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AFLC Senior Counsel Co-Authors Startling Peer-Reviewed Study of U.S. Mosques

New York — A leading international peer-reviewed journal specializing in the empirical study of terrorism has published a study that found that 80% of U.S. mosques provide their worshippers with jihad-style literature promoting the use of violence against non-believers and that the imams in those mosques expressly promote that literature.

The study also found that when a mosque imam or its worshippers were “sharia-adherent,” as measured by certain behaviors in conformity with Islamic law, the mosque was more likely to provide this violent literature and the imam was more likely to promote it.

The abstract for the study summarizes the research findings:

A random survey of 100 representative mosques in the U.S. was conducted to measure the correlation between Sharia adherence and dogma calling for violence against non-believers. Of the 100 mosques surveyed, 51% had texts on site rated as severely advocating violence; 30% had texts rated as moderately advocating violence; and 19% had no violent texts at all. Mosques that presented as Sharia adherent were more likely to feature violence-positive texts on site than were their non-Sharia-adherent counterparts. In 84.5% of the mosques, the imam recommended studying violence-positive texts. The leadership at Sharia-adherent mosques was more likely to recommend that a worshipper study violence-positive texts than leadership at non-Sharia-adherent mosques. Fifty-eight percent of the mosques invited guest imams known to promote violent jihad. The leadership of mosques that featured violence-positive literature was more likely to invite guest imams who were known to promote violent jihad than was the leadership of mosques that did not feature violence-positive literature on mosque premises.

The study was published in December 2011 by *Perspectives on Terrorism*, a scholarly international journal of the Terrorism Research Initiative (TRI), a global initiative that seeks to support the international community of terrorism researchers and scholars through the facilitation of collaborative projects and cooperative initiatives. TRI was established in 2007 by scholars from several disciplines in order to provide the global research community with a common tool than can empower them and extend the impact of each participant's research activities.

The mosque study had previously been published by the *Middle East Quarterly* in September 2011, an academic peer-reviewed journal which specializes on Middle East regional issues. Because of the ground-breaking nature of the study, which brings a rigorous empirical methodology to the question of home-grown jihadists, *MEQ* granted permission to *Perspectives on Terrorism* to publish a more extensive analysis of the study's conception, methodology, and results.

The study's authors, Professor Mordechai Kedar of Bar Ilan University in Israel and AFLC Senior Counsel David Yerushalmi, who also serves as general counsel to the Center for Security Policy in Washington, D.C., have both published widely on terrorism, Islamic law, and its underlying doctrines of jihad and violence against unbelievers.

The study may be accessed at the *Mapping Sharia* website: www.mappingsharia.com.

The study may be accessed at *MEQ*: <http://www.meforum.org/2931/american-mosques>.

The study may be accessed at *Perspectives on Terrorism*: <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/sharia-adherence-mosque-survey>.

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