

**OSCE Conference: Human Dimension Implementation Meeting
Warsaw, 26 September - 7 October 2011**

Working session 2: **Fundamental freedoms I** (continued), including:
– Freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief.

27 September 2011

Intervention on behalf of the
European Federation of Centres for Research and Information on Sectarianism
(FECRIS) by Maxim Yurchenko

Human rights secure the social existence of an individual in society which consists of millions of other individuals. Human rights interact with each other. Power and authority of a human right range only to the bounds where the power and authority of another right start.

One particular right does not have supreme power over another human right.

These statements are simply logic and could be seen as truisms, yet they bring us to a fact that human rights are subject to limitations and legal restrictions to serve the ultimate goal – to preserve a peaceful and just balance between human rights.

The practical evidence of this truism is Article 9 of the European Convention of Human Rights that consists of two parts where the second one stipulates that “freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others”.

Thus governments guided by democratic values, existing moral values of society and the duty to protect the rights and freedoms of others do have a right to regulate by laws the sphere of religious activities in their countries.

Many speakers in favor of the so-called “new religious movements” appeal only to the first part of Article 9 presuming to have an indulgence for all their deeds and totally forgetting one of the basic democratic principles that there are no rights without duties.

The evidences of abuse in the sphere of cults and sects and "religious manifestations" are too high and the EU institutions and bodies reacted to this with several recommendations calling the governments of the member-states to accelerate the creation of the local legislation to prevent such abuse.

FECRIS supports the efforts to establish a just legislation that will eliminate even a possibility to use religious belief in order namely to exploit the free labor of followers, abuse them physically, mentally or sexually, break up families or separate them, abuse children rights.

These acts of legislation should contain a clear system of principles, demands and punishments for the abuse in the sphere of cult and sects religious manifestations.

FECRIS declares itself politically, philosophically and religiously neutral and has never been an anti-religion organization. All its activities have only been targeted to protect human rights of any followers from possible abuse.