



General Assembly

Distr.: General
8 March 2024

English only

Human Rights Council

Fifty-fifth session

26 February–5 April 2024

Agenda item 6

Universal periodic review

Written statement* submitted by payamavaran hamyari (chatra), a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

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

[12 February 2024]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



Islamophobia in Germany

In Germany, the Muslim minority community, as an integral and undoubtedly significant part of society, faces challenges and restrictions that require serious attention and careful consideration. The neglect of the rights of these minorities, including the denial of the right to education, lack of access to health services and discrimination in employment and housing, not only violates the principles of human rights, but also the basic principles of humanity.

As a signatory to various international human rights instruments, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Germany is committed to upholding and protecting the rights of all people within its borders, regardless of their religious or ethnic background.

Despite these commitments, the Muslim minority in Germany faces challenges and restrictions that violate these fundamental principles. The neglect of their rights, including denial of education, lack of access to health services and discrimination in employment and housing, goes against the spirit of these international agreements and Germany's own obligations under these agreements.

Germany has the second largest Muslim population in Western Europe. Many of the 5.5 million Muslims in Germany say they experience discrimination every day. And according to a survey presented by the Expert Council on Integration and Migration in autumn 2022, a third to half of the 15,000 respondents expressed anti-Muslim and anti-Islamic attitudes. and In the first half of 2023, police recorded 258 Islamophobia crimes, including attacks on mosques, cases of bodily harm, and threatening letters.

Furthermore, sexism plays a role in a broader discriminatory context, especially for women who wear a headscarf. The report concluded that Muslim women are less likely to receive sexual health check-ups or have complaints of sexual violence against them taken seriously. The same applies to the treatment of the resulting trauma.

The Independent Group of Experts on Muslim Hostility (UEM) has evaluated scientific studies, police crime statistics and documentation of anti-Muslim incidents by anti-discrimination agencies, counselling centres and non-governmental organisations.

The comprehensive 400-page report, which was published by this independent body with 12 members, took three years to complete and was presented at the Ministry of the Interior.

According to the UEM, at least a third of Muslims in Germany have been attacked because of their religion. However, experts claim that the actual figures are probably to be higher, as only 10 per cent of Muslims appear to report cases of hostility and hate crime against them.

"Muslim life is a natural part of Germany," said Interior Minister Nancy Faeser after receiving the report. "Many of the 5.5 million Muslims in Germany experience marginalisation and discrimination in everyday life – including hatred and violence," she added. "It is very important to make this visible and to raise awareness of the resentment that is still widespread."

Recommendations:

Islamophobia is a serious problem in Germany that requires the active involvement of larger sections of society to combat, and we take this opportunity to recommend Germany:

1. Legislative measures: Implement comprehensive legislation to combat Islamophobia and discrimination against Muslim minorities and ensure that perpetrators of hate crimes are held accountable and victims receive adequate legal protection and support.
2. Public awareness campaigns: Initiate comprehensive public awareness campaigns to educate the general population about the rights and contributions of Muslim minorities to promote understanding and tolerance in German society.
3. Community engagement: Encourage and support initiatives that promote dialogue and cooperation between Muslim communities and other parts of society to strengthen mutual respect and integration.

To the Human Rights Council:

1. Monitoring and reporting: Continuously monitor and report on the situation of Islamophobia and discrimination against Muslim minorities in Germany to provide accurate and up-to-date information for policy making and lobbying.
2. Advocacy and pressure: Advocate for stronger measures and policies in Germany to combat Islamophobia and discrimination and exert pressure where necessary to ensure the protection of human rights for all people, regardless of their religious or ethnic background.
3. International cooperation: Facilitate international cooperation and the exchange of best practises in combating Islamophobia and promoting religious tolerance, and encourage cooperation between governments, civil society organisations and international bodies to effectively address this global problem.

By implementing these recommendations, Germany can work towards creating a more inclusive and just society in which the rights and dignity of Muslim minorities are fully respected and protected.

Finally, combating Islamophobia and discrimination against Muslim minorities requires concerted efforts by both the government and international human rights organisations.

Conclusion

To summarise, it is imperative that Germany takes immediate and concrete legal measures to eliminate the restrictions and discrimination faced by Muslim minorities. By implementing legal measures that ensure the full protection of their rights, including access to education, employment opportunities, health services and housing rights, Germany can demonstrate its commitment to upholding human rights and fulfilling its obligations under international agreements.

In addition, efforts should be made to promote awareness and understanding of Muslim minorities in German society through educational programmes and community initiatives. Working with Muslim minority groups, involving them in decision-making processes and promoting dialogue can lead to more effective solutions and measures that address their specific needs and challenges.

The Human Rights Council and the international community play a crucial role in holding governments accountable to their human rights obligations. Through lobbying, monitoring and promoting dialogue, the Council can put pressure on the German government to meet its commitments and ensure that the rights of Muslim minorities are respected and protected.

At the same time, the Human Rights Council should closely monitor the situation, advocate for stronger measures and facilitate international co-operation to effectively address this issue. By working together and implementing the recommendations made, we can strive for a society in which all people, regardless of their religious beliefs, can live free from discrimination and fear, and promote a more inclusive and tolerant environment for all.

By working together with the German government, civil society organisations and Muslim minority groups, tangible progress can be made in promoting the rights and well-being of Muslim minorities in Germany, ultimately contributing to a more inclusive and equitable society for all.

<https://www.dw.com/en/muslims-experience-islamophobia-every-day-in-germany/a64985144#:~:text=Germany>

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/analysis/islamophobia-is-an-urgent-problem-in-germany-expert-says/3063523#:~:text=A>

<https://www.dw.com/en/report-uncovers-germanys-structural-racism-against-muslims/a-63116871>

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/6/30/german-muslims-face-everyday-racism-discrimination-report>