justifications for them were sought in points of theological doctrine.

JIHAD:

Literally struggle. The word jihad is obtained from J-H-D, which means to strive, to overcome to exert physically. It refers to striving for the benefit of the community or to restraint oneself against personal misdeeds. Any struggle done on a daily basis by obeying the shar'iah will bring one closer to God. Defensive posture to protect one's life property, community when attacked upon is also a lesser form of jihad. The leadership who is following shari'ah declares this form of jihad.