



Set My People Free

Thursday 19 September 2019

Working session 7: Fundamental Freedom I, including freedom of thought conscience, religion or belief

Encouraging news for freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief.
In July this year 27 countries (20 OSCE states) signed the Ministerial to Advance Religious Freedom Statement on Blasphemy and Apostasy Laws.

Set My People Free thanks these states and commends them for their stand for the freedom thought, conscience, religion or belief and expression, the freedom of the individual to choose a faith, practice a faith, change their religion, not have a religion, tell others about their beliefs and practices, or openly debate and discuss aspects of faith or belief.

The statement calls on governments that utilise apostasy and blasphemy laws to free any individuals imprisoned on such grounds, and to repeal blasphemy, apostasy, and other laws that impede the exercise of freedoms of expression and religion or belief in a manner inconsistent with international law.

Set My People Free would like more countries to sign this statement, as this is basic for freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief. Apostasy and blasphemy laws strip the individual from his/her basics rights.

Since 2010 Set My People Free has been working to see these laws abolished in Islamic states, as they impact about 1.3 billion individuals, who do not have the freedom to leave Islam. In 13 states anyone leaving Islam face death sentence and in other 12 states leaving Islam is criminalised. The individual has no right to exist legally as an ex-muslim.

Apostasy laws are ridiculous because if your faith does not come from your heart your faith will not be accepted by God. Because "Going to Paradise is not compulsory" as I once wrote in an Egyptian newspaper.

Blasphemy is also not logical as any challenge to the authenticity of Islam, its laws or prophet is considered hate speech (blasphemy). If I say: "I do not believe in Mohamed as a prophet from God" then I am accused of blasphemy. This is ridiculous because if I believe that, then I am a muslim but I am not.

Without freedom to change belief there is no religious freedom.

Recommendations:

Sign the Ministerial to Advance Religious Freedom Statement on Blasphemy and Apostasy Laws. See [link](#)

Call on governments that utilise apostasy and blasphemy laws to free any individuals imprisoned on such grounds, and to repeal blasphemy, apostasy, and other laws that impede the exercise of freedoms of expression and religion or belief, in a manner consistent with international law.

Participate in the Event: Set My People Free 2020, in Geneva March 16-18, 2020 See [link](#)

Kamal Fahmi

International Executive Director

Set My People Free

Tel. 0046 703419766

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