

CCIF

COMITÉ CONTRE L'ISLAMOPHOBIE

29-30TH JULY 2010 / COMMITTEE AGAINST ISLAMOPHOBIA IN FRANCE

We grew up with the idea that France was the country of human rights.

It turns out that it depends who's rights are at stake.

We believed that our security, our integrity and our dignity were guaranteed by our country, as any other citizen.

We cherished the hope that France would be for us a society of equal rights and equal opportunities, giving every one of us the chance of a better life, based on talent, respect and hard work.

This hope is fading away, day after day.

All across Europe, we are witnessing a growing hatred, a spreading fear directed at Muslim minorities.

Intolerance, discrimination and violence are reaching an alarming level in our modern and developed European democracies.

Times where men and women were persecuted for their belief are not so far, it seems.

Not only is the situation worrying, but it is getting dramatically worse. In France, crimes against Muslims have more than doubled over 2009 (+130%).

Only in the two first months of 2010, we have recorded as many anti-Muslim actions as for the whole of 2009.

Every 3 weeks, a mosque is being attacked or damaged.

Every 3 days, a Muslim is being assaulted in the streets of France.

Every month, a new issue is brought forward surrounding the Muslims, shifting the attention away from the social and economical problems.

As a society, we fail to understand the consequences of our inability to fight islamophobia.

When we raise the issue of minarets in Switzerland, we reinforce the right wing extremists by giving them an excuse to demonize the Muslims.

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Centre for the Study of Islam and the Muslim World

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When we tolerate intolerant and blasphematory forms of art in Netherlands, it ends up with the nationalists almost tripling their political representation in the assembly.

When we stigmatise the Muslims in France about the burqa issue, which by the way doesn't exist in France, Mosques are being attacked with machine guns in a display of extreme anti Muslim violence.

When we allow racism and intolerance to spread in our society, we end up with an innocent mother being stabbed to death in front of her 3 years old child in a German court.

Her name was Marwa El Sherbini, and every one of us should remember her.

We have to put an end to this cycle of hatred and violence.

Our government in France and local organisations have started acting to stop this cycle of islamophobia. The minister of interior has just put in place a task force in charge of recording anti-Muslim violence. Also, organisations like ours are working hard to increase conscience of this recent phenomenon in the civil society.

We need to do much more than that if we want to tackle this issue, and we need to do it quicker.

This is why we ask that you, governments and delegations of the OSCE, act on the three following points:

- Unanimously condemning anti-Muslim violence in any form, in any context
- Putting in place observatories to record and inform the wider society on islamophobia
- Working with local organisations and granting them the support they need to carry on their action.

Thank you for your attention.
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