

THE WISDOM FUND

PO Box 2723
Arlington, VA 22202
USA

March 22, 2011

Re CSID's Letter to President Obama About Libya, March 14, 2011

The Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy, and over 1600 others, in an open letter to President Obama, requested the president

Working closely with U.S. allies, NATO, and the United Nations to create a coalition that will impose as quickly as possible a no-fly zone for all Libyan military aircraft over the full extent of northern Libyan airspace, and implement such measures as may be required to render the Libyan air force inoperable throughout the country.

For the Muslims, Christians, Jews and others who signed this letter I have two questions: **Is the no-fly zone over Libya (a euphemism for war) consistent with international law? Does it constitute a Just War?**

It is my understanding that according to the Charter of the United Nations:

No State or group of States has the right to intervene, directly or indirectly, for any reason whatever, in the internal or external affairs of any other State. Consequently, armed intervention and all other forms of interference or attempted threats against the personality of the State or against its political, economic and cultural elements, are in violation of international law.

Also, I do not believe it meets the Catholic church's criteria for a Just War — see catholic.com which I quote:

The strict conditions for legitimate defense by military force require rigorous consideration. The gravity of such a decision makes it subject to rigorous conditions of moral legitimacy. At one and the same time:

- the damage inflicted by the aggressor on the nation or community of nations must be lasting, grave, and certain;
- all other means of putting an end to it must have been shown to be impractical or ineffective;
- there must be serious prospects of success;
- the use of arms must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated.

The power of modern means of destruction weighs very heavily in evaluating this condition.

These are the traditional elements enumerated in what is called the “just war” doctrine.

I understand that Just War doctrine also requires consideration of motives. Rep. Ed Markey (D-MA) said on MSNBC, “We’re In Libya Because Of Oil”. Libya has the largest oil reserves in Africa.

According to University of California professor Huston Smith, author of *The World's Religions*: “The Koran’s definition of a Holy War is virtually identical with that of a Just War in the Canon Law of Catholicism.”

I believe the no-fly zone is neither consistent with international law, nor is it a Just War. For these reasons, and others stated at <http://www.twf.org/News/Y2011/0319-Libya.html>, I did not sign the CSID letter.

Enver Masud
Founder and CEO
The Wisdom Fund — TWF.org