

Should the People of Gabes Pay the Price for the Failure of the National State's Economic Policy?

(Translated)

The plight of the people of Gabes, who have become among the most affected by cancer and other diseases and epidemics caused by the chemical complex imposed on their city since 1972, has not swayed successive Tunisian authorities. Rates of respiratory and skin diseases, birth defects, kidney and liver problems, and osteoporosis have skyrocketed. The toxic fumes and gases emitted from the complex have become a source of mass suffocation among schoolchildren, in addition to devastating agriculture, fishing, tourism, and the city's unique coastal oasis. Despite the clear magnitude of the disaster, successive authorities clung to the complex's continued operation and failed to implement their decisions issued since June 29, 2017, claiming it was necessary to preserve its financial returns and jobs, ignoring the fact that human life takes precedence over material interests, as the Prophet Muhammad (saw) said: «لَرْوَالُ الدُّنْيَا أَهْوَنُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ قَتْلِ مُسْلِمٍ» **“The destruction of the world is less significant to Allah than the killing of a Muslim.”**

This failure to protect the local population explains why purported environmental improvement projects, such as the EU-funded project to treat emissions from phosphoric acid production units in Gabes, are actually aimed at stabilizing polluting factories to meet European countries' demand for these materials while shielding them from the negative impacts. This raises the question of sovereignty over our phosphate resources and their byproducts. We have become certain that we have no sovereignty over our other fossil fuel resources, especially after one of the energy ministers in the "national" state admitted that production and marketing are controlled by the foreign companies operating them, and that our dealings with them are based on "trust". This confirms that the Gabes dilemma is not merely a technical issue, but a political and sovereign one. The state has lost control over our resources and has become subject to foreign companies. Liberating our will and restoring our decision-making power can only be achieved by freeing ourselves from the Western system imposed upon us to serve Western powers and their local proxies. This will only be possible by liberating ourselves from the intellectual foundations imposed upon us by colonial powers and adopting the legitimate principles (Ahkam Shariah) emanating from our Aqeedah (faith), which establishes sovereignty for Islamic law. It is through this law that interests are understood and priorities are determined, and authority rests with the Ummah, which gives bayah (pledges allegiance) to those who represent it in upholding the rulings of its Deen and preventing it from being led astray.

In light of these serious repercussions, the anger of the population and their legitimate protests, the absence of radical measures from the authorities who resorted to security solutions, and with the crisis worsening in terms of health, psychology, environment and society, we in Hizb ut Tahrir / Wilayah Tunisia affirm the following:

1 .Despite the economic role of the chemical complex, the safety of the residents takes precedence over financial profit, which necessitates immediate state intervention to eliminate the harm. The Prophet (saw) said: «مَنْ ضَارَّ اللَّهُ بِهِ وَمَنْ شَاقَّ شَاقَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ» **“Whoever harms others, Allah will harm him; and whoever makes things difficult for others, Allah will make things difficult for him.”**

2 .It is unjust to burden Gabes and its people with the consequences of failed policies, and then falsely accuse them of treason. The authorities failed in their duty of care, resorting instead to repression rather than reform, forgetting that the people's right to a dignified and secure life can only be realized under the just law of Allah.

3. Linking the fate of the nation to its enemies, and becoming dependent on their economic and political projects, deprives sovereignty of its true meaning and places the country under foreign influence, which is forbidden by Islam. Allah Almighty said: وَلَنْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا **“And Allah will never grant the disbelievers a way over the believers.”** [An-Nisa 4:141]. There is no escape from this subjugation except by restoring political decision-making based on the Islamic doctrine, which gives sovereignty to Sharia and authority to the Ummah.

4 .The environmental crisis cannot be resolved within the capitalist framework based on profit and self-interest. Its true solution lies in the rule of Islam and the Khilafah Rashidah (rightly guided Caliphate), which obligates the state to protect its citizens, regulate industrial activity away from residential areas, and impose clean production systems that preserve the environment. As the Prophet (saw) said: «فَالْإِمَامُ رَاعٍ وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ» **“The Imam is a shepherd and he is responsible for his flock.”**

O People of Green Tunisia:

The pollution that is happening today in Gabes, which has turned the lives of its people into hell, is a natural consequence of a malicious capitalist system that protects the world's tyrants by being based on utilitarianism, and whose concern is the abundance of production.

The filth that fills the environment is nothing but a result of capitalist greed, and the only solution to get rid of this is to follow the guidance of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, who said: «لَا ضَرَرَ وَلَا ضِرَارَ» **"There should neither be harming (of others without cause), nor reciprocating harm (between two parties)."** On the authority of Abu Dharr, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet (saw) said: «عُرِضَتْ عَلَيَّ أُمَّتِي بِأَعْمَالِهَا حَسَنُهَا وَسَيِّئُهَا فَرَأَيْتُ فِي مَحَاسِنِ أَعْمَالِهَا الْأَذَى يُنْحَى عَنْ» **"My Ummah was shown to me with their good deeds and bad deeds. Among their good deeds I saw a harmful thing being removed from the road. And among their bad deeds I saw sputum in the mosque that had not been removed."**

27 Rabi' al-Akhir 1447 AH

19 October 2025 CE

Hizb ut Tahrir

Wilayah Tunisia