

Discourse Center,

Thank you, Madame President. Dear Ladies and Gentlemen. I come from Iran, a country with an ancient heritage and a diverse cultural fabric, which has long served as a cradle of civilizations and religions. The historical presence of the Zoroastrians, Christians, Jews and Muslims, or Sunnis and Shiites, is shaping the cultural identity of this country, bears witness to the deep-rooted traditions of the coexistence. In the framework of national, legal and constitutional principles the rights and freedoms of recognized religious minority communities are formally acknowledged in Iran. These communities enjoy the legal authority to conduct religious practices freely in their dedicated places of worship. Moreover, each of these religious communities is guaranteed dedicated representation in the Iranian Parliament. Dear Madame Chair, Discourse Center, as a non-governmental organization affirms that any attempt to provoke division or instrumentalize ethnic and religious diversity in Iran runs counter to the internationally recognized human rights norms. The people of Iran are keenly aware that the longstanding culture of coexistence among the Abrahamic faiths (?) represents a valuable resource for enhancing dialogue, building mutual trust, and promoting innovative approaches to the protection of religious minority rights. We firmly believe that the acceptance of and respect for the other constitutes the foundation of sustainable peace and harmonious coexistence in every society. Thank you very much for your attention.