

Sikh Union Italy

Mr. President, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, it's a profound honor to be in the distinguished institution of the UN as a young Italian Sikh and a delegate of the Sikh Union of Italy, to witness the vitality of our faith, Sikhism, and our commitment as an integrated minority within the Italian and European structure. We are a community of honest workers whose labor, especially in agriculture, has contributed to the national economy for decades. A sense of duty that was also expressed in the sacrifice of Sikh soldiers who fought for the freedom alongside the allies in the world wars. Our young Sikhs are integrated into universities and work, and our faith translates into equality, service for all, through the (...) and solidarity, providing support to local communities, especially national emergencies. Yet, despite this full and loyal integration, our religion has not yet been legally recognized in Italy. As others do it to a system of recognitions which is not optimum (?). The lack of recognition has direct consequences. For example, legal uncertainty regarding the obligation to wear the turban, the star and to carry the Kirpan. Creating practical difficulties in assessing professions, such as police forces. Furthermore, the guarantee of spiritual assistance in hospitals and prison is lacking, and civil law issues regarding marriages and burial priests. I conclude with an appeal to the Special Rapporteur by saying that full religious freedom is the measure of a nation's democratic maturity. Help us take this essential step toward a fairer and more equitable society for all. Thank you for your attention.