

## Iftaa Industry is a Red Line

In order for the Islamic Sharia law not to be misused, this article should be read carefully or else it would be useless or the meaning would be misunderstood. Because they speak with the word of legitimacy, and because of our values of respect and commitment to Sharia, it can be a very delicate matter when writing and addressing the Sharia committees as there are certain lines that must not be crossed. But the fact is that most of these committees, while carrying out their duties of issuing fatwas, may sometimes fall prey to some managers who make fatwas a mean to reach their own personal goals, whether by approving products or denying rights. In these cases, that which appears to be Sharia law is a distortion of the truth. The existence of the Sharia Committee is essential for both financial institutions with an Islamic character, as well as for government bodies which were founded upon bylaws that insist on the application of Islamic law. The members of these committees are appointed by the boards of directors of those institutions. Because these committees grant the stamp of "In Conformity with Sharia Law" on every decision and product offered by the institution it's attached to, Sharia committees have nearly become a distinct industry unto themselves in the State of Kuwait. It should be emphasized here that any potentially devious decisions do not start from these committees themselves, but from the shadows where managers work hard behind these committees to shield themselves against opposition or the criticism that their decisions may be unfair. The same can be said of managers who have no conscience when it comes to bartering religion in exchange for profits and competitive advantage. Both types of managers are well aware of any weaknesses in these committees. As a result, judgments are issued on general questions without taking into account the specific circumstances surrounding a particular issue, resulting in the loss of rights and ill-gotten permits. Of course, this is apart from the religious and jurisprudential authority, as well as the sectarian affiliation of the committee members. If the institution