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Written Statement
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On the 8th-9th of September in Jerusalem the 2nd Congress of World Christian Council took place, where the members of the World Christian Council (WCC) discussed issues of freedom of conscience and belief in the countries with a large Russian-speaking population.

Participants of the 2nd WCC Congress made a special note regarding the decreasing of freedom of conscience and belief in the countries of OSCE region. The countries that were mostly mentioned Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Belarus, Uzbekistan, Mongolia and Germany.

For several years there has been a conflict in Belarus, where officials are trying to take a building from New Life Church in Minsk, where about 1000 believers gather together. In August 2009 Bishop Vyacheslav Goncharenko received a document – decision of the Court, that says that New Life Church building is belonging now to the City Administration. The Church is offered to take a compensation of 13,000\$. This amount of money is not enough even to buy a little apartment in Belarus.

In Kyrgyzstan recently a new law was approved that forbids any foreign people make any missionary activity without registration. They also have general understanding of traditional religions, according to their understanding, Evangelical churches are not traditional, so they can be limited in their rights. Bishop Vasily Kuzin has expressed his special concern regarding pressure against his churches of Jesus Christ all over Kyrgyzia.

In Kazakhstan there is violation of human rights of Grace Church and its senior Bishop Igor Kim. Grace Church building was searched, its parishioners were questioned and frightened by policemen. Their Church building in Almaty city was confiscated.

In Germany there is a mass media campaign against Russian-speaking evangelical churches, and particular “Generation of Faith” Church in Duisburg. The main reason for their persecution is that the church mainly consist of people of national minority – Russian-speaking Germans.

In Mongolia they have a system of annual re-registration for religious Christian organizations. As Pastor Ruslan Andreichenko informed, General Secretary for Mongolian Evangelical Alliance Bishop Vanlu Dugerma wrote an Open letter to the President of Mongolia where he expressed indignation of Christian Mongolian community. Tens of evangelical churches were closed already because of this law, as a result of this thousands of Evangelical believers can no longer gather together.

In Russia monitoring of freedom of conscience and belief has been going on for many years already. Compared to other countries situations, Russia in the area of human rights of Christians has improved. Russian Government declares tolerance towards Evangelical churches and there positive changes are visible.

But the activity of the Ministry of Justice of Russia makes a special concern among believers in Russia.

This year they founded an Board of Expertise under the Ministry of Justice of Russia. It is led by Mr. Alexander Dvorkin and his team, they have stired up religious hatred in Russian society for many years. This Board was given additional authority to exercise activity of religious organizations, what brings groundless inspections among Evangelical churches, pressure and forcing religious associations to re-register again.

Association of Christian Churches “Union of Christians”, Association “Charisma” and other religious associations and unions were under pressure with many different inspections, what limited the right of believers to create and function Christian unions and associations and cooperation between churches inside of these unions.

Such violations of human rights of Evangelical believers became real in these countries mentioned because, it is not a priority in the internal policy of these countries that citizens have freedom of belief. These Government structures do not provide rights to believers and religious organizations in compliance with internal and international law.

Participants of the 2nd Congress of the World Christian Council consider open discussions during HDIM meetings as a very important factor for the improvement of the condition of believers and religious organizations in their countries, because Organization for Security and cooperation in Europe is the recognized authority in the process of development of democratic values, human rights and freedom of beliefs.