

# ***Human Rights Without Frontiers Int'l***

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## **OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting**

**Warsaw, Thursday 13 September 2018**

### **Working Session 6 : Combating intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief, including against Christians, Muslims and members of other religions, and combating anti-Semitism**

#### **Combating Discrimination Against The Church of Almighty God in the OSCE Space**

For centuries, the United States and Canada have provided asylum to people from other countries fleeing from religious persecution, intolerance and discrimination. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, North America and Europe opened their doors to Armenians and other Christians who were victims of genocide by the Ottoman Empire but also to Christians who were persecuted in Communist countries. In the last few decades, the United States, Canada and EU countries have granted political asylum to Christians fleeing from state repression and social hostility in Muslim majority countries.

In the last few years, an increasing number of believers of all faiths who are persecuted by the Chinese Communist Party have been knocking on the doors of democratic countries and requesting their protection. Unfortunately, they have massively been denied political asylum because the political authorities and the judiciary in OSCE Participating States such as the United States, Canada and EU countries, are unaware of the magnitude and intensity of the religious persecution in China. The main reason is that the state institutions in charge of their requests for asylum in the OSCE space are ignorant about the religious groups to which they belong or are misled by the anti-religious propaganda and the fake news spread around the world by the Chinese Communist Party.

Several thousands of believers from The Church of Almighty, a new religious movement in China, which is dramatically persecuted in that country, have been denied political asylum in the OSCE space and are at risk of being deported back to China where they will be arrested,

tortured and sentenced to heavy prison terms as soon as they arrive. A number of those believers have been arrested by the police in member states of the European Union and detained in prison-like facilities while anxiously waiting to be expelled to China.

As of 1 September, the situation of believers from The Church of Almighty God was as follows:

In France, 444 applications, 419 rejection decisions (94%) and 186 departure orders (44%)

In The Netherlands, 48 applications, 31 rejection decisions (64%) and 31 departure orders (100%)

In Switzerland, 33 applications, 29 rejection decisions (88%) and 24 departure orders (83%)

In Belgium, 12 applications, 10 rejection decisions (83%) and 10 departure orders (100%)

In Canada, 223 applications, 24 rejection decisions (11%) and 5 departure orders (21%)

In Sweden, 9 applications, 2 rejection decisions (22%) and 2 departure orders (100%).

In Europe, Austria, the Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain and the UK have also rejected a lot of applications for political asylum introduced by members of The Church of Almighty God.

Many cases are still pending in these countries but the number of positive decisions has been very small, except outside Europe: New Zealand (77%) and Canada (74%).

In Germany, a 27-year old Chinese girl, ZHAO XUELIANG was deported back to China on the last day of August despite the support of the Red Cross and the German Evangelical Church. All contacts have been interrupted since she arrived at the airport in Beijing. Her whereabouts are unknown.

Moreover, in South Korea, where there have been 960 applications there has not been any positive decision at all but 64% of requests for asylum were rejected and 183 people received a departure order.

## **Recommendations**

Considering that the discriminatory treatment of applications for asylum introduced by members of The Church of Almighty God in a number of Participating States of the OSCE is based either on ignorance about that religious community or the fake news spread by the Chinese Communist Party to discredit the movement,

Considering that thousands of members of The Church of Almighty are prison in China,

Considering that over 1700 members of this religious community have been denied political asylum and are under threat of being sent back to the country where they were persecuted,

*Human Rights Without Frontiers* recommends to the state agencies of the OSCE Participating States dealing with applications for asylum from this religious community;

To visit our online database of religious prisoners around the world in which we have documented 760 cases of prisoners of that religious minority: <http://hrwf.eu>;

To consult the research works of American and European scholars in religious studies online: [https://cesnur.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/tjoc\\_2\\_1\\_full\\_issue.pdf](https://cesnur.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/tjoc_2_1_full_issue.pdf)

To consult the online submissions of numerous NGOs to the upcoming UPR of China later this year and the brochure “Tortured to Death”: <http://hrwf.eu/forb/our-reports/>

before taking a decision concerning the applications for political asylum.

We can provide a printed copy of these documents at this conference.

## ANNEX

	Total number of applications	Asylum Granted	Asylum Rejected	Departure Order	Deported
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	205	7	32	0	0
<b>AUSTRIA</b>	9	2	6	0	0
<b>BELGIUM</b>	11	0	10	10	0
<b>CANADA</b>	223	165	24	5	3
<b>CZECH REP.</b>	42	3	39	0	0
<b>FINLAND</b>	39	9	30	0	0
<b>FRANCE</b>	444	15	419	186	0
<b>GERMANY</b>	300	40	255	1	2
<b>GREECE</b>	48	3	16	0	0
<b>ITALY</b>	702	61	261	0	0
<b>JAPAN</b>	265	0	22	0	0
<b>NETHERLANDS</b>	48	14	31	31	0
<b>NEW ZEALAND</b>	54	42	0	0	0
<b>PORTUGAL</b>	9	0	6	0	0
<b>SAIPAN</b>	187	11	0	0	0
<b>SOUTH KOREA</b>	960	0	614	183	0
<b>SPAIN</b>	294	0	0	0	0
<b>SWEDEN</b>	9	6	2	2	1
<b>SWITZERLAND</b>	33	1	29	24	3
<b>UNITED KINGDOM</b>	1	1	0	0	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>3883</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>1796</b>	<b>442</b>	<b>9</b>

10%      45%      25%

**Situation as of 1 September 2018**