

De Kerk Van Almachtige God

(The Church of Almighty God)

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OSCE Human

Dimension

Implementation Meeting

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Working Session 9: Humanitarian issues and other commitments,

Chinese religious refugees denied political asylum in France

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to thank OSCE for giving me the chance to speak here on behalf of The Church of Almighty God (CAG) asylum seekers in France.

The Church of Almighty God, a Christian new religious movement founded in China, has been subjected to the brutal suppression and persecution by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) since its founding, which has resulted in at least 110 well-documented cases of deaths. The death toll keeps rising. Some organ harvesting cases have been recorded by NGOs. In 2018 alone, more than 10,000 CAG Christians were arrested. Under the brutal persecution, several thousands of CAG Christians fled to seek asylum overseas. We have appealed to the OSCE for three years about the precarious situations of CAG Christians in France whose asylum applications have been rejected. However, the rate of asylum approval remains very low, and the number of CAG asylum seekers having received the departure orders continues to increase. Comparing to the approval rate 100% in New Zealand and 94.9% in Finland, it is only 8.6% in France. Among 444 applicants there, 406 are rejected, and 236 have received the departure orders.

There have been several heartrending cases in France that the failed asylum seekers were caught to have no legal residency by police and then taken to an administrative retention centre awaiting deportation. In January 2018, two CAG Christians were detained, and the police demanded repatriation of them with intransigence. Despite the vigorous support of human rights organizations, lawyers and local priests, they were detained for 45 days, the legal limit in place at that time. Not only this, but also the police issued departure orders to them. Another unfortunate incident occurred to a brother in this April.

For those Christians whose asylum applications have been rejected, their escape from China cannot protect them from fear. Now they don't dare to go outside or take the subway. Their daily life has been badly affected.

In recent years, the human rights community in the U.S. has noted the CCP's persecution of the CAG. Both the U.S. State Department and the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, in their respective 2019 reports, referred to the planned and organizational persecution and extrajudicial executions of the CAG Christians in China. It is obvious that the CAG Christians fleeing China remain in imminent danger. Once they are deported, they will be arrested and persecuted.

Recommandations

We respectfully urge the France authorities to abide by the principle of non-refoulement and grant the CAG Christians asylum status. None of them commits any crime in France. Meanwhile, we call for the support of OSCE to guarantee our basic human rights in France and other member states.