



Address by the Permanent Observer of Italy
to the Organization of American States
Ambassador Roberto Nocella

SESIÓN EXTRAORDINARIA DEL CONSEJO PERMANENTE
PARA RECIBIR
EL ESTUDIO DE LA COMISIÓN INTERAMERICANA DE
DERECHOS HUMANOS SOBRE EL DERECHO A LA LIBERTAD
DE CONCIENCIA Y RELIGIÓN O DE CREENCIA EN LAS
AMÉRICAS, EN CUMPLIMIENTO DEL MANDATO
ESTABLECIDO EN
LA RESOLUCIÓN AG/RES. 3028 (LIV-O/24)

Washington D.C.
October 23, 2024

We deem this debate very relevant and we thank the countries that convened this session: the United States, Chile, and Canada.

We take this opportunity to also congratulate the delegation of the Holy See for having organized another meeting together with the Secretariat of the OAS on freedom of religion and belief at the beginning of this week. The protection of these freedoms, the right of persons belonging to ethnic and religious minorities and the fight against hate speech are cross-cutting priorities of Italy's foreign policy.

Italy upholds the principles of religious freedom and we firmly believe that everyone should have the right to practice their faith without fear of discrimination or persecution. This commitment is reflected in our laws and our active engagement in promoting interfaith dialogue.

A few years ago, the Italian Parliament established a fund to support persecuted Christian minorities in crisis area. Through this fund, we are currently supporting different projects worldwide, with a view to improving the economic condition of persons belonging to Christian minorities.

In addition, in 2023, the government appointed a Special Envoy for Religious Freedom and the Protection of religious minorities in the world, with a particular focus on Christian minorities.

Italy stands also firm in its commitment to promoting interfaith dialogue and education, which are essential to foster cooperation between communities and different faiths and help prevent violent extremism and discrimination.

The report on freedom of religion and belief in the Americas presented today by President Clark is comprehensive and we thank the panelists for their interventions. The report is, in our view, a very useful tool to assess the situation in the region. In this regard, we would like to stress the following: Italy is deeply concerned about the situation and ongoing repression in Nicaragua where citizens are not only forbidden to peacefully profess their own faith but they are also obliged to leave the country, especially Christians and Catholics.

Thank you.