

Doc. 14019
18 April 2016

Freedom of religion and living together in a democratic society

Reply to Recommendation¹: Recommendation 2080 (2015)
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers has carefully examined Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 2080 (2015) on “Freedom of religion and living together in a democratic society” and brought it to the attention of the governments of the member States. It has also forwarded it to the relevant committees for information and possible comments.²
2. The Committee of Ministers considers that the Council of Europe has an important role to play in developing and co-ordinating member States’ action to prevent and combat violent extremism and radicalisation. It thanks the Assembly for its willingness to contribute to this effort.
3. Through the Action Plan to combat violent extremism and radicalisation leading to terrorism, adopted in May 2015, the Committee of Ministers pinpoints the different activities to be undertaken at international and national level. It is closely monitoring the plan’s implementation.
4. The Committee of Ministers is currently reviewing the format for the annual Exchanges on the religious dimension of intercultural dialogue with a view to closer linkage with the Council of Europe’s activities. Accordingly, the 2015 Exchange held in Sarajevo on 2 and 3 November was fully in line with the Action Plan to combat violent extremism and radicalisation leading to terrorism.
5. The recommendations set out in paragraph 3 concerning closer collaboration between the Council of Europe and religious communities and secular organisations warrant consideration. Regarding the creation of a platform for dialogue as recommended in paragraph 3.1, the Committee of Ministers invites the Assembly to clarify its views, in particular on the possible composition, activities, functioning and financing of such a platform. Informal contacts between the two bodies could then be considered.

1. Adopted at the 1253rd meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies (13 April 2016).

2. Steering Committee for Educational Policy and Practice (CDPPE), Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP), Joint Council on Youth (CMJ).

