



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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146TH IPU ASSEMBLY
المنامة، البحرين
MANAMA, BAHRAIN
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146th IPU Assembly Manama (11–15 March 2023)

Assembly
Item 2

A/146/2-P.2
8 March 2023

Consideration of requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda

Request for the inclusion of an emergency item in the agenda of the 146th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union submitted by the delegation of Qatar

On 8 March 2023, the IPU Secretary General received from the delegation of Qatar a request and accompanying documents for the inclusion in the agenda of the 146th Assembly of an emergency item entitled:

“Criminalizing contempt for religions and the spreading of hatred,
and promoting coexistence, tolerance, peace and international security”.

Delegates to the 146th Assembly will find attached the text of the communication submitting the request ([Annex I](#)), as well as an explanatory memorandum ([Annex II](#)) and a draft resolution ([Annex III](#)) in support thereof.

The 146th Assembly will be required to take a decision on the request of the delegation of Qatar on Sunday, 12 March 2023.

Under the terms of Assembly Rule 11.1, any Member of the IPU may request the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda. Such a request must be accompanied by a brief explanatory memorandum and a draft resolution, which clearly define the scope of the subject covered by the request. The IPU Secretariat shall communicate the request and any such documents immediately to all Members.

Furthermore, Assembly Rule 11.2 stipulates that:

- (a) A request for the inclusion of an emergency item must relate to a recent major situation of international concern on which urgent action by the international community is required and on which it is appropriate for the IPU to express its opinion and mobilize a parliamentary response. Such a request must receive a two-thirds majority of the votes cast in order to be accepted.
- (b) The Assembly may place only one emergency item on its agenda. Should several requests obtain the requisite majority, the one having received the largest number of positive votes shall be accepted.
- (c) The authors of two or more requests for the inclusion of an emergency item may combine their proposals to present a joint one, provided that each of the original proposals relates to the same subject.
- (d) The subject of a proposal that has been withdrawn by its authors or rejected by the Assembly cannot be included in the draft resolution submitted on the emergency item, unless it is clearly referred to in the request and title of the subject adopted by the Assembly.

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#IPU146

**COMMUNICATION ADDRESSED TO THE IPU SECRETARY GENERAL BY
THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE SHURA COUNCIL**

8 March 2023

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

Further to our letter dated 2 February 2023 on the request of the Shura Council of the State of Qatar for the inclusion of an emergency item on Agenda of the 146th Assembly of the IPU on the subject:

"Criminalizing contempt for religions and the spreading of hatred,
and promoting coexistence, tolerance, peace and international security"

I am pleased to send you two attachments:

1. Explanatory note on the emergency item request.
2. Draft resolution on the emergency item.

Your Excellency is kindly requested to circulate these documents to all delegations participating in the work of the General Assembly in accordance with the Statutes and Rules of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Yours sincerely,

(signed)

Ahmed bin Nasser AL FADHALA
Secretary General of the Shura Council

CRIMINALIZING CONTEMPT FOR RELIGIONS AND THE SPREADING OF HATRED, AND PROMOTING COEXISTENCE, TOLERANCE, PEACE AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Explanatory memorandum submitted by the delegation of Qatar

The world is witnessing a frantic escalation in the frequency of attacks on holy sites, religious centres and places of worship, locations which must be respected by all. This has been accompanied by a grave rise in manifestations of violent extremism and hatred of religions.

In recent decades, the increase in respect for religious symbols and places has been remarkable thanks to citizens' awareness and desire to live together, tolerating and respecting their differences. However, we have noted that some States have for some time been abandoning laws and regulations against contempt for religions and attacks on places of worship. We have even noted with deep regret that some States are providing legal cover for criminal acts targeting religions, symbols and religious sanctities and for protecting those who commit such crimes by claiming that these acts fall within the framework of respect for freedom of expression, although in fact they are condemnable behaviours that undermine stability, security and peaceful coexistence among members of society, thereby destabilizing societies and encouraging unrest, resulting in serious violence, terrorism and extremism.

These situations, in addition to threatening security and stability within States, constitute a threat to international peace and security and an imminent threat to people's social cohesion and peaceful coexistence.

Considering that parliamentarians are representatives of the people, it is their duty to maintain security and peace in their communities and to promote the values of tolerance and coexistence. It is also their duty to adopt clear and explicit attitudes towards condemning and preventing contempt for religions, abuse, and attacks on holy places and religious symbols. Parliamentarians must work hard to enact legislation to counter such abuses and criminal acts, and ensure that they are recognized not as falling within the limits of freedom of expression but as unlawful acts that promote extremism and religious intolerance and that insult society and fuel the source of terrorism, which constitutes a serious scourge threatening security and stability around the world.

Our call on all States to work towards the enactment of legislation to prevent disrespect for religions and attacks on religious places and symbols is aimed at protecting religious sanctities and reducing the feelings of hatred of religions that threaten the coexistence of nations and civilizations as well as international peace and security, and seriously undermine human dignity.

The enactment of such legislation is also a mechanism for the prevention of sedition and extremism, and not a restriction of freedoms or a suppression of the right to expression guaranteed by international laws and conventions.

On the basis of the foregoing, the delegation of the Shura Council of the State of Qatar decided to apply for the inclusion of an emergency item on the agenda of the 146th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union on this subject in order to contribute to the promotion of security, stability and respect for the fundamental rights of all citizens without regard for their religion, race or culture.

**CRIMINALIZING CONTEMPT FOR RELIGIONS AND THE SPREADING OF HATRED, AND
PROMOTING COEXISTENCE, TOLERANCE, PEACE AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY**

Draft resolution submitted by the delegation of QATAR

The 146th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

- (1) *Reaffirming* that all Member States of the United Nations shall promote and respect human rights and fundamental public freedoms without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion,
- (2) *Affirming* the commitment made by parties to international instruments relevant to the elimination of discrimination, in particular the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,
- (3) *Recalling* the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief,
- (4) *Emphasizing* the provisions of the Declaration on the Human Rights of individuals who are not nationals of the country in which they live, as well as of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities,
- (5) *Also emphasizing* the United Nations Millennium Declaration, adopted by the General Assembly on 8 September 2000, which provides for measures and actions to eliminate racist and xenophobic acts and to promote greater harmony, tolerance and the principles of coexistence, and *expressing deep concern and dissatisfaction* at the recent increase in racial violence, the spread of hatred and contempt for religions, and attacks on religious symbols,
- (6) *Concerned* by the increasing trend towards discrimination on the basis of religion or belief and the tendency of some governments to tolerate, to fail to take any injunctive action against, and even to permit such condemnable acts,
- (7) *Noting with deep regret and concern* cases of intolerance and acts of violence linked to religion or belief, as well as acts resulting in intimidation and coercion motivated by religious extremism,
- (8) *Affirming* that disrespect for religions is a grave violation of human dignity and freedom of religion, and *stressing* the need to combat and reduce disrespect for religions and the incitement of hatred based on religion,
- (9) *Noting* that disrespect for religions and beliefs constitutes a serious threat to national and international security, peace and stability,
- (10) *Welcoming* the international efforts undertaken within the framework of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations initiative to promote mutual respect and understanding among different cultures and societies,
- (11) *Emphasizing* the need for a comprehensive and non-discriminatory approach to ensure respect for all religions,
- (12) *Also emphasizing* the role of education in promoting the values of tolerance and eliminating discrimination based on religion and belief,
 1. *Expresses deep concern* at the manifestations of intolerance in some societies, including intolerance and discrimination based on grounds of religion or belief;
 2. *Expresses also deep resentment* of all acts of violence and attacks against persons based on their religion or beliefs;

3. *Expresses further its strong condemnation* of racist attacks on places of religious worship and of terrorist acts targeting such safe places, as well as all acts targeting scriptures;
4. *Renews* its condemnation of terrorist acts directed against holy sites, places of worship and religious symbols of all religions;
5. *Notes with deep concern* the attempts by some States to undermine religions and incite religious hatred;
6. *Affirms* that contempt for and degradation of religions and incitement to religious hatred are factors that lead to instability and strengthen the causes of terrorism and violent extremism;
7. *Calls upon* all States to commit themselves to implementing the provisions of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, adopted by the General Assembly on 8 September 2006;
8. *Expresses resentment and disgust* at the growing use of social media and some traditional media to spread hatred among individuals and peoples and the failure of such media to disseminate the values of tolerance and peaceful coexistence;
9. *Affirms* the right of every individual to adopt their own religion and beliefs as a human right;
10. *Strongly condemns* all manifestations and acts of racism, racial discrimination, hatred and intolerance;
11. *Urges* all States to enforce laws and regulations that criminalize contempt for religions and the infringement of religious symbols and places of holy worship;
12. *Urges also* all States to take action to promote tolerance and respect for all religions and beliefs;
13. *Welcomes* legislative actions aimed at protecting freedom of religion and belief and preventing the degradation of religions;
14. *Appeals* to all States to make every possible effort, in accordance with international human rights and humanitarian law, to ensure respect for and protection of places of worship and all religious symbols;
15. *Calls upon* the international community to engage in a global dialogue to promote a culture of tolerance, peace and peaceful coexistence based on respect for human rights.