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Islam, Islamism and Islamophobia

Written question No. 596 to the Committee of Ministers

by Mr Mogens JENSEN, Denmark, Socialist Group

The Parliamentary Assembly adopted unanimously [Resolution 1743 \(2010\)](#) and [Recommendation 1927 \(2010\)](#) on Islam, Islamism and Islamophobia on 23 May 2010.

In its reply of 16 March 2011, the Committee of Ministers states that “increased action is required by the Council of Europe, to ensure freedom of thought, conscience and religion while combating religious intolerance and discrimination”. However, the Committee of Ministers puts this statement under the condition that it is “subject to available funding”.

[Recommendation 1927 \(2010\)](#) recommended, *inter alia*, that the Committee of Ministers “call on Switzerland to enact a moratorium on, and to repeal as soon as possible, its general prohibition on the construction of minarets for mosques, which discriminates against Muslim communities under Articles 9 and 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights”, and “call on member states not to establish a general ban on full veiling or other religious or special clothing”. However, the reply by the Committee of Ministers remains silent on those two issues.

[Recommendation 1927 \(2010\)](#) recommended that the Committee of Ministers “consider opening the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) to participation by non-member states, in particular from North Africa, the Middle East and Eurasia”. The Committee of Ministers replies that it was difficult to imagine how a country which was not a party to the European Convention on Human Rights and was not bound by the case law of the European Court of Human Rights could be properly monitored by ECRI. However, under Article 5 of the Statute of ECRI, the Holy See is invited to be represented in ECRI without the right to vote. The latter modus could be enlarged to all observer states or other non-member states.

Therefore, Mr Jensen,

To ask the Committee of Ministers:

1. The Committee of Ministers is responsible for the intergovernmental work programme and the Council of Europe budget. If the Committee of Ministers recognised that increased action is required in this field, should it not provide additional funding for concrete action?
2. How does the Committee of Ministers involve competent ministries in member states, especially ministries for culture, education and justice, when deciding on Council of Europe action in this field?
3. What is the position of the Committee of Ministers on the absolute ban of minarets under the Swiss Constitution and on legislative initiatives in member states banning the full veil for women?
4. Would the Committee of Ministers consider revising the Statute of ECRI in order to enable other non member states to be invited to be represented in ECRI without the right to vote?

