

Daniela Malec Korin's panelist speech remarks.

Commission "Welcoming the Other through Citizenship for Just and Harmonious Societies" on 21 November 2013 from 11:00 am-12:30 pm .

1. I will to present two particular examples of so called "good practice" in the area of multireligious cooperation, highlighting assets and value that multireligious cooperation has. Both of them relate to point "b" of our Commission's topic – "Religious freedom and protection of minorities".
2. First of them relate to two ongoing debates in different European countries, touching legislative level, debate on circumcision and on ritual slaughter (October 1, the Council of Europe's parliament passed a non-binding resolution defining ritual circumcision of boys as a "violation of the physical integrity of children.").
3. Those two debates and events related to them reveal an alarming undercurrent in European society.
4. Recent ban on ritual slaughter in Poland and a very disturbing public (media) debate around it, put Jewish and Muslim minorities in Poland in difficult position, but first of all, the way the debate was carried, fostered hate and racism in the society, instilled fear among Jews and Muslims, and finally – led to violence (physical attacks on Jews, setting a mosque on fire).
5. One responsible voice in this debate was a voice of Polish Catholic Church, that appealed to the Polish society to respect religious freedom in Poland. Church top officials said Christians cannot oppose the ritual requirements of other faiths.
6. This interreligious support was very important for Jewish and Muslim communities in Poland, and calmed down many Jews and Muslims. It generally calmed down the whole debate to a certain extent.
7. This activity of Polish Church should be an example for what should happen more in Europe, especially in context of another debate of this kind, also referring to religious rituals of Muslim and Jews - debate on circumcision.
8. Religions should be on forefront of fighting with such cultural imperialism and dominant religions should protect rights of minority religions. Action taken by Catholic Church in Poland sets a good example for all Europe.
9. Second example of "good practice" I want to talk about is a campaign of Religions for Peace - Restoring Dignity. This campaign is dear to my heart and I perceive it is the most important campaign of Religions for Peace.
10. I believe Restoring Dignity campaign should take a step further. It should promote this parts of our holy books that talk about dignity of a women, to stress that our faith traditions and holy books are not only against violence against women but are against any form of violating rights of women - rights to

education, rights to drive, to work, to equal pay, to be elected to leadership positions, and other basic rights, rights that are violated in different parts of the world.

11. Women are not a minority, but they are still perceived in many places in the world as “the other”, and if the theme of this World Assembly, is “welcoming the other”, in my view, the biggest challenge of religion and multireligious action for the next 5 years is to welcome the women. Welcome the women as equal.