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The first question of Fatwa no. 2036

Q 1: What is the ruling on Photography in Islam?

A: The basis is that taking pictures of anything that has a soul such as humans and animals is forbidden whether the image is stereoscopic, drawn on paper, cloth, walls, or otherwise because of the following: 1- The prohibition of taking pictures is related in the authentic Hadiths where the doer is threatened with severe punishment. 2- It is common that such an action is a means of Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) by standing before them, submitting, drawing near and revering them in a way that is not appropriate except for Allah (Exalted He be). 3- They are an imitation of the creation of Allah. 4- Some of them may be a Fitnah (temptation) such as the photographs of actresses, naked women, and those who are called "Beauty Queens" etc.

Some Hadiths indicate photograph prohibition and prove that they are a major sin: - Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both) reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: [«Those who make images will be punished on the Day of Resurrection and it will be said to them: Breathe a soul into what you have created.»](#) (Related by Al-Bukhari and Muslim) - `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that he heard Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) saying: [«The people who will receive the severest punishment from Allah in the Day of Resurrection will be the picture makers.»](#)

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(Related by Al-Bukhari and Muslim). - Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that he heard the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) saying: [«Allah \(Exalted be He\) has said: 'Who can be more unjust than he who tries to create the like of My creatures? Let them \(i.e. I challenge them to\) create an atom \(or a small ant\), a grain of wheat or a grain of barley!'"](#) (Related by Al-Bukhari and Muslim) - `Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her) reported that: [«Allah's Messenger \(peace be upon him\) returned from a journey and I had covered a shelf with a thin cloth curtain containing pictures. No sooner did he see it than his face changed and said: 'O `Aisha! The most grievous torment on the Day of Resurrection would be for those who imitate \(Allah\) in the act of His creation.' She said: 'So, we turned it \(i.e., the curtain\) into one or two pillows.'"](#) (Related by Al-Bukhari and Muslim) - Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that I heard the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) saying: [«Whoever makes pictures in the world would be compelled to breathe a soul in them on the Day of Resurrection, but they will not be able to breathe soul \(in them\).»](#) (Related by Al-Bukhari and Muslim). In addition to his second Hadith that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

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[«Every picture maker will be in Hellfire, every picture they make will be revived by Allah to torment them in Hellfire.»](#) Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both) said: [«If you must do it, make](#)

the picture of trees and inanimate objects.) (Related by Al-Bukhari and Muslim) The general meaning of these Hadiths indicates the prohibition of taking pictures of things which have souls. It is permissible to take pictures of inanimate objects such as trees, seas, mountains and the like as Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both) mentioned and none of the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) disagreed, given Ibn `Abbas' opinion regarding the Hadiths of the threat "Make alive what you have created" and the Prophet's saying "A person will be commanded to breathe the soul therein and they will not be able to do so."

May Allah grant us success. May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions.

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