

14 September 2018



European Federation of Centres of Research and Information on Cults and Sects
Participant in the Fundamental Rights Platform of the European Union since 2010
NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations since
2009
INGO with participatory status at the Council of Europe since 2005
<http://fecris.org>

**Statement by the European Federation of Centres of Research and Information on Cults
and Sects**

at

Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 2018

OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)
10 September - 21 September 2018
Warsaw, Poland

**Working Session 6 13/14 September 2018 – “Combating intolerance and
discrimination based on religion and belief”**

FECRIS and the European associations of defense of victims of undue influence by abusive groups are often targeted by smear campaigns insisting on the alleged threat against religious freedom represented by our associations.

FECRIS is an NGO with participatory status with the Council of Europe since 2005.

These same people continuously accusing FECRIS of being “freedom destroyer activists” have fought against our organization, using unfair means to prevent the granting of our status. Several well-informed journalists reported these facts.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, in REC 1697 (2005), stated that the allegations against FECRIS to prevent the attribution of status were not justified.

The same group of people is relentlessly carrying on defamation campaigns against our organization, within institutions such as the Council of Europe, the UN in Geneva and the EU in which FECRIS is represented and respects the charters and fundamental rights.

Such accusations are made by organizations sometimes in collusion with very controversial sects. The paradox lies there.

Is denouncing closed groups, be they religious, for having committed abuse on children, an infringement on freedom of belief?

To denounce the attacks on freedom of conscience made by such groups towards individuals, to attract attention on the abuse to which they are subjected, is that undermining beliefs?

It is the criminal practices of these groups that FECRIS denounces in democratic countries because these practices harm not only citizens but through them the fundamental principles underlying democracy.

Consider who is anti-democratic, who broadcasts fake news, false news?

The participatory status of FECRIS with the Council of Europe has been renewed recently, as has the special ECOSOC status of our organization with the U.N. Is not this the proof of their confidence?

Once again FECRIS asks the representatives of the governments that make up this honorable assembly not to be mistaken in their judgment and attracts your institution's attention on the justification of the fight that FECRIS is waging.

Thank you