



PERMANENT MISSION OF HUNGARY
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
NEW YORK

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY!

Statement by
H.E. Ms Katalin Annamária Bogyay
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Hungary to the United Nations

On the occasion of the
Interactive Dialogue with Mr. Ahmed Shaheed,
Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief

Third Committee of the General Assembly Agenda Item 74:
Promotion and protection of human rights

22 October 2018

Mr/Madam Chair,

Hungary thanks Special Rapporteur Mr. Ahmed Shaheed for his valuable and important report. We are deeply committed to the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief, and firmly support the Rapporteur in his mandate.

The report highlights the complex relationship between freedom of religion and belief and violent extremism. As it is rightly pointed out, even if acts of violence are committed in the name of a religion, the underlying causes might be different. Therefore, we need to address these root causes by building inclusive societies, where marginalised groups are empowered, and all are free to practice peacefully their religions.

Mr Chair,

Hungary is deeply concerned by the persecution on religious minorities by terrorist groups, with special regard to Christian minorities. Abduction, forced conversion and violence against members of religious minorities go beyond the violation of their human rights: they threaten the culture, the rich heritage of entire communities, putting in peril not only their entire future, but also the stability and cultural diversity of whole regions.

Therefore, ensuring freedom of religion and belief, and the protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of members of religious and faith communities is a cornerstone of building peaceful and inclusive societies.

Hungary has a long-standing history of religious tolerance: the Edict of Torda, also known as the Patent of Toleration, was adopted in 1568, 450 years ago, as one of the earliest laws in Europe to guarantee religious freedom. Today, the Fundamental Law of Hungary affirms that „we value the various religious traditions of our country”, and an interreligious roundtable is in place, gathering all major religions represented in Hungary.

We believe that inter- and intra-religious dialogue can play an integral role in prevention and reconciliation, promoting peaceful coexistence and building sustainable peace, and moderate religious leaders are key partners in this regard.

Mr Rapporteur,

Could you please give your insights on how to ensure freedom of religion and belief for religious minorities, and how States, moderate religious leaders and civil society can work together in this regard?

Thank you very much.