



European Parliament Intergroup on

FoRB & RT

Freedom of Religion or Belief and Religious Tolerance

Brussels, 15th July 2015

Dear President of the Bundestag of the Federal Republic of Germany Mr Norbert Lammert,

We are writing as Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and as the Co-Presidents of the European Parliament Intergroup on Freedom of Religion or Belief and Religious Tolerance regarding the recent resolution passed by the Bundestag concerning freedom of religion or belief (FoRB).

We very much welcome the passing of the resolution and the recommendation to the German Government to present a report on worldwide religious or belief freedom by 30th June 2016. The fact that the German parliament passed the resolution and asked the German government to present a report is an important contribution to on-going global efforts to combat freedom of religion or belief violations.

The European Parliament Intergroup was setup over two years ago and aims at contributing to the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief in the European Union's external actions. The Intergroup is composed of MEPs from almost all of the political groups in the European Parliament.

The Intergroup recently presented its own Annual Report on the 'State of Freedom of Religion or Belief' at an event hosted by the Intergroup in collaboration with United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) in the European Parliament. Our report, which is in attachment, comprises of chapters on freedom of religion or belief in five regions of the world and documented violations committed by states, non-state actors or both. The report also has a thematic chapter on violence against places of worship and holy places. In its concluding chapters the report lists institutional recommendations for more effective promotion and protection of FoRB in the European Union's (EU) external policies as well as country-specific recommendations regarding identified countries of particular concern.

We hope that our report will be useful for the Bundestag's future work. We would also appreciate it if in the future we could find time to engage directly and the possibility to present our report in the Bundestag.

Yours sincerely

 Dennis de Jong MEP

 Peter van Dalen MEP