

6th session of the Forum on Minority Issues

III. Protection of the existence of and prevention of violence against religious minorities

Permanent Mission of the Holy See

Madame chair person, the topic of this forum centres on guaranteeing the rights of religious minorities which is both timely and necessary. (...) related to religious minorities showed that around the world the attainment of such right has been blocked or even has been reduced. Because of some of the most restrictive countries are very populous more than five billion people in 2011 were living in countries with high government restrictions on religion or high social hostilities as well in religion. The branch which falls and religious minorities that is in many parts of the world, that religious minorities struggle merely to survive and their future is tied to the full respect of their rights. Among religious minorities, Christians communities are under special threat, especially in the middle-East where religious minorities have existed for centuries and that developed a fair degree of peaceful coexistence which is now deteriorating. Members of the various Christian communities in Syria, in Egypt, in Iraq, and elsewhere are choosing to exile over remaining in their ancestor lands where they are victims of an (...) violence, threats, and overall increasing discrimination. All religious minorities must be protected by respecting and upholding all the rights inherent in every person. In the experience of a Catholic communities to approach is a proven effective, first the recognition of the dignity of every person and of their equal right and duty as any other citizen, to participate in the social, cultural, political, and economic life, or their country. Secondly, the implementation of the practical steps through education, dialogues, solidarity, to make possible coexistence. A practical aspect of the recognition of our common dignity is provided by the common citizenship that requires the state to prevent any discrimination based on religious conviction and its expression in private or in public others. The state cannot imprison groups of citizens through archaically legal structures, the more often facilitate their exploitation and abuse, rather than their protection. The elimination of all various to full enjoyment of citizenship becomes an urgent responsibility. Accepting the diverse of religious diversity of religious groups should be seen as a normal experience. At the same time, when collective expressions or beliefs are accepted the individual must be free to participate in society on the basis of equal opportunities, duties, and rights. The various recommendations of the independent expert on minority issues are excellent, concrete, and they are all supported. Experience, however, indicates that such recommendations presuppose a modern, western, secular state. On the other hand, the rights of religious minorities, are highly dependent on the way states understand secularity. And therefore, the forum should dedicate special attention to this issue.

Thank you, Madame chairperson.