Do Reconstruction and Building the Economy Warrant Such Subservience?

(Translated)

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By: Ustadh Ahmad Al-Qasas*

The French President’s visit to Damascus emerged as a significant event that captured the attention of political observers and commentators, marking the first visit by a leader of a major power. The manner of the reception sparked further commentary, criticism, and debate; honoring him with a reception at the Umayyad Masjid—given its profound religious, historical, and civilizational symbolism—came as a shock to many Muslims both inside and outside Syria, particularly given his well-known, brazen hostility—both in word and deed—toward Islam and Muslims.

As is often the case, this conduct by the Syrian authorities was met with a barrage of justifications and rationalizations rooted in the unquestioning acceptance of any decision or action taken by the ruler—based on the premise that the leader knows best what serves the country's policy, and on a culture of blind obedience that is a hallmark of a nation’s decline.

One of the primary arguments advanced to justify this reception—which was humiliating and unworthy of the Ummah of the Noble Quran—was that strong, friendly political ties with major powers could contribute to economic recovery and Syria’s reconstruction. This was particularly relevant given that the visit’s central theme was economic cooperation agreements and French investment. As clearly outlined in the visit’s agenda, the key objectives were to bolster economic cooperation and participate in rebuilding the country. France seeks to play a pivotal role in reconstructing the Syrian infrastructure and civil institutions damaged by the war. Macron was accompanied by a delegation comprising CEOs of major French corporations—such as TotalEnergies in the energy sector and CMA CGM for ports and logistics—to explore investment opportunities and revitalize trade. The discussions also encompassed agreements in the fields of tourism, agriculture, industry, air and maritime transport—including the supply of Airbus aircraft—and banking services. In short, the defining theme of this visit is Macron’s haste to secure a share for his country and its investment firms in the anticipated reconstruction and investment drive in Syria—a process where the ultimate decision-making power lies with the United States. Political forecasts for the Eastern Mediterranean—particularly Ash-Sham—envision a massive investment undertaking that promises to become a vast goldmine, or rather a collection of financial bonanzas, whetting the appetites of the corporate giants that dominate major capitalist nations and their policies.

Although the visit’s agenda extended beyond economics and investment, this article focuses on the economic aspect, as it is the visit’s most prominent theme and the primary pretext cited by its cheerleaders, apologists, and proponents.

To begin with, it must be reiterated that an Ummah carrying the Risaalah message of Allah (swt) to His servants must never place material economic gains at the top of its list of priorities. What rightfully occupies the pinnacle of that list is the ideology—Islam itself. In other words, it is the supremacy of the Shariah over the Ummah, its state, and its policies. Under no circumstances may any part of Islam’s sovereignty or its Shariah within society and the state be compromised for the sake of material gains—no matter how substantial—despite the undeniable importance of the economy as the lifeblood of society. A requirement that follows immediately after the supremacy of Shariah—ranking next in the hierarchy of priorities for the Ummah and the state—is the authority of the Ummah over its state, territory, and assets. This entails that the Ummah’s political, security, economic, and cultural decision-making remains exclusively its own; foreigners must have absolutely no avenue to infringe upon the state’s sovereignty or its authority over its land and political decisions. Allah (swt) says, ﴿وَلَن يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلاً﴾ **“And Allah does not permit the disbelievers authority over the believers”** [TMQ Surah An-Nisaa: 141]. As mufasiroon (Quranic commentators) have explained, this means Allah (swt) forbids the disbelievers from having authority or dominion over the believers.

Beyond the fact that Islam prioritizes the supremacy of Shariah—not the economy or anything else—the notion celebrated by many, that relations transgressing the Shariah's boundaries will lead to national economic revival, is a sheer delusion. It betrays an ignorance of politics, economics, and Shariah alike. The economic path pursued by the Syrian authorities does not yield economic security. Instead, it renders Syria's economy—and consequently the entire country—hostage to foreign will. To grasp this point, one must clarify two contrasting political concepts that, regrettably, elude most Muslims in Syria and across the Muslim World due to a lack of political and economic awareness, alongside a weakness in Islamic knowledge. These two concepts are: a dependency-based economy and an independent economy.

A dependency-based economy relies on foreign entities, tethering its economic destiny to foreign nations or institutions. It subjects the state to the dictates of major powers or international financial institutions—such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF)—and to the conditions they impose for granting loans or aid. Such an economy is often exposed or undiversified, relying on the export of raw materials alone. More critically, major foreign corporations often control the extraction and export of these resources, repatriating profits and marginalizing the local workforce. This dependent economy imports most of its other needs—including vital supplies—leaving it hostage to global market fluctuations and the political pressures of exporting nations. Furthermore, its local currency is often rigidly pegged to a foreign currency, such as the US dollar, or it suffers from hyperinflation and a continuous loss of value driven by riba (interest) debt.

In contrast, an independent economy relies on independent state decision-making and the achievement of self-sufficiency. The state possesses full authority to formulate its fiscal and monetary policies free from foreign pressure or dictates. It is characterized by economic diversity—spanning industry, agriculture, and technology—to minimize reliance on imports of basic goods and foodstuffs. It prioritizes self-sufficiency in strategic commodities—such as wheat, pharmaceuticals, and energy—to safeguard national security against sanctions or political volatility. Additionally, it manages natural resources, including raw materials and energy sources like oil, gas, and minerals, using local expertise, directing them toward domestic development and the construction of robust infrastructure.

If there is a temporary need to utilize foreign expertise, the state should contract for such services for a specific period in exchange for a fee, rather than granting extraction and sales concessions that leave the Ummah's wealth open to foreign plunder. Furthermore, an independent economy possesses an independent currency—which, under Shariah Law, consists of gold and silver, or banknotes that truly represent them, whereby each currency unit equals a fixed, specific weight of gold or silver. This currency is backed by real production and diversified reserves, granting it resilience against crises.

Beyond the necessity of adopting a sovereign economy, states that are currently at war—or face the imminent threat of war—must adopt a "war economy." They must not jeopardize their people, land, and wealth by relying on a "peacetime economy" this is a separate dichotomy that warrants its own dedicated article.

Regrettably, the economic approach currently observed in the "New Syria" is one of dependency—far removed from an independent economy. While we remain in a state of perpetual war with the usurping Jewish entity—a state of conflict that must not cease—Syria's ruler is pursuing plans completely at odds with a war economy. This indicates that he envisions a near future for the region in which the state of war with the usurping entity no longer exists; instead, it would become a "natural neighbor" whose economy integrates with that of Syria and the rest of the region. This is precisely what America is planning—and indeed, actively implementing.

*** Member of the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir**