

Working session 10: Tolerance and non-discrimination II, 5 October am.

Recommendation of the European Humanist Federation

Whereas freedom of religion or belief is to be considered in the more general context of tolerance and non-discrimination,

Whereas hate language targeted at a given group of individuals is a breeding ground for hate crimes,

Whereas in some countries the representatives of a prevailing religion or belief (apart from enjoying huge privileges which in themselves discriminate against others' religions or beliefs) are usually able to exercise a considerable influence on social and political life,

Whereas the progress made towards greater tolerance between religions is to be commended BUT a growing intolerance of the non-religious seems to emerge in the language used by some religious representatives,

the European Humanist Federation recommends that

all those in positions of influence and especially religious leaders refrain from using disparaging and dehumanising language with respect to people of different religions or beliefs and exercise their influence in a manner conducive to dialogue and social cohesion.

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Encyclical Caritas in Veritate of the Supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI, June 2009

“29. Yet it should be added that, as well as religious fanaticism that in some contexts impedes the exercise of the right to religious freedom, so too the deliberate promotion of religious indifference or practical atheism on the part of many countries obstructs the requirements for the development of peoples, depriving them of spiritual and human resources”.

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“78. Without God man neither knows which way to go, nor even understands who he is.... On the other hand, ideological rejection of God and an atheism of indifference, oblivious to the Creator and at risk of becoming equally oblivious to human values, constitute some of the chief obstacles to development today. A humanism which excludes God is an inhuman humanism.”

