

Beat: Technology

## CAIR- Muslim, Sikh Groups to Launch -Twitterstorm- Urging FIBA to Drop Hijab Ban

Council on American-Islamic Relations

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**USPA NEWS** - The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) joined on August 19, 2016, MPower Change and the The Sikh Coalition to launch a 'Twitterstorm' urging the Switzerland-based International Basketball Federation (FIBA) to permanently lift the ban on athletes wearing religious attire when it issues...

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) joined on August 19, 2016, MPower Change and the The Sikh Coalition to launch a 'Twitterstorm' urging the Switzerland-based International Basketball Federation (FIBA) to permanently lift the ban on athletes wearing religious attire when it issues a final decision on its head-covering policy later this month.

Also on the same day, CAIR's Georgia chapter called on Dekalb County law enforcement to investigate a possible bias motive for vandalism targeting an Islamic charity in Stone Mountain. In Minnesota, CAIR's chapter called on the FBI to investigate an alleged threat by two men to burn down the house of a Somali-American woman in that state if she and her family do not leave town.

CAIR, the nation's largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization, said those participating in the Twitterstorm are being asked to use #LetThemPlay and #FibaAllowHijab when tweeting @FIBA in support of Sikh, Jewish and Muslim athletes who wish to wear religious attire.

The Washington-based Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization and the Sikh American Legal Defense & Education Fund (SALDEF) recently called on FIBA to permanently lift the ban on Muslim women athletes wearing Islamic head scarves (hijab).

The multi-faith Twitterstorm comes as a number of Olympic athletes wearing religious attire have competed successfully in the ongoing Olympic Games in Brazil. CAIR noted that Ibtihaj Muhammad recently became the first American Muslim woman to win an Olympic medal while wearing hijab. CAIR had requested and received a change to the hijab ban in 2014 and is working with two American Muslim basketball players who were being impacted by the prohibition. Sikh players who wear turbans for religious reasons had also been prevented from playing basketball under FIBA's policy.

As part of a two-year testing program that FIBA agreed to in 2014 following intervention by CAIR and Sikh organizations, players can currently wear hijabs (and Sikh turbans) in some competitions. FIBA will likely issue its final decision on hijab after the Rio Olympics. CAIR noted that FIFA's International Football Association Board acknowledged the religious rights of soccer players by changing its rules to allow hijabs and Sikh turbans.

Source : Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)

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