



INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

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“PROPOSAL FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM”

Religious freedom is the right to maintain or change a spiritual creed, while this creed may be freely expressed both privately and publicly, without forcing the person’s conscience and without this resulting in any type of discrimination. The right to live one’s faith privately and express it publicly, including not only the cult, but perform it through acts of charity and social service, helping in sanitary and educational services through religious institutions and participating in public life.

Religious freedom is recognized in the Human Rights Declaration, art. 18.

It is neither a marginal right nor something pertaining fanatics that practice any religion, but something we may consider a primary right, as Pope Benedict XVI has mentioned.

We have the experience that when the right for religious freedom is violated it becomes an unequivocal sign that in the nation where this takes place, other liberties will be violated and possibly democratic principles themselves. The defense of this right should unite believers of any creed.

Violence must never be founded in religious beliefs. Terrorism based in religion is the destruction of itself, as Pope Benedict XVI mentioned in Asis, where he asked religious leaders to insist in deeply rejecting any kind of terrorism, even more the religious terrorism.



The defense of this right should unite associations, NGOs, foundations and non lucrative associations concerned with the basic freedoms of Mankind.

The defense of this right directly affects politicians and governments who, independently from their beliefs, have the obligation to look after their safeguard. Protecting the right to believe also means protecting the right not to believe.

Politicians have the obligation to verify the right for religious freedom not only within their own nations, but worldwide as well, and promote its defense in international forums and organisms.

The defense of this right is so important to governments, that they should be able to have prepared mechanisms that include diplomatic, political and commercial sanctions against those nations violating it.

The media also plays a fundamental role in building up awareness, giving information and forming a moral conscience about this right. The media has the ethical obligation to inform with utmost objectiveness about the constant violations that take part in many nations across the world. Omitting this information is both irresponsible and cowardly.

From the Catholic Foundation of the Holy See, whose fundamental charisma is that of supporting needy and persecuted Christians in the world, we recur with all our faith to pray for all of those who are deprived of this fundamental right across the world, and constantly invoke God so that He may illuminate the hearts of those who violate it and to console and strengthen those who suffer these violations.

We beg to believers of any religion to equally pray for this intention and influence, as far as they are able to, their political leaders, as well as their civil and religious institutions.

As the main cause of violating the right to religious freedom is fanaticism and extreme radicalism present in other religions in their own environment and society, I ask to foster an inter-religious dialogue to always maintain communication bridges to honestly search for peace and good coexistence among all men of good will, as well as putting aside the most radical behavior that cause exclusion to those who do not practice the same religion, or those who do not practice any religion at all.



Conclusion: defending religious freedom means neither defending the privilege of a religion over another, nor the privilege of believers over those who are not, but it means defending the right of Mankind to communicate with a God, the fundament of true culture and authentic peace.

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