

Violence of ISIL attacks Religious Freedom

The Congress of the **International Association for Religious Freedom (IARF)** calls for united action against the greatest current threat to religious freedom.

All religious communities and international communities as well as the United Nations, are called to stand up against the heinous acts of the so-called Islamic State (ISIL), which are killing or driving from their homes thousands of Yezidi, Christians, Shi'ites and others. Ancient churches and mosques, religious and cultural heritage sites, are being destroyed.

We join the Lord Bishop of Coventry, His Grace Coptic Bishop Angaelos, Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner and representatives of Orthodox Christians, Islamic, Hindu, Sikh and Zoroastrian faiths in declaring *"what we are witnessing in Northern Iraq today is a tragedy of historic proportions in which thousands of innocent people are in immediate risk of death for no other reason than their religious beliefs"* (Daily Telegraph, London, 21 Aug 2014).

In a statement titled "Not in our name", the Muslim Council of Britain, [declares](#):

The Muslim Council of Britain once again condemns the action of the so-called Islamic State in Syria and the Levant, ISIL.... We are horrified at the abhorrent murder of James Foley, a reporter who initially went to the region to expose human rights abuses of the Syrian regime... We urge Muslim communities to redouble their efforts in coming together, condemning the barbarity of ISIS.

In our midst we have many representatives of other religious groups reporting violations of Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Congress believes: "There is no freedom without responsibility", and these continuing attacks on Human Rights – and especially those on minorities throughout the world – are a threat to religious freedom and all humanity.

Therefore:

Let us respond to these attacks with both action and compassion, so that Religious Freedom becomes a reality, Peace may prevail on earth, and everyman will be free.

Richard Boeke, Jehangir Sarosh OBE, & Annelies Trenning
with thanks to Charanjit & Ajit Singh, Rudy van Kerckhove
Birmingham, 2014 August 27

Please see also the [message of Parliament of the World's Religions](#)

To join IARF's British Chapter, please contact [Pejman Khojasteh](#)