FORUM: Human Rights Council

QUESTION OF: Measures to protect religious diversity

MAIN SUBMITTER: Benin

CO-SUBMITTERS: Albania, Colombia, Croatia, Ethiopia, France, Georgia, Haiti, India, Interpol, Israel, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Netherlands, Rwanda, Senegal, South Sudan , Sri Lanka and United Kingdom

THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL,

*Guided* *by* Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that “Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance”,

*Deeply* *concerned* by the number of the conflicts caused by the religious intolerance in the 20th century,

*Disturbed* by the atrocities that took place during the Second Sudanese Civil War, which took lives of more than 2 million people,

*Noting* with concern the lack of international attempts to address the proliferation of religious intolerance among people, particularly youth,

*Alarmed* by the actions of religious extremist groups and lack of means to address this issue,

*Noting* with regret the persecutions of non-Islamic people in the Middle East by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS), the Shia and Sunni conflict and the growing anti-Islam communities in the Western World, such as the Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the Occident (Pegida),

*Viewing* with appreciation the previous attempts to solve the problem by the United Nations (UN) and all Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) that contributed,

1. Encourages all member states that have not signed and ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to do so and use it as a basis of addressing the issue of religious diversity;
2. Requests that appropriate sanctions be imposed on member states that refuse to sign the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and/or do not follow the articles stated there;
3. Further requests the creation of a UN body, United Nations Protection of Religious Diversity (UNPRD) which aims to set up awareness campaigns in conjunction with relevant NGOs and United Nations Organisations (UNOs) that focus on awareness in an effort to protect religious diversity by:
   1. Educating the population through a public awareness campaign by means such as but not limited to:
4. leaflets handed out by volunteers,
5. billboards and posters hung in prominent places
   1. integrating the issue and history of religion into school lessons;
6. Calls for the UN to introduce incentives for nations that succeed to protect religious diversity which would include but not be limited to:
   1. subsidization of resources such as:
      1. natural resources
      2. sustainable energy
   2. financial incentives, such as paying off debts
   3. facilities and aid such as:
      1. health care centers
      2. infrastructure;
7. Further calls for the UN to introduce economic penalties for nations that fail to accept and have religious equality, which would include, but not be limited to:
   1. taxes
   2. political sanctions
   3. financial sanctions and asset restrictions
   4. travel bans and restrictions;
8. Urges nations to set up awareness campaigns and issue legislation in conjunction with relevant NGOs and UNOs, such as UNPRD that focuses on awareness in an effort to eliminate religious disparity through the means of education, by:
   1. integrating the issue into school lessons
   2. creating a curriculum that enforces and promotes religious equality
   3. educating the community on the benefits of religious diversity
   4. advertisement through means of social media in order to reach a larger audience on the issue of religious diversity
   5. creating more multicultural schools, enhancing children’s learning about cultures and religions;
9. Suggests that ‘neutral’ zones are created in regions of conflict where parties can collaborate and participate in recreational activities and which will be funded, monitored and managed by the UNPRD;
10. Asks for governments from all member states to permit the building of places of worship of any official religion, thereby enabling different cultures to feel welcomed where-ever they are, even if they are not located in their home country where their belief thrives most;
11. Calls upon the 6th Committee of General Assembly to discuss the reasonable legality of religious expression in so far as it does not violate crucial law of modern states;
12. Endorses a periodical gathering every four months of national and religious leaders to discuss global and national religious issues as well as updates on the situation;
13. Wishes to remain seized on the matter.