



مبادرة إنبعاث الحركة الانعتاقية
INITIATIVE DE RESURGENCE DU MOUVEMENT ABOLITIONNISTE EN MAURITANIE
IRA - Mauritanie

In the name of Allah, the good and the merciful, peace be unto His prophet

From Biram Dah Abeid to the women and men, young and old, the abolitionists of Mauritania, and through them, to all our compatriots of goodwill, to all organisations and governments fighting for justice, for freedom and for human dignity, throughout the vastness of the world.

Dear sisters, dear brothers

After a year and a half behind bars, here I stand, expressing to you in my own name and that of my companion in misfortune, all my gratitude for the support you have given to us and our families.

I am writing to you to renew my oath to honour the principles and positions that led me to this cell. Be certain that our morale and our determination are growing stronger day by day, thanks to Allah, the great and merciful. It is He who has allowed us to live long enough to celebrate the fourth anniversary of the glorious ceremony, both deliberate and symbolic, in which the textbooks of slavery, of lies and hypocrisy, were burned. Yet these books of shame, which represent an offense to Allah and to his prophet, form the basis of the judicial reference to slavery in a number of [Muslim](#) countries. They twist and distort the Prophet's message by legitimating offenses to human dignity, attacks on the sanctity of the human body, and the arbitrary seizure of goods.

Justifying exploitation and racism, such treatises incite hatred and sow discord between brothers of the same country. They have been used over [the](#) centuries by generations of the dominant class to quench their desire for sensual pleasure and to satisfy their own selfish interests on the backs of their fellow human beings.

So it was with all deliberation, as a slap in the face of a history that had too long laid dormant, that on 27 April 2012 we set fire to these books, separating uprightness from infamy. In so doing we raised up the Holy Qu'ran, the book of God and of the tolerant Sunna, in which the example of our Holy Prophet teaches liberty and equality among the human race and among believers. For us this was the signal of a deep moral and spiritual revolution aiming to restore and return to true Islam, to deconstruct and to denounce the hypocrisy of the profiteers who set up their shops beneath its august banner.

Dear sisters and brothers

For me, the anniversary of this glorious auto da fé offers the opportunity to renew our commitment to Mauritania's wretched of the earth, to the Haratin, to the caste of blacksmiths, to the Halpular, to the Soninké, to the Wolofs, to the Bambaras and to the Arab-Berbers: we will support you, we will defend you, even from the depths of our prison cells. Together we will conquer or we will perish. And to the oppressors, we repeat what should now be perfectly clear: you will always find us on your path, as long as Allah gives us breath.

Mauritanians

I urge all of you, individually and collectively, with your organisations, your parties, your trade unions and all other types of association, to overcome your differences in this delicate phase of our history; the situation is deteriorating as a result of the dangerous game being played by a state without shame which uses your divisions to establish now and forever its usurpation of authority and its embezzlement.

To do so, it relies on a de facto 'racialism', as when it undertakes repeated purges, however soft, however stealthy, of members of certain communities from posts in the command of the armed forces and the security services, in the civil service and the financial authorities, in the judiciary, the diplomatic service, national private businesses, and the educational and training establishment, and above all within the religious leadership of the country.

My brothers and sisters, my dear Mauritanians

The regime of Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz is strangling our liberties, beneath the hollow pretence of respecting them. It has shrunk the available field of action for human rights activists by gradually limiting the right to hold public meetings and to demonstrate. It has banned organisations within civil society, it has locked people up for their opinions, it has censored radio and television broadcasts, it has imprisoned journalists, it has persecuted its opponents and put them on bread and water, depriving them of any professional activity and forcing them to join a whole cohort of businessmen who, if they refuse to swear allegiance to the regime, face harassment and ruin.

Mauritanians, Ladies and Gentlemen

Alongside the victims of traditional slavery and of state racism now stand those of the regime's secret prisons, of its kangaroo courts, of its land grabs, as well as thousands of workers, the wretched of the land's mines, factories and ports. Every fringe of Mauritanian society has suffered, in one way or another, from such a serious degree of contempt for the law. Today, as a new degree of avidity is added to existing betrayals, rationality demands that each and every one of us rises to the occasion.

My dear brothers and sisters

Sons and daughters of Mauritania, the Initiative for the Resurgence of the Abolitionist Movement reaches out, in a spirit of fraternisation and reconciliation, to all Mauritanians, to individuals, groups, organisations and political parties of all kinds, with a view to the elaboration of a National Charter of Honour and Peace to be respected by all, and to be based on the precepts of the Holy Qu'ran and on the standards of international law. Its code of behaviour and concord accords a priority to the return to a true Islamic fraternity, to the principles of citizenship within a state that protects its citizens instead of persecuting them.

The first act of this renaissance of duty and dignity lies in the creation of a sacred union to defend the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

I place myself in the hands of Allah.

Biram Dah Abeid

le 27 avril 2016