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UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

6th session of the Forum on Minorities Issues

Item 5 : Promotion of constructive interfaith dialogue,
consultation and exchange

Statement
by
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On behalf of the Council of Europe

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Promotion of constructive interfaith dialogue, consultation and exchange

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance recommends States to pursue a regular constructive dialogue with representatives of Muslim communities and encourage debate within the media on their responsibility to avoid perpetuating prejudice.¹ The structures established to permit such dialogue should be reinforced if necessary.² ECRI has also recommended information and awareness-raising campaigns vis-à-vis public service employees and the majority population so as to prevent unlawful, discriminatory requests that Muslim women wearing the headscarf either remove it or refrain from entering a public place.³

ECRI recommends that national authorities continue their active engagement against antisemitism, with the assistance of the media and civil society, including the [Catholic] Church⁴. It encourages the authorities to undertake full and open consultation with the Jewish community in all issues of concern to them⁵ and recommends establishing a system for monitoring antisemitic acts⁶. The authorities should give special attention to paying homage to the memory of the victims of the systematic persecution and extermination of Jews in the Shoah.⁷

ECRI also recommends that states take the necessary measures to ensure teaching about the Holocaust in schools;⁸ in consultation with Jewish communities⁹ and encourages them to take preventive measures more generally to ensure that antisemitic views do not gain a foothold among youth.¹⁰ ECRI recommended that the Spanish authorities extend the compulsory teaching of the Holocaust to cover also the history, culture and positive contribution of Jews in Spain.¹¹

With regard to antisemitism, ECRI recommends that the authorities seek and identify the causes of antisemitism in order to improve their action to prevent and counter this phenomenon.¹²

¹ See ECRI report on Denmark (§ 92).

² See ECRI report on Italy (§ 153).

³ See ECRI report on France (§ 94).

⁴ See ECRI report on Poland (§ 129).

⁵ See ECRI report on the Russian Federation (§ 187).

⁶ See ECRI report on Greece (§ 171).

⁷ See ECRI report on the Russian Federation (§ 187).

⁸ See ECRI report on Finland, § 136.

⁹ See ECRI report on Croatia, § 218.

¹⁰ See ECRI report on the Czech Republic (§ 72).

¹¹ See ECRI report on Spain (§ 147).

¹² See ECRI report on Belgium (§ 164) and Switzerland (§ 173).