



On. Mario Mauro
Head of PDL Italian Delegation in the European Parliament

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Milan

Dear friends,

It is a great pleasure for me to address again to you my compliments for the initiative of the "Solidarity with persecuted Christians" platform. The occasion of the United Nations' Declaration on Human Rights' commemoration gives us the chance to underline the violations of human rights which are shaking entire communities. The most important tragedy of our time is without any doubt the persecution against Christian communities.

Using a famous statement of Saint Augustine it can be said that "if you believe you do not have suffered, than you did not start yet to be a Christian". Today, the situation described by Saint Augustine, cannot be accepted any longer. Last years' statistics, combined with the general indifference from medias as well as from Western Governments, show that the "Christian factor" provokes irritation not only where it represents a minority as well as in the European cultural and political world.

It seems that post-modern democracy aims at denying the public dimension of Christian presence in the society. Therefore, dealing with freedom of religion for Christians becomes a battle for the defence of true democracy. As Pope John Paul II has said "freedom of religion is the litmus test of every other rights".

Middle East is the region of the world where violence is growing in proportion, with millions of people forced to go in to self-exile and thousands of victims in the last ten years.

In these territories, persecutions against Christians are committed by terrorists and extremists. In addition, the indifference shown by political leadership does not ensure safety for minorities.

How is possible to explain such a fierceness from everybody? The enmity of powers, dictatorships, totalitarianism views towards Christianity have the same roots: Christian communities prove the drama of human being freedom connected with power. Josef Tischner said "God is born, great powers tremble".

Finally, I would offer my greetings to all the people on site, I am sure that there will be other occasions for a discussion on the issues linked to the activities carried out by "Solidarity with persecuted Christians" platform.

I take this chance to thank you for your attention and to give you my best wishes for your work in the future.

Mario Mauro
Head of PDL Italian Delegation in the European Parliament