

Atheist Ireland contribution to Working Session 11

3 pm to 6 pm Monday 26 September

Tolerance and non-discrimination

Atheist Ireland supports the OSCE in specifically addressing discrimination and prejudice-motivated crime against Jews, Muslims, Christians and members of other religions.

We recommend that you also specifically address such discrimination against atheists.

We further recommend that you tackle prejudice-motivated crime against ex-Muslim atheists, and against Ahmadiyya Muslims.

Atheist Ireland supports the new Ex-Muslims of Ireland group, one of whose members has already received an Islamist death threat for being an apostate.

These are not idle threats. Recently in Scotland, a Sunni Muslim murdered an Ahmadi shopkeeper, because of his religious beliefs.

We recommend that genitally mutilating girls, and forcing women to wear specific clothing, be treated as prejudice-motivated crimes based on religion and gender.

We recommend that the OSCE promotes the separation of the State from either religion or atheism, as the foundation of protecting everybody equally.

Atheist Ireland campaigns for this type of secularism with the Evangelical Alliance of Ireland and the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Ireland.

But The Irish State claims that it is constitutionally obliged (not merely permitted, but obliged) to allow religious discrimination, in order to buttress religion.

The chairs of both major UN Human Rights Committees have strongly criticised Ireland about this.

The President, judges and Prime Minister all have to swear religious oaths.

We have a law against blasphemy, which Islamic States cite at the United Nations to try to spread their laws against defamation of religion.

Nine different sets of United Nations and Council of Europe committees have concluded that Irish schools breach the human rights of atheist and minority faith children, families and teachers.

These include very fundamental human rights like freedom of religion and belief, freedom from discrimination, equality before the law, and no effective remedy.

We recommend that Ireland removes the blasphemy law and religious oaths, and obliges publicly funded schools to deliver all services, including employment, state curriculum and enrolment, in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner, and with no religious discrimination of any kind.