

Thank you Madam President.

Discussions in these two days clearly confirm that the major obstacle to the implementation of the declaration on the rights of persons belonging to minorities is constituted by increasing acts of violence and discrimination against religious minorities worldwide. We are particularly and greatly concerned by threats to Christian minorities in many countries, while recognising that also other religious communities are targeted in different regions. Often government committed to upholding religious minorities rights are under attack is well.

The challenge therefore is global and the international community must respond in a united and effective way. On September 27th the Italian and Jordan ministers for foreign affairs chaired in New York a ministerial event on the education and human rights as a tool for promoting religious and tolerance. Let me briefly recall the main proposals formulated on that occasion; to promote on education on human rights as well as inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue. To mobilise the civil society in particular the media to foster better understanding, tolerance, mutual respect and through coexistence in diversity among different religious and cultural communities and finally to define and establish a UN early warning mechanism to detect high risk situations conducive to religious or sectarian violence. We hope that those proposals may be reflected in the final recommendations of this forum and eventually be translated into a preventive action plan to ensure that religious minorities are actually protected and their rights and fundamental freedoms fully respected.

Thank you Madam President.