



Doc. 13157
22 April 2013

Violence against religious communities

Amendment¹ No. 1

In the draft resolution, after paragraph 5, insert the following paragraph:

"Caricatures and films ridiculing or insulting a religion is not freedom of expression but quite the contrary an indication of intolerance and xenophobia. The aim is to provoke the believers of that religion. These types of acts do not contribute to world peace or the world's intellectual heritage, do not add anything positive to any society except for segregation and hurt. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe calls on all member states to ensure respect for all religious and sacred symbols, religious figures, holy books, Prophets and God, as the opposite deeply hurts the devout believers of a religion, who can believe that their identity and community is being victimized if their religion or its sacred symbols are subjected to public ridicule or vilification. This offence should be considered within the framework of 'hate crimes'."

Explanatory note

The European Court of Human Rights in a judgement (case of I.A. v. Turkey, Application no. 42571/98 of 13 September 2005) has come to the decision that the freedom of expression was not violated by the conviction of a book publisher for publishing insults against "God, Religion, the Prophet and the Holly Book". The Court stresses that a distinction is to be made between "provocative" opinions or abusive attacks on one's religion and freedom of expression.

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1. 2013 - Second part-session

