Opportunities for emotional, civilisational and historical unity of Muslims

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Ahmed Uddin

- Recapturing our Ummah by recalling Zakat and Sadaqah.

Jean-Henri Dunant travelled to Italy to meet French emperor Napoléon III with the intention of discussing difficulties in conducting business in French occupied Algeria. On his travels he witnessed the horrors of the 1859 Battle of Solferino between France, Sardinia, and Austria. Three years later he published Un Souvenir de Solferino at his own expense and presented it to leading figures in Europe. The next year, due to his efforts, the Red Cross was founded.

Dunant was perturbed by what he experienced and one could strongly argue that Muslims in the UK need to be more perturbed by our state of affairs. Totally 2.7 million Muslims in England and Wales are generally disadvantaged, particularly in terms of its dependence on social housing, child poverty and unemployment. A very large proportion (47%) of Muslims

reside in the 10% most deprived local authority districts of England.

The solution to our complex social problems is a simplistic one: Zakat and Sadaqah.

The key principles in the way Zakat and Sadaqah should be distributed is to give in a manner so that it brings about positive changes in the lives of the beneficiary. It is not to act as a hand-out but rather an investment in ones future. The purpose of Zakat and Sadaqah is to help the needy thrive, not just survive. The correct implementation of Zakat and Sadaqah can be the single most positive development in our lifetimes to secure the future of generations of Muslims to come in this country. This article will lay out how Muslim civil society can step in to recapture our community from spiralling out of control. Lessons will be brought from the past, to how the community has a whole was supported and how it fostered a society where there was tolerance not only within the various schools in Islam but also with non-Muslims.

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