

Notice: Undefined index: et_header_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1214

Notice: Trying to access array offset on value of type null in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1214

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EU: 10th Anniversary of the EU Guidelines on Freedom of Religion or Belief

Photo credit: EU Brussels FoRB Roundtable – THIX Photo. – 10th Anniversary of the EU Guidelines on FoRB co-organized by the Eu Parliament Intergroup on FoRB&RT, with HRWF, EU Brussels FoRB Roundtable and Netherlands FoRB Roundtable.

EU: 10th Anniversary of the EU Guidelines on Freedom of Religion

or Belief celebrated at the European Parliament

On 29 June, MEPs Peter van Dalen and Carlo Fidanza, co-chairs of the Intergroup on Freedom of Religion or Belief at the European Parliament, hosted a conference at the European Parliament to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the EU Guidelines on Freedom of Religion or Belief. The FORB Roundtables Brussels-EU and Netherlands as well as HRWF contributed to this event.

By MEP Peter van Dalen

Dear honourable speakers, dear guests,

On behalf of the European Parliament Intergroup on Freedom of Religion or Belief and Religious Tolerance, I want to welcome you here today. Last Saturday, the 24th of June, marked the 10th anniversary of the EU Guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief. This is a very joyous occasion, as it shows that the fight for religious freedom has its rightful place on the European agenda.

Since this day in 2013, we have seen some important developments. One highlight, in my regard, is the appointment of the EU Special Envoy for freedom of religion or belief, and the growing number of national envoys in the EU. Also, over the years we did manage to get some vital references to religious freedom in key reports of the European Parliament, such as the annual human rights report.

Yet, we have also been challenged. The utterly slow conduct of the European Commission when appointing the Special Envoy shows that religious freedom does not remain on the European agenda without a fight. That is why I am glad that you are here. There is a big and professional community here in Brussels devoted to advocating the cause of those that are put under pressure or even persecuted for what they believe, or don't believe. Your work is very important to us, MEPs, but more so to the people that you are advocating for.

The EU Guidelines that are the centre of attention today form a good foundation for EU action in defence of religious freedom. However, over the years we have also heard signals that their implementation sometimes leaves something to be desired. Therefore I am grateful that we can have this event today, to discuss how the use of the Guidelines can be further enhanced in EU external action. We have a number of great speakers, all with considerable experience in the field of religious freedom, human rights and diplomacy.

[Further reading about FORB in the EU on HRWF website](#)

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`/home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php` on line **1269**