

“Values for Leadership in Community Building in Our Scriptures”

- 1) The single word “governance” condenses significant aspects of values for leaders in community building. God is the Perfect Exemplar in governance; and mankind must learn from God’s examples of His Excellences of the entire universe systems we know of. Values for leadership in community building comprises elements of
 - (a) Embracing responsibility
 - (b) Volunteering to assist others
 - (c) Listening to others’ viewpoints without dictatorship
 - (d) Having confidence in others
 - (e) Eliciting cooperation
 - (f) Inspiring others to correct path
 - (g) Planning and visualizing the future
 - (h) Recognizing gender equality
 - (i) Instilling passion and purpose, and
 - (j) Steering away from hypocrisy.

- 2) Embracing Responsibility: Leaders must accept responsibility with accountability and liability (if any) in their functioning role as community leaders. In the following verse from the Holy Qur’an (HQ), the term Messenger is taken to mean the Head of State. **HQ4:59** *“O you who believe, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority from among you; then if you quarrel about anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger if you believe in Allah and the Last Day. This is best and more suitable to (achieve) the end.”* At this juncture it may be noted that the inscription on the scroll of the Fiji Coat of Arms has almost identical meaning to this verse in the Holy Qur’an in terms of democratic governance led by the Head of State (*Rerevaka na Kalou ka doka na Tui* and which means “Fear God and Honour the King”).

- 3) Volunteering to assist others is basic element in community bonding. Listening to others’ viewpoints and having confidence in others, without being dictatorial is the next step up. These elements together with eliciting cooperation and inspiring others to correct path are basic bricks of community building. Planning and visualizing the future will only be successful if the community remains united. Gender equality is a matter often overlooked; but leaders must recognize on balance that almost 50% of the community is made up of each gender. Both genders have equal rights in the

2013 Fiji Constitution. In the same token, both genders require instilling passion and purpose of their belongingness to the nation. Leaders must be exemplary in instilling passion and purpose and do not regard community matters below dignity. This is quoted in the verse **HQ21:73** *“And We made them leaders who guided (people) by Our command, and We revealed to them the doing of good and the keeping up of prayer and the giving of alms, and Us (alone) they served.”* A damaging cause to community fragmentation is practicing of hypocrisy by the leaders. Hypocrisy must never become an element with the leader of any community. This is stated in the verse **HQ4:81** *“And they say: Obedience. But when they go out from thy presence, a party of them plan by night doing otherwise than what thou sayest. And Allah writes down what they plan by night, so turn aside from them and trust in Allah. And Allah is sufficient as having charge of affairs.”* However, potential leaders must always be aware of false leaders who will undermine existing leadership. This has been witnessed in many countries.

- 4) The Holy Qur’an as Muslims’ Scripture, is the handbook for excellence in governance about the universe and those other things closer at hand on earth; and accordingly, it is imperative that we fully appreciate on balance the Supremacy of God and heed to His excellent guidance on values for leadership. This is given in the quote **HQ2:164** *“In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, and the ships that run in the sea with that which profits men, and the water that Allah sends down from the sky, then gives life therewith to the earth after its death and spreads in it all (kinds of) animals, and the changing of the winds and the clouds made subservient between heaven and earth, there are surely signs for a people who understand.”* The governance of the universe has been in continuous motion for 14.3 billion years without fail.
- 5) Muslims are also reminded in their Scripture of the second record of disobedience in humanity, which has become a hallmark for slyness: **HQ20:120** *“But the devil made an evil suggestion to him; he said: O Adam, shall I lead thee to the tree of immortality and a kingdom which decays not?”* This devil-inspired culture has followed downstream into humanity to this day and sadly there are many people who relish in misleading communities and causing chaos to administrations of various communities: **HQ3:68** *“A party of the People of the Book desire that they should lead you astray; and they lead not astray but themselves, and they perceive not.”* The impact of the devil successfully taking control of leaders within communities to mislead the communities and bringing chaos to everybody is clearly witnessed in the verse **HQ4:47** *“O you who have been given the Book, believe in what We have revealed, verifying that which you have, before We destroy the leaders and turn them on their backs, or curse them as We cursed the Sabbath-breakers. And the command of Allah is ever executed.”* The verses quoted so far show that one of the values for good leadership in community building is not getting misled by devil-inspired ideas.

- 6) Democracy is the essences of leadership and communities must respect the Head of State. Rather than communities of people quarrelling amongst themselves and weakening the population base, there has to be system of arbitration to hear both sides and deliver a balanced judgment. Whilst there are different ethnicities and cultures, humanity is a single community before God the Creator and God has clarified so in the verses: **HQ23:52** *“And surely this your community is one community, and I am your Lord, so keep your duty to Me.”* God has brought about values for leadership in scriptures by civilizations’ progress and given as case studies of past Prophets.
- 7) The Muslims’ Scripture (Holy Qur’an) has several historical case studies, especially of past prophets and their communities and how these prophets demonstrated their values of community building. All communities had leaders. Within those communities there were smaller pockets of people who were honest and sincere to prophets and they were promised reward in Heaven. Within the same communities were larger pockets of people who were driven by frauds, traitors, conspirators and hypocrites; these people were promised the fire of hell. An example is King David, who was also a prophet, quoted at **HQ38:26** *“O David, surely We have made thee a ruler in the land; so judge between men justly and follow not desire, lest it lead thee astray from the path of Allah. Those who go astray from the path of Allah, for them is surely a severe chastisement because they forgot the day of Reckoning.”* Community leaders must respect everybody’s cultures.
- 8) Governance also requires establishment of welfare systems, orphanages, charity and care of the underprivileged as one of several values; the quote is at **HQ9:60** *“(Zakat) charity is only for the poor and the needy, and those employed to administer it, and those whose hearts are made to incline (to truth), and (to free) the captives, and those in debt, and in the way of Allah and for the wayfarer — an ordinance from Allah. And Allah is Knowing, Wise.”* The establishment of Department of Social Welfare in the country is definitely a necessary value in community leadership. The lesser privileged are also people and form the community base. Another value in community leadership is setting up a system of Public Trustee. This is quoted at **HQ4:58** *“Surely Allah commands you to make over trusts to those worthy of them, and that when you judge between people, you judge with justice. Surely Allah admonishes you with what is excellent. Surely Allah is ever Hearing, Seeing.”*
- 9) In conclusion, the Holy Qur’an has always been the handbook for values in community building and shall continue to be so. However, sometimes people choose to ignore excellent advice available.

-End of Document-