

Declaration of support for the creation of an Observatory for

spiritual, therapeutic and educational minorities. The Observatory would be independent and competent.

Whereas in France, like in other countries, there is a growing number of groups with a spiritual, educational or therapeutic purpose, that wishes to honestly answer the essential questions that man is asking him- or herself in order to improve people's lives and to improve the society we are living in.

Whereas a few tragic events (Jonestown, Waco and the Solar Temple) have been widely publicised in order to create scapegoats and assimilate spirituality with criminality.

Whereas the word "cult", without a legal definition, is a symbol of this stigmatisation of part of the population and consequently is violating individual freedoms.

Whereas French government powers have been the main drive in the spreading of the anti-sect phobia and encouraged a suppressive approach by setting aside the work of key sociologists on religions.

Whereas parliamentarians have created several commissions of inquiry and are at the origin of the arbitrary black list of "cults", which is internationally criticized, yet constitutes an on-going reference for public administrations and media.

Whereas in spite of a recommendation of Minister of Police to stick to a legal qualification of facts and crimes, the MILVILUDES is working to develop a new referential system which according to its president, would concern 600 movements and practices.

Whereas we are witnessing an intensification of this repressive approach with an increased frequency of heavy-handed raids of MIVILUDES and police on some of the target groups ;

Whereas such a political agenda violates the basic principle of an open secularism as well as the fundamental freedoms of thought, conscience and religion that are enshrined in the European Convention of Human Rights.

Whereas the numerous collateral damages undergone by these groups and individuals who are unfairly accused of being "cults" or of "sectarian abuses", are never being taken into consideration.

Whereas such a political agenda based on rumours and suspicions widely broadcasted by the media, turns one part of French society against the other

Whereas the signatories of this declaration ask the President of the Republic of France to take immediate action towards the creation of an independent and competent observatory of the spiritual, therapeutic and educative minority groups, which is a project presented by the CICNS in the attached document.

To encourage a national public debate in order for those who play a major role in different spiritual movements, universities, intellectuals, associations, educators and politicians to communicate about the place of spirituality in our society.

To recognize the contemporary alternative spiritual, therapeutic and educational approaches as natural and necessary components in the evolution of human society.

To respect citizen's individual liberties and their choice of the life they want to live.

Name, Surname, City, Profession, Email address and hand signature: *(These informations will not be published by CICNS)*

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To be sent to: *CICNS - Observatory - BP 7 - 82270 Montpezat de Quercy*