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Commentary to 23-24 periodic report on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination from the International Public Organization “The World Russian People’s Council” (Russia).

According to the article 5 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (New York, 7 march 1966), we propose our assessment of compliance by Russian with the Convention.

During the quarter of a century, the WRPC has been working in Russia for prevention of ethnic and religious hatred inciting as well as of violation of such fundamental human rights as the right to freedom of conscience and religion.

The WRPC also monitors the situation connected with the observance of human rights to freedom of conscience and religion.

In that regard, it was observed that Russian authorities act positively and, although the WRPC periodically criticizes them on other questions, there are no reproaches to Russian authorities concerning the Legal regulation of public relations on rights to freedom of rights to religion.

In Russia, there are more than 200 nations among which Orthodox Christianity is most prevalent; however, the number of Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, Protestants and Catholics is also significant. Those religious denominations who made the greatest contribution to the development of the country and to the promotion of its peoples’ culture are referred to as traditional, nevertheless, it diminish in no way the rights of other religious communities.

With regard to the legal regulation, an appropriate legal framework was put in place based on universally recognized norms of international law including federal law “On the freedom of conscience and religious associations” article 14 of which contains the following basis for religious associations liquidation and for prohibition on activities of religious association or religious group judicially:

- Violation of public safety and public order;
- Activities aimed at realization of Extremism;
- Forcing to the family destruction;

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- Offence to human dignity, rights and freedom of citizens;
- Damage of citizen's morality and health as a result of the use of narcotic and psychotropic substances, of hypnosis and as a result of the commission of indecent and other illegal acts due to their religious activities.
- Inclination Coercion to suicide;
- Coercion of members and followers of a religious association and of other persons to alienate their property in favor of a religious association.

Obviously, in any democratic rule-of-law state authorities has an obligation to intercept the activities of organizations of this nature in case of circumstances listed above.

It was observed that in Russia there are no restrictions on the use of the relevant religious symbols, religious clothing, including food (kosher, halal, etc.).

At the same time, activities of destructive religious organizations in Russia are restricted by law, especially if they are of extremist and terrorist nature. Most of the religious organizations banned in Russia belong to the aggressive Islamist group, followed by a totality of neo-pagan structures of a pro-fascist nature. The other destructive organizations are of a different nature, but also characterized by extremism that could be external - that is directed at people of other faiths as well as internal - that is, directed at their own members.

Some of them are distinguished by extremism of both types. Thus the international religious organization of Jehovah's Witnesses for decades incited hatred towards Catholics (especially), Orthodox, Muslims and people of all other faiths, and also violated the rights of their adherents, including the right to life. Dozens of cases are known, when the children of members of this organization died due to the refusal of blood transfusion.

There is no doubt that the rule-of-law state not only can, but also must protect its citizens from religious denominations dangerous for their lives and health, which can be observed everywhere in the world practice. It should be kept in mind that the religious nature of an organization does not guarantee its law-abidingness, as is clearly seen in the example of the terrorist sect "Aum Shinrikyo". Now in Russia, all terrorist attacks are committed for religious reasons; crimes of an extremist nature are mostly based on the same reasons. We must not forget that the religion is used as a cover for fraudulent organizations and we should honestly and openly spoke about this fact. Tabooing of these topics is unacceptable.

Considering current challenges to our citizens' security, we can conclude that Russian legislation in regard to countering extremism and terrorism, as well as to religious security, needs to be further optimized by legal regulation strengthening.

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