

Submission by Wiener Akademikerbund
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Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Henrik Ræder Clausen, representing Wiener Akademikerbund. Today, I shall address a major impediment to Freedom of religion or belief, as well as a major security concern in all pS'.

In the modern world, it has fortunately become axiomatic that the freedom to believe, and to peacefully practice one's beliefs, are important elements of free and prosperous societies.

In particular, the widely recognized principle of secularism has increasingly separated religion from state power. This has given space for great advances in liberty and prosperity through many centuries. Upholding and extending this principle is of great benefit to freedom of religion, as it can dismantle fears and resistance.

Over the last two decades, in particular after the tragic events of September 11th 2001, Muslims in particular have face significant opposition to their faith. The fact that these terrorist attacks were perpetrated by Muslims, in the name of Islam, and applauded by many Islamic leaders, did not go unnoticed.

Since then, terrorist attacks in the name of Islam have continued at a rate of 2000 per year.

Fortunately for us in the OSCE pS', the vast majority of these attacks take place in Islamic states, not in our states. But the fact that they do take place remains a major security concern.

If one studies the political ideology of islam, these attacks are not merely cruel acts of violence.

They ar part of a coordinated effort to impose Sharia – Islamic law – into a society. The European Court of Human Rights made it clear in its February 2003 Refah verdict, that Sharia is incompatible with fundamental principles of democracy and human rights.

It should be clear to all involved that Freedom of Religion does not include the freedom to impose Sharia into our societies, nor to endorse the use of terrorism to do so. Thus, in order for Muslims to practice their faith without suspicion, Islamic leaders need to cut out any endorsement of terrorism or Sharia.

A practical way to do this would be for the pS' to require Islamic organisations to sign this Proposed Charter of Muslim Understanding, penned by Islamic legal expert Sam Solomon. Copies of this charter are available outside.

Failing to cut any and all endorsements of terrorism and Sharia can be handled by our relevant authorities. On the other hand, removing all ties to terrorism and Sharia would enable Muslims to practice their faith freely in Western societies.

Wiener Akademikerbund thus recommends:

- That Islamic leaders are encouraged to sign a delcaration such as the Charter.
- That any Islamic organisations refusing to do so be investigated by state authorities.
- That OSCE pS' keep up the efforts to prevent terrorism and enforcement of Sharia law

The Proposed Charter of Muslim Understanding:

<https://islam-watch.org/ExMuslims/Charter-of-Muslim-Understanding.htm>