

Good morning ladies and gentlemen,

My name is Yasser Louati and I am the Spokesperson for the CCIF, Collective Against Islamophobia in France and I thank the OSCE ODHIR office for its remarkable work.

According to data collected by the CCIF six months after the January terrorist attacks in Paris, anti muslim attacks rose en by 23.5% in comparison to the same period last year. The attacks are again dominated by discriminations but new kinds have been recorded such as the dragging of primary school children to police stations, the destruction of Mosques and even the killing of people, in total impunity.

Structural discriminations against muslims have again been confirmed by our own studies and by academics. These discriminations are happening in schools, places of work, public transportation and hospitals, thus de facto excluding it from the rest of society.

The CCIF welcomes the recognition of islamophobia by French President Mr Francois Hollande and the will shown by Minister of Interior Mr Bernard Cazeneuve to address the issue, but as reported by partner organisations in the OSCE region, namely Belgium, the UK or Germany, there is a wide gap between public declarations and their execution on the field.

We call upon OSCE and its member states to recognize islamophobia as it is, a hate fueled ideology threatening social cohesion.

We call upon OSCE member states to support victims of discriminations by:

- 1) enforcing their right to file charges
- 2) for civil servants to accept them
- 3) and for the justice system to consider islamophobia as an aggravating factor

My country can proudly speak of its notion of secularism, Laïcité. But this law has been transformed from granting freedom of religion to denying the right for Muslims and others communities to practice their faith.

We cannot stress enough the need to include islamophobia in government statistics on hate crimes and discriminations. Should the need arise, the CCIF is ready to work with OSCE governments to share its expertise.