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Muslims who move from one country to another during Ramadan where the beginning and end of Sawm are different should adhere to the ruling applied in the country where they are present during the beginning or the end of Ramadan

Fatwa no. 2665

Q: A citizen called Khuwaylid Al-Jada`y Al-Matiry submitted the following question: On the eve of the thirtieth of Sha`ban this year, he was in Kuwait when the radio of Kuwait announced their confirmed sighting of the crescent moon of Ramadan on Tuesday night which, according to the calendar of Um Al-Qura, would fall on the thirtieth of Sha`ban. Shortly after he heard on the radio the announcement broadcasted on the radio of Riyadh on the authority of the Higher Judiciary Council that the crescent moon of Ramadan was not sighted by them on the Tuesday night corresponding to the thirtieth of Sha`ban according to the calendar of Um Al-Qura. Accordingly, he, as well as the people of the country where he was present during the sighting of the crescent observed Sawm. After a couple of days, he came back to Saudi Arabia where Ramadan had begun one day later and the people had been fasting for two days, whereas he had been fasting for three. This may cause a problem for him at the end of the month if Ramadan completes thirty days.

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Is he obliged to fast with the people in Saudi Arabia or to stop fasting when Kuwait announces on the thirtieth of Ramadan that sighting the crescent of Shawwal is confirmed? The questioner thinks that the moon sighting announced on the radio of Riyadh is more correct and says that he fasted with the people of Kuwait only out of appreciating the sanctity of time. Please clarify this matter.

A: If a person finds himself in a country where people have already started fasting, he must fast with them, because under such a situation the person present in another country will come under the same ruling as its own citizens. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **(Sawm (Fasting, i.e. beginning of Ramadan) is the day when you fast; Fitr (Breaking the Fast, i.e. end of Ramadan) is the day when you end the fast, and Al-Adha (the Festival of the Sacrifice) is the day when you sacrifice.)** (Reported by Abu Dawud with an authentic Sanad [chain of narrators]; there are supporting reports for it narrated by Abu Dawud and others)

Supposing that he moved from a country where he has begun fasting with the people there, and went to another country, he should break or continue his Sawm according to the ruling of the people in the country to which he traveled, even if they end their Sawm earlier than the country where he has started fasting. But if he ends up fasting less than twenty-nine days, he must make up for one day (of fasting) later on, because the Hijri (lunar) month cannot be less than twenty-nine days.

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

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Source: Fatwas of the Permanent Committee