



Belgium

Organization for Defending Victims of Violence submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review 24th session of the UPR Working Group, (Jan-Feb 2016)

The Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV) is a non-governmental, non-profit, non-political organization in Special Consultative Status to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC). ODVV was established in 1988 in Tehran and has been active in the field of human rights and humanitarian activities. ODVV is also associated to the United Nations Department of Public Information (UNDPI), a participatory of the NGOs Coalition for an International Court (based in New York), and national coordinator of the Global March Against Child Labour (based in New Delhi) which cooperated in a variety of issues with international organizations and has working relations with many NGOs in Iran and around the globe. ODVV is also member of the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), conference of Non Governmental Organization (CONGO), and the International Movement for a Just World.

The present submission expresses ODVV's concerns about incidents of Racism, Xenophobia and Islamophobia observed in Belgium.

C. Promotion and protection of human rights on the ground Racism, Xenophobia and Islamophobia

According to the media reports and the comments given by Muslims, they feel stereotyped and discriminated against in Belgium. There have been numerous reports of Muslim harassments such as, deadly attacks on mosques¹, anti-Muslim graffiti in

¹ . <http://www.onislam.net/english/news/europe/456193-muslim-imam-dies-in-belgian-mosque-attack.html>

public places such as mosques and stadiums² ³, physical attacks to Muslim veiled women⁴ discrimination against women even wearing the traditional hijab or head scarf⁵, support for anti-Muslim political parties⁶, job opportunity discrimination⁷ and racist internet games ⁸. The tension in Iraq and Syria and the emergence of the ISIL has exacerbated the way Muslims are treated in general and portrayed in the media.

Considering the fact that the widespread discrimination leads to marginalization of and exclusion of Muslims and is contrary to the principles of human rights equality,

Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV) calls on Belgium to:

- *Condemn, monitor and combat any manifestation of racism, discrimination, xenophobia and Islamophobia in political statements, the media, and social life, pursue its efficient measures to combat these phenomena.*
- *Address the root causes of islamophobia while at the same time combat extremism after its development.*

This contribution is submitted on June 20th 2015.

² . http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/after-paris-attacks-belgian-muslims-face-renewed-fight/2015/01/14/823d8f40-9b62-11e4-96cc-e858eba91ced_story.html

³ . <http://www.onislam.net/english/news/europe/466361-mosques-defilement-angers-belgians.html>

⁴ . <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2728932/Senior-Belgian-diplomat-arrested-tearing-face-veil-Qatari-princess-asked-directions.html>

⁵ . http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/after-paris-attacks-belgian-muslims-face-renewed-fight/2015/01/14/823d8f40-9b62-11e4-96cc-e858eba91ced_story.html

⁶ . <http://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2014/03/126276/belgium-far-right-party-followers-chant-fewer-fewer-moroccans-2/>

⁷ . <http://www.flanderstoday.eu/current-affairs/racism-belgiums-labour-market-says-european-network>

⁸ . <http://www.flanderstoday.eu/politics/dewinter-questioned-about-alleged-racist-internet-game>