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Working session 6: Freedom of religion or belief

STATEMENT BY MAGDALENA KORZEKWA

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As CitizenGo we work for the service of the society so that the dignity of the human person and the rights inherent to it are respected in all areas. We are a grassroots group dedicated to activism and citizen's mobilization with universal values; we defend the values of the life, the family and liberty.

Dear Governments and all Participants!

Tolerance without limits is dangerous. Tolerance, in regards to morality and Christianity, can lead to the invasion of someone's conscience, which is against religious freedom.

One example: A married couple from Great Britain, owners of some rooms which they rented to tourists, had a few double-bedded rooms only intended for occupation by married couples, and they made this clear on their hotel's website. This rule was in accord with their religion and conscience. By abiding with this rule, the married couple refused to rent one of these rooms to a homosexual couple, and – in consequence – The Hotel owners were sued by these individuals. The court sentenced them to 3600 £ of redress¹. This is an easy example, where people were not allowed to behave according to their Christian beliefs. I can give you more examples from other countries. In the USA, a Christian photographer refused a request to take photos of a homosexual ceremony, similar to a "wedding", because it was against their religious persuasion. The court ruled that this was discrimination. This means that, according to the court, this person should have complied with the request, even though it was against their religion and morality².

These examples show us that unlimited tolerance can bring us so far as to force our citizens into doing something that is directly against their religious beliefs. Unlimited tolerance can lead us to totalitarianism. So please, place your attention on

¹ Bull and Bull v. Hall and Preddy and Hall [2012] EWCA Civ 83.

² Case Wilcock v. Elane Photography (2008) HRD nr 06-12-20-0685,
<http://www.adfmedia.org/News/PRDetail/5537>.

all documents and rulings of the courts, which claim tolerance as their foundation. Tolerance is only a value when we can use it to be reasonably true to the values of others: This includes the historically established freedom of religion or belief, the freedom of conscience and – of course – the dignity of every person.

Recommendations:

- Defend the respect of the human right of religious belief, which is unable to exist with unlimited tolerance;
- Be critical of legal documents and the rulings of the courts, which include in their justification unlimited tolerance without considering the human values they violate.