

MUSLIMS CRUCIFIED OVER HALAAL

After over two decades of consistent service excellence in certification, **SANHA** has come to symbolise a trusted quality Halaal assurance system that has won accolades from consumers, industry and Governments, locally and internationally.

This has also attracted the attention of extremists fringe groups and individuals who see **SANHA's** high-profile public platform as an opportunity to promote their nefarious agendas. Keyboard zealots, some of whom take it upon themselves to speak for entire religious groupings, rationalize that firing broadsides publically at high profile targets such as the institution of Halaal and national retailers will bring them glory as Saviors of the Nation.

We are accustomed to their queries surfacing periodically with its hallmarks of bigotry and intolerance. However, the use of a State institution and a sensationalist news medium has upped the ante this time around.

We were contacted by a journalist in February of this year asking for comment on complaints allegedly lodged with the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities (CRL). As we encountered this for the first time, we asked for details to determine authenticity, bona fides of the complainants and the specific charge against us. The journalist was unable or unwilling to provide this and claimed that it was **"privileged and confidential information."** Notwithstanding that the allegations were hearsay and the belligerent line of interrogation, we obliged with detailed responses. **"Islam holds that all Christians and Jews must either be converted to Islam or killed"** is an example of the absurd line of questioning posed to **SANHA**.

We also urgently communicated with the CRL and forwarded the newspaper's questionnaire

requesting details of the allegations against us. Our correspondence and subsequent follow ups have to date neither been answered nor even acknowledged.

In true tabloid style and for maximum impact the newspaper sensationally broke the story on one of the most festive of Christian days of the year i.e. Easter Sunday, (<https://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/christians-war-on-halaal-20180401-2>). It's the day when according to the Bible, Jesus was resurrected and hence every Sunday is viewed symbolically as a commemoration of the resurrection.

The headline screamed, **"Christian consumers campaign against Halaal"** and the article stated that the CRL was **"flooded with letters from Christian consumers"** with complaints against Halaal. We have summarized these below with our responses and comment.

1. "FLOODED WITH LETTERS FROM CHRISTIAN CONSUMERS"

Flooded by how many? Is it 30, 300 or 3000 and who are the complainants? Do they represent mainstream Christianity or is it a concerted campaign by one or two groups of fanatics in the name of religion? Several years ago when a furore erupted over hot cross buns also around Easter time, mainstream Christianity distanced itself from these fringe groups. (Click here to view:

<http://www.sanha.org.za/flashnews/flashn60.pdf>)

2. HALAAL IS SYMBOL OF FOOD "SACRIFICED TO IDOLS"

Any person with the slightest modicum of knowledge ought to be aware that Islam is a strictly monotheistic religion which vehemently

opposes any kind of idol worship. It is a fundamental article of the Muslim faith to testify to the Oneness of God and belief in all the Prophets (peace be upon them). This includes Jesus (Isa) (peace be upon him) who is revered as a Messenger of God in Islam. Denial of this places one outside the fold of Islam. How then can there be even the remotest of connection to the ludicrous claims of sacrifice to idols?

3. BUYING HALAAL-CERTIFIED FOODS INDIRECTLY FORCES CHRISTIANS TO ADHERE TO SHARIA LAW, PAY FOR THE PERSECUTION OF OTHER CHRISTIANS IN MUSLIM COUNTRIES, FUND THE BUILDING OF MOSQUES AND EVEN CONTRIBUTE FINANCIALLY TO TERRORIST GROUPS, SUCH AS THE ISLAMIC STATE AND HAMAS

SANHA is a non-profit organization whose charter does not allow funding for any other cause no matter how noble it may be. Surplus funds are ploughed back into certification. We do not undertake protest marches in the full glare of public spotlight on political and social issues by day and then by night churn out Halaal certificates to collect funds. Halaal regulation is our only mission and we have no other activity. Our audited financial statements are posted on our website and presented at our open Annual General Meetings to which the media are invited to.

Suggestion of links and complicity with persecution, death and destruction of populace of other countries is highly offensive, repugnant and defamatory. The journalist claimed that Christians were concerned ***“that funds that are being generated by the Halaal Trade in South Africa is thus forcing Christians to fund, among other things, the persecution and murder of fellow believers all over the world by radical terrorist organisations”***

Any person who has even a shred of proof in this regard must report it to the authorities for prosecution and public exposure. Failure to do this is treasonous to humanity and our country. As members of the human family we will never associate, promote or condone any acts of violence resulting in death and destruction to people and property.

4. RIGHTS AND CHOICES. COMPLAINTS THAT “I AS A CHRISTIAN, DON’T HAVE A CHOICE,” “MY OWN RELIGIOUS BELIEFS HAS BEEN VIOLATED”

- i. You have a right to shop where your rights are respected. By the same token the businesses right to pursue legal trading activities and prerogative to choose how to market themselves must also be respected which includes the right to choose marketing enhancements such as the Halaal mark.
- ii. Dietary laws are not a fundamental article of the Christian faith so there is no violation of religious rights. In the Holy Bible it is stated by the Apostle Paul in Romans 14:16-18: ***“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*** And specifically on meat in 1 Corinthians 10:25 it is stated, ***“Eat anything sold in the meat market without raising questions of conscience”.***

5. RIGHTS OF CITIZENS AND GOVERNMENT

- i. An overwhelming majority of the several thousand establishments that have chosen Halaal certification belong to and employ non-Muslims. We are certain that they will make their voices heard loudly at the appropriate forums on the infringement of their right to freedom of trade and occupation.
- ii. As a strategic economic objective, our democratic Government endorses and promotes the efforts of its citizens on Halaal trade and development. This niche market has been identified as the fastest growing sector in agro processing and is vigorously promoted by the Department of Trade and Industries (DTI). Provincial Governments have also stepped up campaigns on the establishment of Halaal hubs and the promotion of Halaal tourism.

We aver that many more Christians would have voted for the Government and endorse their activities than the unknown few number of complainants.

Fomenting hatred and tension amongst brothers in faith perpetuates injustice. It is a grave disservice by extremists to the remembrance of the trial and crucifixion, which Christians believe was of one of the greatest miscarriages of justice in history.

We pray for peace and echo the words of Pope Francis when he says ***“what is needed are peacemakers, not fomenters of conflict; firefighters not arsonists; preachers of reconciliation and not instigators of destruction...”***

GOD BLESS AFRICA

Related reading: Wendy Knowler's report on costs of certification:

http://www.sanha.co.za/a/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=4064

Any queries pertaining to the above or any other aspect of Halaal may be referred to our offices

Halaal Helpline 0861 786 111