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Social and human rights questions: human rights

Statement submitted by the Fédération européenne des centres de recherche et d'information sur le sectarisme, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2012/100.



Statement

In order to build a healthy society in which every citizen has a chance to assume his or her rightful place — in other words, a democratic society — each stakeholder must be responsible, realistic and supportive. Cults preclude this possibility since their goal is to infiltrate, control and corrupt our societies from top to bottom, from education to health care, from international institutions to States themselves.

In its resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000 on the Millennium Declaration, the General Assembly recommended that the United Nations commit itself to “a more peaceful, prosperous and just world” and “uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity at the global level”. The Federation exists to bear witness to the fact that cults violate these principles by depriving followers of their free will and reducing them to the level of slaves, subject solely to the power and will of leaders who exploit them financially and subjugate them psychologically, and often sexually.

Cults do not respect the fundamental values mandated in the Millennium Development Goals: freedom, tolerance, solidarity and shared responsibility. They hide behind masks and give their followers the illusion of well-being and independence.

Poverty cannot be eradicated without the help of each of society’s stakeholders. Cults exist for the sole purpose of self-enrichment. The largest among them wield fortunes amounting to billions of dollars, even as they hide behind the deceptive label of religion and bear no tax burden. A well-known organization based in Florida (United States of America) fits this profile. Another organization, no less rich, has tax-exempt status because it holds mass weddings.

In paragraph 20 of its resolution 55/2, the General Assembly resolved to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty. Many cults, such as The Family International, to mention one example, subjugate women, leaving them without resources, support, social protection or medical coverage.

We can attest to the fact that Africa has also fallen victim to the activities of cults. President Chissano of Mozambique has donated a large portion of that country’s arable lands to the Transcendental Meditation organization, thereby robbing peasants of their property. Elsewhere in Africa, followers of religious cults must pay them large sums of money. These cults have fortunes that would otherwise go to countries for education or poverty eradication.

We call on local United Nations offices to report on these activities.

We also request that the role of cults in reducing people to poverty and undermining democratic systems be taken into account.
