

Laszlo Lange, representing Scientologists Taking Action Against Discrimination,  
Hungary

Distinguished Panel, distinguished Participants,

In the Annotated Agenda of this session there was a question raised:

How does freedom of religion or belief facilitate peace and security?

Well, history has proven for us that any attempt to suppress the freedom of religion or belief eventually resulted in violence either from the side of the suppressed minorities or the ruling power. Thus, the contrary must be true.

We could see in the in Hungarian history that right after communism collapsed the thirst for freedom was so big in Hungary that the Parliament voted for one of the most simple law on freedom of religion and churches and that led to 20 years of peace and tolerance in the field of religions and it contributed also to security in general in Hungary.

Apart from very occasional political statements there were no instances of religious intolerance.

With the new law on Churches in 2011 political and social debates started to emerge and a number of international bodies had to interfere like the Venice committee or the European Court of Human Rights. Before that Hungary wasn't in focus of OSCE or the UN Special Rapporteur or the US State Department's Annual reports as far as religious freedom is concerned. But now we are here.

Please don't take us wrong, we do love our country and we do believe that the efforts of the Hungarian Government to help prosecuted Christians is exemplary as well as the programs to support families and safeguard Christian values.

As our Prime Minister stated on a conference in Hungarian Parliament last week, Christian freedom means that we don't do to others what we wouldn't like them to do to us.

We only ask to have the same principle applied onto minority religions also and start a dialogue with them so peace and security can be re-installed to Hungary from this aspect.

Thank you very much.