

Hasan Al Turabi is one of world's present top Political Islamic leaders. A Phd from France and long time Speaker/Minister of Sudan he went through big roller-coaster of politics including imprisonment by President Basheer, once his friend. As Dr. Nae'em says in his book "Toward an Islamic Reformation", even such an educated Islamic leader after struggling for long 26 years to estanlish Sharia-based Islamic State failed to give detailed structure of such theocratic state that would succeed in today's world. I firmly believe that is just not possible.

### Hasan Mahmud.

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Sudanese Scholar Hassan Al-Turabi: Women Should Cover Chest, Not Face; Women Can Be Imams, Political Leaders; No Punishment for Drinking Alcohol at Home Following are excerpts from an interview with Sudanese scholar Hassan Al-Turabi, which was aired on Al-Arabiya TV on April 10, 2006. <http://www.memritv.org/Transcript.asp?P1=1112> Hassan Al-Turabi: Some of these views were already expressed decades ago, and have appeared in books. But you still see most of the Islamic world - in its stagnation, backwardness, and traditions - quoting [blindly] without reading the Koran, except for blessings. [...] Interviewer: Dr. Al-Turabi, you talked about equality between men and women, and said that women had the right to serve as Imams. You said that if a woman is more devout and knowledgeable than a man, she can lead the prayers. You also criticized marriage through a third party when the woman is present. You [permitted] marriage between a Muslim woman and a man from among the People of the Book. You also raised some issues regarding the hijab, and said it was enough to cover the chest. [...] Hassan Al-Turabi: I didn't mean that half of society should leave the home just in order to double the number of people in the streets. In any case, the home doesn't require much work anymore, with all the appliances - unless we keep our wives as ornaments and wait for the night. I want women to work and become part of public life, Allah willing. Allah gave them certain advantages over us, and gave us certain advantages over them. He gave men and women advantages over one another. I would like there to be equality between people, because we were all created from the same soul: "Allah created from a single soul its mate." [...] I have not found a hadith that prohibits women from being Imams. During the prayer itself - I can understand... When we pray, we get close and touch one another. If women were to pray with us, in such proximity, they might divert our thoughts from our prayer to relations between men and women. That is why they pray behind us or on the side, depending on the mosque. But if a woman is more devout, better, or older than us, people will not stare at her face, but will listen to her words of wisdom. I have only found one relevant hadith. The Prophet used to visit Umm Warqa. He used to visit several women. He would visit the wives, not their husbands, because they were more righteous. A woman can serves as a muazin, and she can lead the people of her dar in prayer. Dar does not just mean a home. Dar is a large area like dar in Darfour or Dar-Hamed... Dar refers to a large area. [...] A woman can be the leader of a country, if she is the best of all the candidates, and the one most capable of meeting the challenges facing the country. The country may be in social, economic,

or military difficulties... Depending on the difficulties, I vote for this person or that, according to the current needs. [...] People convert to Islam. In Europe, women may convert to Islam before their husbands. Are we supposed to stop them, or place them on trial? She is a believing woman - are we supposed to keep her from converting until she gets divorced, and cause her family to fall apart? Where is this taken from? There is no verse... Interviewer: If she wants to convert to Islam, she must be married... Hassan Al-Turabi: No, there is no verse that tells us... The verse refers to polytheists. We are forbidden to marry them. [...] The Koran tells us we can marry the People of the Book. It doesn't say otherwise. [Clerics who forbid this] rely on general verses, which can hardly be relied on in this matter. If this does not cause strife between the wife [and her husband], and nowadays it doesn't... She doesn't even vote for the same party as her husband, let alone... Sometimes he is not even religious. His Christianity is merely his heritage, and he does not really believe in Jesus. Are we supposed to make her go back to Christianity?! This does not make sense. Similarly, we do not force our wives from among the People of the Book to convert to our religion. I ruled... I didn't rule, but gave people my opinion about their problems. Women converted to Islam before their husbands, and the [clerics] would stop them. I told them not to do so. If you had read your Salafi books, you would have encountered this ruling. [...] The word hijab appears in the Koran. It refers to a curtain in the Prophet's room. Naturally, it was impossible for the Prophet's wife to sit there, while people entered the room - Muslims who came to ask for rulings, converts to Islam who wanted to ask questions, people of the Jahiliya who wanted to visit - this is impossible, even in modern homes... Allah be praised, today's homes are larger, and there are halls and guest rooms, but back then there was only one room, so they put a hijab so the woman would feel comfortable, and wear whatever she liked. And if we want something from her, we request it from behind the hijab. The Koran did not refer to this thing as a hijab. This was called a khimar, and it was worn over the chest only. What they are referring to is the khimar, not the hijab. You keep hearing hijab, hijab, hijab... When these words are distorted, they mislead people. [...] This is the weakness of the Muslims. They always just sit there and beg God to solve their problems: "Oh Allah, kill the Jews, kill the Americans." That's what they do, just sitting there. They want Jesus to come, they want the Mahdi to come, and fill the world with justice and light. [...] They don't want to do anything by themselves. They don't want to fight falsehood or wage Jihad. They are waiting for Allah to send them Jesus from the heavens so he can solve all their problems - the problems with "those Americans, those Christians." Jesus is not still alive after 2006 years, but he continues to live in the Muslims' illusions. These are illusions, my brother, illusions. [...] The same goes for the Shiites. I think - of course I cannot be sure - the caliph found out his name and he took him and his father and perhaps he killed him in secret. But they are still waiting for the Imam to come back. For more than a thousand, or hundreds of years, they wait for the Imam. In fact, most of them have set the Imam aside and moved on. I wish all Muslims would move on. On Judgment Day, I will not be able to apologize to Allah, saying: I was waiting for the Messiah, but for reasons known to You alone, You delayed his coming. I was waiting for him. I am one of those who are waiting. Be one of those who act, until you die. Many

people have died. [...] We are forbidden to drink alcohol. The punishment for drinking alcohol is whipping. But I have said that we cannot enter people's homes. We enter homes only with permission. If we knock and knock and knock, and nobody opens the door, we should leave, even if we are the police - even if we are Omar Ibn Al-Khattab. That is what he did. We do not enter people's homes. If he makes his own alcohol, and drinks it without taking it outside - let him do it until he falls asleep, and leaves his house the next day like that. It is not that terrible. But whoever drinks alcohol in public or sells it should be punished, unless he is a non-Muslim, of course. If he is very drunk and unsteady on his feet, and drives a car in a reckless manner - he is held accountable in all the countries of the world. I don't want people to use the ban on alcohol to spy on others. [...] Brother, our society needs to be reformed, and reform cannot emerge out of wretchedness, fear, and conservatism. What are we conserving? This backwardness? The Westerners ride our backs with their armies, with their economy, their media, and their science, and we just sit there being conservative? What are we conserving? By Allah, our faith will become stronger if we go to the countries of the West. Our faith will only grow. My faith grew stronger in Europe, in France, in Britain. My faith grew stronger, and so did my knowledge, Allah be praised.