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Compatibility of the European Convention on Human Rights and the Cairo Declaration

Reply¹ to the Written question No. 651 (Doc. 13412)
Committee of Ministers

1. As it already had the opportunity to underline, in particular in its Declaration of 1 July 2009 on human rights in culturally diverse societies, the Committee of Ministers attaches the highest importance to the principle according to which all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated. It is in the light of this principle that, in this declaration, the Committee of Ministers stressed “the obligation for member States, as the ultimate guarantors of the principle of pluralism, to secure everyone’s effective enjoyment of human rights, especially those enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights” and indicated that “it is indispensable to regard respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms as a common basis for all: no cultural, religious or other practices or traditions can be invoked to prevent any individual from exercising his or her basic rights or from participating actively in society, nor shall anyone’s rights be unduly restricted on account of their religious or cultural practices”.
2. The Committee of Ministers’ prerogatives, with respect to the judgments of the European Court, are defined in Article 46 of the European Convention on Human Rights. The Committee would recall, however, that States Parties are legally bound to comply with their Convention obligations, notwithstanding any other legal instruments to which they might decide to accede within the framework of other international organisations.
3. The Committee of Ministers underlines the importance of working in favour of intercultural dialogue, including its interreligious dimension. As indicated in the White Paper “Living Together As Equals in Dignity”, launched at the 118th Ministerial Session, “the task of living together amid growing cultural diversity while respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms has become one of the major demands of our times and is set to remain relevant for many years to come”.

1. Adopted at the 1194th meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies (12 March 2014).

