

2015 OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting – Working Session 15

Recommendations by Dr. Mattia F. Ferrero Co-ordinator of the **“Giuseppe Dossetti” Observatory for Religious Tolerance and Freedom** (Italy)

To the Participating States

Participating States are urged to:

- benefit from the Guidelines on the Legal Personality of Religious or Belief Communities in drafting and reviewing legislation pertaining to registration of religious communities.
- engage in consultations with religious communities in order to adopt anti-discrimination laws which do not violate the autonomy and self-organization of the religious communities.
- foster the participation of religious communities in public life and welcome the interventions in the public debate of the religious leaders.
- promote a dialogue between the representatives of the religious communities that are building a new place of worship and the religious communities historically present in the places in order to foster a climate of mutual tolerance and respect between believers of different communities.
- return to religious communities the place of worship which were confiscated by public authorities, returning them to the original owner instead allocating to other religious communities.
- adopt legislation and zoning laws which prohibits zoning of place of worship for different use than the original.
- guarantee the right to wear religious symbols and attire in public spaces, which is encompassed by the freedom of religion or belief.
- guarantee the conscientious objection not only to the compulsory military service but also in relation to all morally sensitive questions.
- not force children to a compulsory religious or ethical teaching which may be not consistent with the convictions of the children’s parents, providing for this case non-discriminatory opt-out possibilities.
- request the assistance of the OSCE/ODIHR in reviewing or drafting legislation pertaining freedom of religion or belief.
- mainstream freedom of religion or belief in their foreign policies.

To the OSCE/ODIHR

The OSCE/ODIHR is called upon to:

- raise awareness on the positive contribution of the religions to the building and the well-being of our democratic societies.
- assist – in cooperation with the Advisory Panel of Experts on Freedom of Religion or Belief – the participating States in reviewing or drafting legislation pertaining freedom of religion or belief in order to guarantee (a) that the liberty of parents to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions is fully respected and (b) that the participating States provide non-discriminatory opt-out possibilities that would accommodate the wishes of parents.
- assist – in cooperation with the Advisory Panel of Experts on Freedom of Religion or Belief – the participating States in reviewing or drafting legislation pertaining freedom of religion or belief in order to guarantee the right to conscientious objection in all morally sensitive questions, providing that the rights of others to be free from discrimination are respected and that the access

to lawful services is guaranteed.

To the OSCE Representative on the Freedom of the Media

The OSCE Representative on the Freedom of the Media is called upon to:

- provide – in close cooperation with the OSCE-ODIHR and the Advisory Panel of Experts on Freedom of Religion or Belief – guidelines for voluntary professional standards and self-regulation of the media aimed to (i) promote knowledge and understanding of religions, (ii) give a fair and accurate account of religious beliefs, and (iii) ensure that members of religious communities are given the chance to express their own views on the media.

To the OSCE Field Mission

The OSCE Field Mission are urged to:

- mainstream freedom of religion or belief in their programs and activities.