

Table of Contents

- [A White Paper on the bill confirming respect for the principles of the Republic](#)
 - [Livre blanc sur le projet de Loi confortant le respect des principes de la République](#)
 - [French archbishop, others protest draft law against religious extremism](#)
-

A White Paper on the bill confirming respect for the principles of the Republic

Experts question the 1905 Law and make proposals

HRWF/ Bitter Winter (11.01.2021) - While the bill Consolidating Respect for the Principles of the Republic (former bill *on separatism*) is currently being examined by a special committee of the French National Assembly, three renowned experts have just published a white paper entitled ***Laïcité, How to Preserve it.***

To do this, the authors undertook a meticulous research in the history of secularism, examined the parliamentary debates of 1905, case law and doctrine, while contextualizing everything in order to fully understand what this law had first of all changed after almost a centenary of the Napoleonic Concordat, and how "case law on the subject has struggled to evolve while the French religious landscape has changed considerably since the promulgation of the law of 1905."

For the authors, "The government, by wishing to strongly encourage associations of law 1901 (mainly Muslim, but not only) to join the regime of religious associations of law 1905, crosses an additional level in the state control of religions (...) Unfortunately, it's a safe bet that this harmonization of constraints, whatever the mode of exercise freely chosen, will not be enough to cause a real change of paradigm and to encourage associations under the 1901 law to join the regime of the 1905 law." They join in this the fears of representatives of religions heard on January 4 by the special committee responsible for examining the bill.

The authors, the jurist Frédéric Jérôme Pansier, author of more than 50 reference works in the field of law, the sociologist of religions Massimo Introvigne, author of more than 70 books and Willy Fautre, President of the NGO Human Rights Without Frontiers International, advocate in this forty-page document an approach that preserves the spirit of the 1905 law, while modernizing it to adapt it to the current religious reality in France.

The document ends with a final conclusion: "in order for the reform to achieve its goals, it is necessary to ensure that the spirit of freedom of the law of 1905 is preserved, and that the great majority of religions which do not represent a terrorist threat, do not provoke hatred or violence, can not only have access to the advantages of the status of religious association, but also that this access is facilitated, encouraged and attractive."

The White Paper is available at <https://hrwf.eu/forb/our-advocacy-papers/>

Contact media:

Frédéric-Jérôme Pansier (France)
Email: fjpansier@yahoo.fr

Massimo Introvigne/ Bitter Winter Int'l (Italy)
Email: maxintrovigne@gmail.com

Willy Fautré/ Human Rights Without Frontiers Int'l (Brussels)
Email : w.fautre@hrwf.org

Livre blanc sur le projet de Loi confortant le respect des principes de la République

Des experts interrogent la Loi de 1905 et font des propositions

HRWF/ Bitter Winter (11.01.2021) - Alors que le projet de *Loi confortant le respect des principes de la République* (ex-projet de loi sur les séparatismes) est actuellement examiné par une commission spéciale de l'Assemblée Nationale, trois experts de renom viennent de publier un livre blanc intitulé ***La Laïcité, Comment la Préserver.***

Pour ce faire, les auteurs ont entrepris une recherche minutieuse dans l'histoire de la laïcité, ont épluché les débats parlementaires de 1905, la jurisprudence et la doctrine, en contextualisant le tout afin de bien comprendre ce que cette loi avait tout d'abord changé après un quasi-centenaire de Concordat napoléonien, et comment « la jurisprudence sur le sujet a peine à évoluer tandis que le paysage religieux français s'est transformé considérablement depuis la promulgation de la loi de 1905 ».

Pour les auteurs, « Le gouvernement, en souhaitant inciter fortement les associations de loi 1901 (principalement musulmanes, mais pas seulement) à rejoindre le régime des associations culturelles de loi 1905, franchit un palier supplémentaire dans le contrôle étatique des cultes (...) Malheureusement, il y a fort à parier que cette harmonisation des contraintes, quel que soit le mode d'exercice librement choisi, ne suffira pas à provoquer un réel changement de paradigme et à inciter les associations loi 1901 à rejoindre le régime de la loi 1905 ». Ils rejoignent en cela les craintes des représentants des cultes auditionnés le 4 janvier par la commission spéciale chargée d'examiner le projet de loi.

Les auteurs, le juriste Frédéric Jérôme Pansier, auteur de plus de 50 ouvrages-référence dans le domaine du droit, le sociologue des religions Massimo Introvigne, auteur de plus de 70 livres et Willy Fautré, Président de l'ONG Human Rights Without Frontiers International, préconisent dans ce document d'une quarantaine de pages une approche qui préserve l'esprit de la loi de 1905, tout en la modernisant pour l'adapter à la réalité religieuse actuelle de la France.

Le document se termine par une conclusion sans appel : « pour arriver à ce que la réforme puisse atteindre ses buts, il faut s'assurer que l'esprit de liberté de la loi de 1905 soit préservé, et que la grande majorité des cultes qui ne représentent pas de menace terroriste, ne provoquent pas à la haine ou à la violence, puissent non seulement avoir accès aux avantages du statut d'association culturelle, mais aussi que cet accès soit facilité, encouragé et attractif. »

Le livre blanc est accessible à l'adresse suivante : <https://hrwf.eu/forb/our-advocacy-papers/>

Contact presse :

Frédéric-Jérôme Pansier (France)
Email: fjpansier@yahoo.fr

Massimo Introvigne/ Bitter Winter Int'l (Italy)
Email: maxintrovigne@gmail.com

Willy Fautré/ Human Rights Without Frontiers Int'l (Brussels)
Email : w.fautre@hrwf.org

French archbishop, others protest draft law against religious extremism

Archbishop Eric de Moulins-Beaufort says repressive legislation will bring control measures.

UCA News (06.01.2021) – <https://bit.ly/2MPL4Xp> – The head of the French bishops' conference testified to a special commission of the National Assembly that while he understands the need to strengthen national security, a proposed law designed to rein in extremist militancy would place religions and religious believers under particular surveillance.

Archbishop Eric de Moulins-Beaufort of Reims, conference president, told the commission on Jan. 4 that "the disadvantages of repressive legislation lie in the control measures they bring."

"Some may be legitimate. But we can reasonably ask why they should especially apply to religious groups, and not to other associations or elements," he said in remarks about the proposed law on separatism, which would impose new security and administrative curbs on churches and religious associations.

The legislation, introduced in December, would "strengthen respect for the principles of the republic" by compelling religious associations to comply with France's 1905 law on church-state separation and empowering regional governors to compile fuller data on religious groups.

The legislation proposes tightening rules on social media, including information "aimed at exposing a person to immediate risk of an attack on his life, or his physical or psychological security," and would speed court action against religiously motivated "threats, violence and intimidation against public service agents."

Among financial transparency rules, it would require foreign donations of more than \$12,300 to be officially registered by religious associations.

The law aims to curb "provocation of acts of terrorism, discrimination, hatred or violence" and would require official authorization for religious homeschooling, tighten rules against forced marriages and outlaw the issuing of "virginity certificates" for Muslim brides.

France's Muslim leaders were to submit opinions about the proposed law to the National Assembly commission on Jan. 6.

In his testimony, Archbishop de Moulins-Beaufort said the new financial rules would not affect Catholic parishes and dioceses, who "survived principally from faithful donations," but emphasized that other sectors of society, not just religion, should be subject to the same scrutiny.

"Our church can only express concern at such pressure, and ask why religions and religious believers are now to be kept under particular surveillance," he said.

Firmer measures have long been anticipated to contain Islamist militancy in France, where 12 people were massacred in January 2015 at the satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo, and 90 were killed and 200 injured in coordinated attacks in Paris the following November.

In July 2016, a 75-year-old Catholic priest, Father Jacques Hamel, was murdered by Islamists during Mass at his Normandy church. In October, history teacher Samuel Paty was beheaded outside his school in Conflans-Sainte-Honorine.

Protestant and Orthodox leaders also testified about the proposed law on Jan. 4 and criticized its blanket control and surveillance clauses. A leader of France's Jewish minority, Joël Mergui, warned it would "compromise the religious freedom of those who are not creating any problem."

"The enemy today is terrorism and radical Islam, not all religions -- I cannot accept that we become collateral damage," Mergui told the commission.
