

Kurdocide – WATCH Organisation

On the occasion of the 8th session of the Forum on Minority Issues, I would like to speak on behalf of the Kurdocide-Watch organisation. “Thinking, believing, or doubting. Speaking or praying; gathering or staying away.” Such is the feeling of religious minorities in a country where religious freedom is still a sensitive question or even a taboo.

Today more than ever religious diversity and peaceful coexistence between religious minorities are increasingly facing xenophobia, incomprehension and mutual rejection.

The situation of minorities is worsening everywhere in the world. Christians in Egypt, Buddhist Tibetans, Muslim Uighurs in China, everywhere conflicts break out with renewed intensity.

Political crises and armed conflicts in the Middle-East are today the main cause for concern according to writers and political scientists when it comes to religious freedom. While we welcome the uprising of the peoples in the region against dictators, political transitions and conflicts are changing the ethnic and religious demographic map in the region. We are witnessing a general exodus of religious minorities towards neighbouring countries or even Europe when it is possible. In the end, it is the international community, governmental and non-governmental organisations, as well as each and everyone of us who should act and come to the rescue of religious minorities whose life and moral integrity are at risk. In the first place we should protect them from the daily atrocities they face, then we should fight against terrorism and restore order in their country.

In Kurdistan, Iraq, and Syria, the terrorist group DAESH wishes to justify with religious arguments its policy of terror and rape. According to the young female victims who were able to escape from them, the terrorists considered that raping a non-Muslim woman was not at all reprehensible. Testimonies collected by the New York Times are horrific and reveal the state of a group that justifies the worst forms of abuse with its interpretation of religion. The first testimony is from a young Yezidi girl of 12 years old who fell into the hands of one member of the terrorist organisation in Iraq. She told her ordeal and specified that her aggressor insisted particularly on the fact that what he was doing was not at all a “sin” as she was not a Muslim.

Since then, the young girl managed to escape after 11 months in captivity. Yet other women gave the same testimony. Some tell about members of DAESH who are convinced that raping a non-Muslim woman would bring them closer to God. All the 21 testimonies of women who managed to escape from the Islamic State collected by the American newspaper tell about the institutionalisation of rape by the group. Illicit rape culture has indeed become an important part of the culture of DAESH who created a real “economy” of female sexual slaves. This might even explain why the terrorist movement is attractive to some men coming from a conservative cultural background that prohibits any sexual relation before marriage. Nearly 5000 women and girls of the Yezidis sect have been kidnapped by Daesh in August 2014. This way, the terrorist group has organised a real system of sexual slavery that goes even so far as to conclude contracts of sale before the tribunals. One year after these abductions, and despite several escapes, there might still be at least 3000 who are still detained. 165 dollars is the price for a child, according to Daesh's price catalogue for female sexual slaves.

Long live religious tolerance and the freedom to believe, think, and pray.

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