Title of Article in the English language: Rulings on the Usage of External Loudspeakers for Congregational Prayers in Islamic Jurisprudence

Dr. Steven-Moustafa Kassem

Abstract

The use of external loudspeakers for mosques is a widespread modern practice which began in the early twentieth century, affecting the lives of Muslims and non-Muslims nearby to mosques who can hear these speakers. This study is an investigation into the proper usage, if any, of loudspeakers for the Islamic call to prayer (athan), announcements of the beginning of congregational prayers and broadcasting the sounds of congregational prayers, from an Islamic jurisprudential perspective. The findings of this study are of interest to everyone who resides nearby to or is involved in the management of mosques in Islamic countries and elsewhere.

This study is comprised of an introduction, three main sections, and a conclusion. As for the first section, it is titled, “The usage of external loudspeakers for the call to prayer”, and it contains four subsections, which are: the definition of the call to prayer, a description of loudspeakers, a discussion of means to ends (waseelah) and their Islamic rulings, and the ruling on the usage of loudspeakers for the call to prayer, whereas the author concludes that it is permissible to use external amplifiers for the call to obligatory congregational prayers.

As for the second section, it is titled, “The usage of external loudspeakers to announce the beginning of congregational prayers”. It contains three subsections, which are: a description of the announcement of the beginning of congregational prayers, the precedent for the announcement of the beginning of congregational prayers, and the ruling on the usage of loudspeakers to announce the beginning of congregational prayers, whereas the author concludes that it is permissible to use external loudspeakers to announce the beginning of congregational prayers.

*Unm Al Qura University, College of Shariah and Islamic Studies, K.S.A
As for the third section, it is titled: "The usage of external loudspeakers to broadcast congregational prayers from mosques." It contains three subsections, which are: the definition of prayer, the practice of reciting prayers out-loud, and the ruling on using loudspeakers to broadcast congregational prayers from mosques, whereas the author concludes that the usage of loudspeakers to broadcast congregational prayers from mosques should be avoided in most situations, except to facilitate participation in congregational prayers for worshippers outside of the mosque, in the event that the mosque reaches its maximum occupancy.

Keywords: