

Item IV

Italy aligns itself with the statement delivered by (or that will be delivered by) the European Union.

In many interventions yesterday it has been already highlighted how prevention and inclusion of minorities in decision-making process are proven to be effective ways to address violence and atrocity crimes targeted against minorities.

Italy strongly supports the UN early warning mechanisms and believes that particular attention should be given to the religious dimension and to the role that religious leaders can play in preventing the outbreak of conflicts. Today too often religion is exploited to exacerbate tensions and violence, unleashed for other interests or to put in question the existence of minor religious communities. The International Community has to commit itself to prevent such results.

In the context of the cooperation established in 2012 with the Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Adama Dieng, and with the special Adviser for the Responsibility to Protect, Jennifer Welsh, Italy will co-organize on December 11th in New York an event focused on the important role that specific actors can play in preventing and responding to atrocity crimes , namely religious leaders, the media and civil society.

Prevention also means fight against racism and political extremism. These phenomena are present in many societies, as

proven by cases of xenophobia, "hate speech" and intolerance. In our view, young generations education to human rights, as well as promotion of intercultural and inter-religious dialogue are the most effective ways to defuse those threats. *(We strongly believe that Education to human rights contributes to promoting the respect for human dignity and for diversity, to fostering the culture of dialogue and mutual understanding, to strengthening the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms by the institutions and civil society and with respect to minorities. For this reason, we have always supported the campaigns promoted to this scope by the United Nations and other regional organizations, including the Council of Europe).*

Italy also conducts activities to train staff belonging to "law enforcement bodies". I refer in particular to the training activities promoted by the Centre of Excellence for Stability Police Units, established in 2005 in Vicenza, which include specific modules on the promotion of human rights and protection of minorities.

At the political level, we believe that it is necessary to include minorities in the Institutions' decision-making process as a perspective of "rule of law" and not only as emergency measure. Minorities should not only be considered as potential victims of human rights violations, but also as actors in peace building process. Indeed, they should be included in post-conflict mediation and reconciliation process, since inclusiveness is the only way to ensure sustainable peace and development.

Therefore we welcome those recommendations that specifically address all these issues.