

# 2012 G8 Compliance on Human Rights: Freedom of Religion

Takumi Shibaïke, G8 Research Group  
January 19, 2014

## Commitment

2012-66: “We also commit to supporting the right of all people, including women, to freedom of religion in safety and security.”

*May 19, 2012 Camp David Declaration*

## Assessment

Country	Lack of Compliance	Work in Progress	Full Compliance
Canada			1
France	-1		
Germany			1
Italy	-1		
Japan	-1		
Russia	-1		
United Kingdom			1
United States			1
European Union			1
Average Score	0.11		

## Background

Until the 2011 Deauville Summit, the G8 had paid almost no attention to the freedom of religion. The first reference to religion was made at the 2006 St. Petersburg Summit. It was mentioned in tandem with social and economic background, age, sex, ethnicity and disability, to emphasize equality in access to education and professional training for development.<sup>1</sup> Since then, the G8 made no commitments on the freedom of religion until 2011.<sup>2</sup>

In the preamble of the 2011 summit communiqué, the G8 declared support for democratic reform, which included the protection of freedom of religion in the Middle East, North Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>3</sup> They also made a commitment to support “the right to practice religious faith in safety and security” in response to the Arab Spring.<sup>4</sup> In December 2010, a revolution in Tunisia had triggered the Arab Spring, which developed into a series of anti-government uprisings in various countries in North Africa and the Middle East.<sup>5</sup> Such political upheavals often entailed violent religious conflicts. On 8 May 2012, for

---

<sup>1</sup> All G7/8 Commitments, 1975-2012, G8 Research Group (Toronto). Date of Access: 6 October 2013. [www.g8.utoronto.ca/evaluations/G8\\_commitments-to-2012.pdf](http://www.g8.utoronto.ca/evaluations/G8_commitments-to-2012.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> All G7/8 Commitments, 1975-2012, G8 Research Group (Toronto). Date of Access: 6 October 2013. [www.g8.utoronto.ca/evaluations/G8\\_commitments-to-2012.pdf](http://www.g8.utoronto.ca/evaluations/G8_commitments-to-2012.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> G8 Declaration: Renewed Commitment for Freedom and Democracy, G8 Information Centre (Toronto) 27 May 2011. Date of Access: 6 October 2013. [www.g8.utoronto.ca/summit/2011deauville/2011-declaration-en.html](http://www.g8.utoronto.ca/summit/2011deauville/2011-declaration-en.html).

<sup>4</sup> Declaration of the G8 on the Arab Springs, G8 Research Group. Date of Access: 6 October 2013. [www.g8.utoronto.ca/summit/2011deauville/2011-arabsprings-en.html](http://www.g8.utoronto.ca/summit/2011deauville/2011-arabsprings-en.html).

<sup>5</sup> Oxford Dictionaries. Date of Access: 6 October 2013. <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/Arab-Spring>.

example, 12 people died in large-scale street fighting between hundreds of Muslims and Christians in Cairo.<sup>6</sup>

In 2012, the Arab Spring remained on the G8 agenda along with the issues of Iran's nuclear development and Afghanistan's economic transition.<sup>7</sup> The situation in the Middle East and North Africa continued to be unstable. In December 2011, for example, a Sunni extremist group killed 63 Shiite worshippers by detonating a bomb in the three Afghan cities – Kabul, Kandahar, and Mazar-i-Sharif.<sup>8</sup> The 2012 Camp David Summit Declaration therefore included more references to freedom of religion than the 2011 Deauville communiqué.<sup>9</sup> The Camp David declaration made a total of four references citing different countries and regions.<sup>10</sup> Out of the four references, two were aimed at Iran and Afghanistan. In response to the ongoing Arab Spring, another reference was directed at the Middle East and North Africa. The other was the commitment assessed in this report and did not limit its scope to a specific country or a region.

### Commitment Features

In assessing compliance of the G8 members, the commitment requires three initial definitions: 1) Whose rights and 2) what sort of rights were supported, and 3) what does “support” exactly mean? The commitment states that the support is aimed at “all people” with emphasis on “women.” According to the *G8/G20 Reference Manual*, there is no established guideline on how to interpret the word “including.”<sup>11</sup> In this report, as “all people” necessarily include “women,” the member does not have to specify women as a target of the support. However, actions emphasizing on women will be noted in the following assessment in order to reflect the will of G8 members to feature women in this commitment. Also, the member may take an action aimed at a specific country or a region, as it is impossible for a state policy to encompass virtually “all people” in the world.

In terms of content, the commitment features “freedom of religion in safety and security.” To receive a score of full compliance, +1, the member must specify religious freedom as a right to be supported. In doing so, such a member should also promote safety and security and any actions promoting religious freedom with particular emphasis on safety and security will be noted in the following assessment. That being said, freedom of religion is closely linked to the other fundamental human rights.<sup>12</sup> To receive the partial compliance score of 0, the member may take an action that supports any of the other fundamental

---

<sup>6</sup> Clashes in Cairo Leave 12 Dead and 2 Churches in Flames, *The New York Times* (New York) 8 May 2011. Date of Access: 6 October 2013. <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/09/world/middleeast/09egypt.html?ref=middleeast#>.

<sup>7</sup> Camp David Declaration, G8 Information Centre (Toronto) 19 May 2012. Date of Access: 6 October 2013. <http://www.g8.utoronto.ca/summit/2012campdavid/g8-declaration.html>.

<sup>8</sup> Rare Attacks on Shiites Kill Scores in Afghanistan, *The New York Times* (New York City) 8 May 2011. Date of Access: 6 October 2013.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/07/world/asia/suicide-bombers-attack-shiite-worshippers-in-afghanistan.html?page-wanted=all>.

<sup>9</sup> G8 Declaration: Renewed Commitment for Freedom and Democracy, G8 Information Centre (Toronto) 27 May 2011. Date of Access: 6 October 2013. [www.g8.utoronto.ca/summit/2011deauville/2011-declaration-en.html](http://www.g8.utoronto.ca/summit/2011deauville/2011-declaration-en.html). And, Camp David Declaration, G8 Information Centre (Toronto) 19 May 2012. Date of Access: 6 October 2013. <http://www.g8.utoronto.ca/summit/2012campdavid/g8-declaration.html>.

<sup>10</sup> Camp David Declaration, G8 Information Centre (Toronto) 19 May 2012. Date of Access: 6 October 2013. <http://www.g8.utoronto.ca/summit/2012campdavid/g8-declaration.html>.

<sup>11</sup> G8/G20 Reference Manual for Commitment and Compliance Coding, G8 Information Centre (Toronto) September 22 2011. Date of Access: 21 January 2014.

<http://www.g8.utoronto.ca/evaluations/compliancemanual-110922.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> Fundamental human rights are defined as the rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

human rights; however, it must explicitly state the term “human rights” in its description. If the member begins norm-violating behaviour domestically per “all people” or internationally, such a member receives the non-compliance score of -1. If the member takes no action regarding human rights, *i.e.* neither “supports” any of the fundamental human rights nor begins norm-violating behaviour, such a member also receives -1.

To “support” religious freedom or any of the other fundamental human rights, the member must take measures that entail substantial budgetary disbursement. Such measures include, but not limited to, establishing a human rights office in the government, implementing developmental programs abroad, and imposing sanctions on human rights perpetrators. Simply releasing statements that endorse international human rights norms does not count as “support,” as it does not require substantial budgetary disbursement. State actions may be an iteration of an existing commitment as long as substantial budgetary disbursement entails. Also, “support” is limited to an independent state action, which must be taken by the government, including the executive, legislature, and judicial branches, as opposed to individuals in the government or in the form of routine behaviour at international or supranational organizations, namely the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU). These are demanding criteria; in the previous compliance assessments, verbal affirmation of a Summit commitment has sometimes counted as compliance.<sup>13</sup> However, due to the nature of the freedom of religion, any state, especially among the G8 members, would no longer deny the principle of religious freedom. Therefore, “support” must be 1) an independent state action and 2) done with substantial budgetary allocation.

### Scoring

-1	The member begins norm-violating behaviour domestically or internationally, or the member takes no action regarding human rights, <i>i.e.</i> , neither “supports” any of the fundamental human rights nor begins norm-violating behaviour.
0	The member takes an action that “supports” any of the fundamental human rights without emphasis on freedom of religion. The member may take such an action as iteration of an existing commitment as long as substantive budgetary disbursement entails.
+1	The member takes measures to “support” the freedom of religion with emphasis on both or either “women” and “security and safety.” The member may take such measures as iteration of existing commitment as long as substantive budgetary disbursement entails.

### Canada: 1

Canada fully complied with its commitment to support religious freedom of all people. Canada established the Office of Religious Freedom, whose annual budget amounts to CAD 5 million.<sup>14</sup>

On 19 February 2013, Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced the establishment of the Office of Religious Freedom within the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. He announced the appointment of Dr. Andrew Bennett as the first Ambassador to the Office. The mandate of the Office was stated as “promoting freedom of religion or belief around the world.”<sup>15</sup> Specifically, the Office has three major objectives: 1) to “protect, and advocate on behalf of, religious minorities under threat”; 2) to “oppose religious hatred and intolerance”; and 3) to “promote Canadian values of pluralism and tolerance

<sup>13</sup> G8/G20 Reference Manual for Commitment and Compliance Coding, G8 Information Centre (Toronto) September 22 2011. Date of Access: 21 January 2014.

<http://www.g8.utoronto.ca/evaluations/compliancemanual-110922.pdf>.

<sup>14</sup> Background Information on the Office of Religion Freedom, Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada (Ottawa) 19 February 2013. Date of Access: 3 December 2013.

[http://www.international.gc.ca/religious\\_freedom-liberte\\_de\\_religion/background\\_document.aspx](http://www.international.gc.ca/religious_freedom-liberte_de_religion/background_document.aspx).

<sup>15</sup> PM Announces the Establishment of the Office of Religious Freedom, Prime Minister of Canada (Ottawa) 19 February 2013. Date of Access: 3 December 2013. <http://www.pm.gc.ca/eng/node/22000>.

abroad.”<sup>16</sup> By including “religious minorities under threat” in its provision, the Office has emphasized its commitment on safety and security of people whose religious rights are threatened.

To achieve these goals, the Office of Religious Freedom established the Religious Freedom Fund. The Fund finances projects operated in foreign countries that are experiencing religious intolerance and persecution.<sup>17</sup> Organizations operating or based in foreign countries are eligible to apply for the Fund, but their project must be operated outside Canada.<sup>18</sup>

Regarding women’s rights, Canada has shown its commitment in promoting gender equality, although this is not directly tied to the promotion of religious freedom.<sup>19</sup> Also, Canada’s global actions toward gender equality have largely remained routine behaviour at the UN level.

Canada established this new Office aimed at the promotion of religious freedom, allocating the annual budget of CAD 5 million to its projects. Therefore, Canada received the full compliance score of 1.

### **France: -1**

France did not comply with its commitment to support religious freedom of all people. Although France’s Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) is intended to help countries achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), the term “human rights” has never been employed in its description.<sup>20</sup> The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, France-Diplomatie, endorses the principle of the freedom of religion and belief, but its actions are taken through UN and EU bodies.<sup>21</sup> The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also affirms women’s rights as a priority issue; yet, no independent action has been reported.<sup>22</sup>

Moreover, France kept the controversial ban on facial veils in the public space. On 13 July 2010, the French Parliament had passed the legislation that prohibited people from wearing veils, such as the burqa and the niqab, in the public space.<sup>23</sup> Even before the Parliament passed the legislation, Amnesty International had expressed concerns that the French law would violate international human rights law, namely freedom of expression and religion of Muslim women who wore facial veils.<sup>24</sup> Human Rights Watch has also criticized the legislation by stating that the law interferes with the fundamental human

---

<sup>16</sup> Canada’s Office of Religious Freedom, Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada (Ottawa) 12 August 2013. Date of Access: 3 December 2013.

[http://www.international.gc.ca/religious\\_freedom-liberte\\_de\\_religion/index.aspx](http://www.international.gc.ca/religious_freedom-liberte_de_religion/index.aspx).

<sup>17</sup> The Religious Freedom Fund, Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada (Ottawa) 3 September 2013. Date of Access: 3 December 2013. [http://www.international.gc.ca/religious\\_freedom-liberte\\_de\\_religion/fund\\_fond.aspx](http://www.international.gc.ca/religious_freedom-liberte_de_religion/fund_fond.aspx).

<sup>18</sup> The Religious Freedom Fund, Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada (Ottawa) 3 September 2013. Date of Access: 3 December 2013. [http://www.international.gc.ca/religious\\_freedom-liberte\\_de\\_religion/fund\\_fond.aspx](http://www.international.gc.ca/religious_freedom-liberte_de_religion/fund_fond.aspx).

<sup>19</sup> Canada’s commitment to gender equality and the advancement of women’s rights, Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada (Ottawa) 12 August 2013. Date of Access: 17 January 2014.

<http://www.international.gc.ca/rights-droits/women-femmes/equality-egalite.aspx>.

<sup>20</sup> France and Overseas Development Assistance, France-Diplomatie (Paris). Date of Access: 3 December 2013.

[http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/IMG/pdf/Text\\_APD\\_ENG\\_0813\\_access.pdf](http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/IMG/pdf/Text_APD_ENG_0813_access.pdf).

<sup>21</sup> Freedom of religion or belief, France-Diplomatie (Paris). Date of Access: 17 January 2014.

<http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy-1/human-rights/freedom-of-religion-or-belief/>.

<sup>22</sup> Women’s rights, France-Diplomatie (Paris). Date of Access: 17 January 2014.

<http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy-1/human-rights/women-s-rights/>

<sup>23</sup> Parliament Moves France Closer to a Ban on Facial Veils, The New York Times 13 July 2010 (New York City). Date of Access: 3 December 2013. <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/14/world/europe/14burqa.html>.

<sup>24</sup> Bans on Full Face Veils would Violate International Human Rights Law, Amnesty International (London) 21 April 2010. Date of Access: 4 December 2013.

<http://www.amnestymena.org/en/Magazine/Issue16/Hijab.aspx?articleID=1021>.

rights of women.<sup>25</sup> As the legislation is implicitly targeted at Muslim women, the French ban on facial veils is vastly at odds with the G8 commitment, which intended to protect the freedom of religion with emphasis on women.

While France did not begin norm-violating behaviour, it did not attempt to improve religious freedom or the other fundamental human rights in an explicit manner. Therefore, France received the non-compliance score of -1.

### Germany: 1

Germany fully complied with its commitment to support religious freedom of all people. The German Bundestag set up the Committee of Human Rights and Humanitarian Aid for the 17<sup>th</sup> electoral term (2009-2013) along with the other 21 permanent committees, *e.g.* the Budget Committee and the Defence Committee.<sup>26</sup> The mandate of the Committee is “to help stop violations of and avert threats to human rights – both in Germany and also internationally,” thus emphasizing safety and security components.<sup>27</sup>

Germany’s Federal Foreign Office is proactively engaging in human rights policy. Promoting freedom of religion or belief is one of the major objectives of the Office along with children’s rights, women’s rights, and the rights of persons with disabilities *etc.*<sup>28</sup> On 11 May 2013, Foreign Minister Westerwelle affirmed support for the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion and Belief, Heiner Bielefeldt.<sup>29</sup> Although the Office’s priority issue areas encompassed the promotion of women’s rights, its actions to address gender inequalities remained at the UN level.<sup>30</sup>

The Federal Foreign Office also supported a government-funded NGO, the Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung (KAS), to promote “tolerance and freedom of worship” in Tanzania.<sup>31</sup> On 15 June 2013, the KAS successfully held an inter-religious dialogue in Dar es Salaam with the support from its faith-based partners.<sup>32</sup> Every year, about 96% of the KAS’s total funds come from the government.<sup>33</sup>

Germany supported religious freedom abroad under the leadership of the Committee on Human Rights and Humanitarian Aid and in partnership with various nongovernmental organizations. Therefore, Germany received the full compliance score of 1.

---

<sup>25</sup> Banning Muslim Veil Denies Women a Choice, Too, Human Rights Watch 12 September 2013 (New York City). Date of Access: 4 December 2013.

<http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/09/23/banning-muslim-veil-denies-women-choice-too>.

<sup>26</sup> Permanent committees, Deutscher Bundestag (Berlin). Date of Access: 4 December 2013.

[http://www.bundestag.de/htdocs\\_e/bundestag/committees/index.html](http://www.bundestag.de/htdocs_e/bundestag/committees/index.html).

<sup>27</sup> Committee on Human Rights and Humanitarian Aid, Deutscher Bundestag (Berlin). Date of Access: 4 December 2013. [http://www.bundestag.de/htdocs\\_e/bundestag/committees/a17/index.jsp](http://www.bundestag.de/htdocs_e/bundestag/committees/a17/index.jsp).

<sup>28</sup> Freedom of religion or belief, Federal Foreign Office (Berlin). Date of Access: 4 December 2013.

[http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/Aussenpolitik/Menschenrechte/Religions\\_Glaubensfreiheit\\_node.html](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/Aussenpolitik/Menschenrechte/Religions_Glaubensfreiheit_node.html).

<sup>29</sup> Foreign Minister Westerwelle underscores German Government’s efforts to advance freedom of religion, Federal Foreign Office (Berlin) 11 May 2013. Date of Access: 5 December 2013.

<http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/Infoservice/Presse/Meldungen/2012/120511-Religionsfreiheit.html>

<sup>30</sup> Women’s rights, Federal Foreign Office (Berlin). Date of Access: 18 January 2014.

[http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/Aussenpolitik/Menschenrechte/Frauenrechte/Frauen\\_Uebersicht\\_node.html](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/Aussenpolitik/Menschenrechte/Frauenrechte/Frauen_Uebersicht_node.html).

<sup>31</sup> Interfaith dialogue project supported by Germany – A full success, Deutsche Botschaft,

Daressalam (Dar es Salaam). Date of Access: 5 December 2013.

[http://www.daressalam.diplo.de/Vertretung/daressalam/en/03/Seite\\_\\_Bo\\_\\_KAS.html](http://www.daressalam.diplo.de/Vertretung/daressalam/en/03/Seite__Bo__KAS.html).

<sup>32</sup> Peace and Tolerance in Tanzania, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (Dar es Salaam) 18 June 2013. Date of Access: 5 December 2013. <http://www.kas.de/tanzania/en/publications/34746/>.

<sup>33</sup> Funding, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (Berlin) 5 August 2010. Date of Access: 5 December 2013.

<http://www.kas.de/wf/en/71.3712/>.

**Italy: -1**

Italy did not comply with its commitment to support religious freedom. While the Ministry of Foreign Affairs claims that Italy is “highly active on human rights issues,”<sup>34</sup> it failed to provide specific examples to the public.

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Italy’s foreign policy covers a wide range of human rights issues including freedom of religion, women’s rights, and children’s rights.<sup>35</sup> In regard to freedom of religion, Italy works through the EU and the UN. In promoting women’s rights, Italy has implemented its Action Plan from 2010 to 2013 in accordance with UN Security Council resolution 1325.<sup>36</sup>

However, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not provide information regarding its independent human rights policy or action during the time period covered by this report. While the website states, “Italian action to protect and promote human right [in] the world is carried out through a number of bilateral and multilateral instruments,”<sup>37</sup> specific examples of such bilateral measures, *i.e.* Italy’s independent actions, were not available. Nor did the prime minister’s office, Governo Italiano, provide such information.

Italy has worked with the EU and the UN to promote freedom of religion; however, it has seldom taken independent actions. Therefore, Italy received the non-compliance score of -1.

**Japan: -1**

Japan did not comply with its commitment to support religious freedom. Japan failed to establish its first human rights institution<sup>38</sup> upon the dissolution of the Lower House in December 2012.

Japan engaged in the discussions at the UN General Assembly and its Third Committee, which is no more than a routine behaviour of the UN members. In regard to human rights protection, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs states, “Japan participates in the discussions in a constructive manner.”<sup>39</sup> However, Japan did not take independent actions to improve human rights, including women’s rights and religious rights, overseas; Japan’s commitment remained exclusively at the UN level.<sup>40</sup>

On 11 November 2012, the Democratic Party of Japan, the ruling party of the time, submitted the bill aimed at the establishment of the Human Rights Commission (HRC).<sup>41</sup> The HRC, according to Japan

<sup>34</sup> Italy and Human Rights, Ministero degli Affari Esteri (Rome) 4 January 2011. Date of Access: 5 December 2013. [http://www.esteri.it/MAE/EN/Politica\\_Estera/Temi\\_Globali/Diritti\\_Umani/LItalia\\_e\\_i\\_Diritti\\_Umani.html](http://www.esteri.it/MAE/EN/Politica_Estera/Temi_Globali/Diritti_Umani/LItalia_e_i_Diritti_Umani.html).

<sup>35</sup> Italy and Human Rights, Ministero degli Affari Esteri (Rome) 4 January 2011. Date of Access: 5 December 2013. [http://www.esteri.it/MAE/EN/Politica\\_Estera/Temi\\_Globali/Diritti\\_Umani/LItalia\\_e\\_i\\_Diritti\\_Umani.html](http://www.esteri.it/MAE/EN/Politica_Estera/Temi_Globali/Diritti_Umani/LItalia_e_i_Diritti_Umani.html).

<sup>36</sup> National Action Plan of Italy on “Women, Peace and Security” 2010-2013, Ministero degli Affari Esteri (Rome) 23 December 2010. Date of Access: 18 January 2014. [http://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/NationalActionPlans/italy\\_nationaactionplan\\_2010.pdf](http://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/NationalActionPlans/italy_nationaactionplan_2010.pdf).

<sup>37</sup> Italy and Human Rights, Ministero degli Affari Esteri (Rome) 4 January 2011. Date of Access: 5 December 2013. [http://www.esteri.it/MAE/EN/Politica\\_Estera/Temi\\_Globali/Diritti\\_Umani/LItalia\\_e\\_i\\_Diritti\\_Umani.htm](http://www.esteri.it/MAE/EN/Politica_Estera/Temi_Globali/Diritti_Umani/LItalia_e_i_Diritti_Umani.htm). Also, the original text in the brackets was “is.”

<sup>38</sup> Statement on the "Draft Bill on the Establishment of a Human Rights Commission" Approved by the Cabinet, Japan Federation of Bar Association (Tokyo) 19 September 2012. Date of Access: 5 December 2013. <http://www.nichibenren.or.jp/en/document/statements/year/2012/120919.html>.

<sup>39</sup> Japan's Efforts in Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations (New York). Date of Access: 6 December 2013. [http://www.un.emb-japan.go.jp/topics/human\\_right.html](http://www.un.emb-japan.go.jp/topics/human_right.html).

<sup>40</sup> Jinkengaiko (Human Rights Diplomacy), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Tokyo). Date of Access: 6 December 2013. <http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/jinken.html>.

<sup>41</sup> DPJ submits human rights panel bill, The Japan Times (Tokyo) 11 November 2012. Date of Access: 6 December 2013. <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2012/11/11/national/dpj-submits-human-rights-panel-bill/#.UqODEGRDueB>.

Federation of Bar Association, would have met the Paris Principles adapted by the UN.<sup>42</sup> On 16 November 2012, however, the government dissolved the Lower House,<sup>43</sup> thereby collapsing the bill before its enactment. On 16 December 2012, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), led by Shinzo Abe, achieved a landslide victory in the Lower House election.<sup>44</sup> The LDP, the new ruling party, has never submitted the equivalence of the HRC bill.

While Japan has worked at the UN level, it did not take independent actions to promote fundamental human rights, at least in a systematic way. Japan also failed to establish the HRC due to the dissolution of the Lower House. Therefore, Japan received the non-compliance score of -1.

### **Russia: -1**

Russia did not comply with its commitment to support religious freedom. Rather, Russia restricted freedom of expression by establishing the ban on homosexual “propaganda.”<sup>45</sup>

On 11 June 2013, six days before the G8 Lough Erne Summit, the Lower House of the State Duma passed a bill that banned campaigns for homosexual rights with the fines of up to USD 16,200.<sup>46</sup> Amnesty International warned that the law would violate freedom of expression, as “there is no legal definition in the Russian law of what constitutes ‘propaganda of homosexuality’ and the law could be interpreted very loosely.”<sup>47</sup> Human Rights Watch also called for the rejection of the law, as it restricts freedom of expression beyond any reasonable extent to “achieve a legitimate aim.”<sup>48</sup>

Furthermore, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs disclosed little evidence that Russia had supported religious freedom and the other fundamental human rights abroad. Although Russia has released a number of statements that confirm international human rights norms, it has never undertaken independent projects that necessitated substantial budgetary disbursement in 2012-2013.

---

<sup>42</sup> Statement on the "Draft Bill on the Establishment of a Human Rights Commission" Approved by the Cabinet, Japan Federation of Bar Association (Tokyo) 19 September 2012. Date of Access: 5 December 2013. <http://www.nichibenren.or.jp/en/document/statements/year/2012/120919.html>.

<sup>43</sup> Japan lower house dissolved for Dec 16 election, Reuters (Tokyo) 16 November 2012. November 2012. Date of Access: 7 December 2013. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/11/16/us-japan-election-dissolve-idUSBRE8AF0CA20121116>.

<sup>44</sup> LDP returns to power with crushing victory in Lower House, The Asahi Shimbun (Tokyo) 16 December 2012. Date of Access: 7 December 2013. [http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind\\_news/politics/AJ201212160030](http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201212160030).

<sup>45</sup> Russia Passes Bill Banning Gay 'Propaganda,' The Wall Street Journal (Moscow) 11 June 2013. Date of Access: 7 December 2013. <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424127887323495604578539220032220406>.

<sup>46</sup> Russia Passes Bill Banning Gay 'Propaganda,' The Wall Street Journal (Moscow) 11 June 2013. Date of Access: 7 December 2013. <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424127887323495604578539220032220406>. And, Russia's anti-gay 'propaganda law' assault on freedom of expression, Amnesty International (London) 25 January 2013. Date of Access: 8 December 2013. <http://www.amnesty.org/en/for-media/press-releases/russia-s-anti-gay-propaganda-law-assault-freedom-expression-2013-01-25>.

<sup>47</sup> Russia's anti-gay 'propaganda law' assault on freedom of expression, Amnesty International (London) 25 January 2013. Date of Access: 8 December 2013. <http://www.amnesty.org/en/for-media/press-releases/russia-s-anti-gay-propaganda-law-assault-freedom-expression-2013-01-25>.

<sup>48</sup> Russia: International Human Rights Law Breached by Russian Ban on “Homosexual Propaganda,” Human Rights Watch (New York City) 29 June 2013. Date of Access: 8 December 2013. <http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/06/29/russia-international-human-rights-law-breached-russian-ban-homosexual-propaganda>.

Russia has begun to restrict freedom of expression – particularly of homosexual persons – and has never taken independent actions toward religious freedom in safety and security. Therefore, Russia received a non-compliance score of -1.

### **United Kingdom: 1**

The United Kingdom fully complied with its commitment to support freedom of religion of all people. The United Kingdom funded over 70 projects through the Human Rights and Democracy Programme (HRDP), whose objectives included the protection of freedom of religion or belief.<sup>49</sup>

The HRDP is run by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Human Rights and Democracy Department. From April 2012 to March 2013, the HRDP spent GBP 6.5 million to support 71 programs, ranging from GBP 5,000 to GBP 275,000.<sup>50</sup> The HRDP had set priority issue areas, which included “freedom of religion and belief,” “discrimination against women,” and “global torture prevention,” thereby addressing both safety and gender components of the G8 commitment.<sup>51</sup> From April 2013 onward, freedom of religion or belief continued to be one of the HRDP's priorities.<sup>52</sup> To receive the funding from the HRDP, organizations must submit an application with a proposal that “clearly demonstrate how they will address the target areas.”<sup>53</sup>

The United Kingdom is also working with the Holy See to promote human rights and religious freedom.<sup>54</sup> On 1 March 2013, Nigel Baker, Ambassador to the Holy See, chaired the “Religion and Secularism in a Global Age” conference.<sup>55</sup>

The United Kingdom supported freedom of religion overseas through the HRDP, spending GBP 6.5 million in the fiscal year of 2012 to 2013. Therefore, the United Kingdom received the full compliance score of 1.

### **United States: 1**

The United States fully complied with its commitment to support freedom of religion via two governmental agencies: 1) The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) and 2) The Office of International Religious Freedom (OIRF) within the Department of State.

On 9 October 1998, the Senate had unanimously passed the International Religious Freedom Act, which provided the legal basis for the establishment of the USCIRF along with the OIRF.<sup>56</sup> The mandate of the

---

<sup>49</sup> Human Rights and Democracy 2012, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London). Date of Access: 8 December 2013. <http://www.hrdreport.fco.gov.uk/the-human-rights-and-democracy-programme/?showall=1>.

<sup>50</sup> Human Rights and Democracy 2012, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London). Date of Access: 8 December 2013. <http://www.hrdreport.fco.gov.uk/the-human-rights-and-democracy-programme/?showall=1>.

<sup>51</sup> Human Rights and Democracy 2012, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London). Date of Access: 8 December 2013. <http://www.hrdreport.fco.gov.uk/the-human-rights-and-democracy-programme/?showall=1>.

<sup>52</sup> FCO Human Rights and Democracy Programme Strategy 2013-14, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London). Date of Access: 8 December 2013. [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/82888/HRDP\\_2013\\_14\\_Strategy\\_Feb\\_2013.doc](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/82888/HRDP_2013_14_Strategy_Feb_2013.doc).

<sup>53</sup> Human Rights and Democracy Programme, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London) 25 July 2013. Date of Access: 8 December 2013. <https://www.gov.uk/human-rights-and-democracy-programme>.

<sup>54</sup> Promoting human rights and freedom of religion and belief with the Holy See, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London) 22 March 2013. Date of Access: 8 December 2013. <https://www.gov.uk/government/priority/promoting-human-rights-and-freedom-of-religion-and-belief-with-the-holy-see#issue>.

<sup>55</sup> The dialogue between faith and reason, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London) 4 March 2013. Date of Access: 9 December 2013. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/the-dialogue-between-faith-and-reason--2>.

USCIRF is to monitor “the status of freedom of religion or belief abroad” and to provide “policy recommendations to the President, the Secretary of State, and Congress.”<sup>57</sup> The 2013 USCIRF annual report covered 23 countries that unjustly restricted freedom of religion.<sup>58</sup>

On the other hand, the OIRF annual report covers 195 countries throughout the world, describing the status of religious freedom in each country.<sup>59</sup> The OIRF also provides financial assistance for projects that “promote religious freedom and combat anti-Semitism around the world.”<sup>60</sup>

However, neither the USCIRF nor the OIRF made an explicit commitment to safety and gender issues. One of the rare exceptions is as follows: On 20 May 2013, the Department of State made a statement that pledges to “encourag[e] accountability for religious-based violence and ensuring the protection of citizens and places of worship.”<sup>61</sup> It must be noted that while the United States maintains a rich program to combat religious freedom and anti-Semitism in particular, its focus on gender discrimination is relatively scarce.

The House has a bipartisan caucus for human rights, the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission (TLHRC). In 1983, John Edward Porter and Tom Lantos, a Holocaust survivor himself, had jointly founded the Congressional Human Rights Caucus.<sup>62</sup> After the death of Tom Lantos, the Caucus was renamed the TLFRC. The mission of the TLHRC is “to promote, defend and advocate internationally recognized human rights norms in a nonpartisan manner.”<sup>63</sup> On 7 June 2012, the TLHRC welcomed the Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act, which would impose a visa ban and an asset freeze on individuals who are responsible for the death and torture of Sergei Magnitsky, a whistleblower of human rights violations in Russia.<sup>64</sup>

Through the USCIRF and the OIRF, the United States has published the reports on countries that violate religious freedom and has funded civil society aimed at the promotion of freedom of religion, although its focus on safety and gender issues was relatively weak. The United States maintained its bipartisan human rights caucus, the TLHRC, highly active. Therefore, the United States receives the full compliance score of 1.

---

<sup>56</sup> Bill to Punish Nations Limiting Religious Beliefs Passes Senate, The New York Times (Washington) 10 October 1998. Date of Access: 8 December 2013.

<http://www.nytimes.com/1998/10/10/world/bill-to-punish-nations-limiting-religious-beliefs-passes-senate.html>.

<sup>57</sup> Frequently Asked Questions, United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (Washington).

Date of Access: 8 December 2013. <http://www.uscirtf.gov/about-uscirtf/frequently-asked-questions.html>.

<sup>58</sup> Frequently Asked Questions, United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (Washington).

Date of Access: 8 December 2013. <http://www.uscirtf.gov/about-uscirtf/frequently-asked-questions.html>.

<sup>59</sup> Religious Freedom, U.S. Department of State (Washington). Date of Access: 9 December 2013.

<http://www.state.gov/j/drl/irf/>

<sup>60</sup> U.S. Policy and Programs in Support of International Religious Freedom, U.S. Department of State (Washington) 20 May 2013. Date of Access: 9 December 2013. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2013/05/209666.htm>.

<sup>61</sup> U.S. Policy and Programs in Support of International Religious Freedom, U.S. Department of State (Washington) 20 May 2013. Date of Access: 21 January 2014.

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2013/05/209666.htm>.

<sup>62</sup> About The Committee, Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission United States Congress (Washington). Date of Access: 9 December 2013. <http://tlhrc.house.gov/about.asp>.

<sup>63</sup> About The Committee, Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission United States Congress (Washington). Date of Access: 9 December 2013. <http://tlhrc.house.gov/about.asp>.

<sup>64</sup> Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission Welcomes Unanimous Approval of Important Russia and Lord’s Resistance Army Human Rights Measures by House Foreign Affairs Committee, Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission United States Congress (Washington). Date of Access: 9 December 2013.

[http://tlhrc.house.gov/press\\_display.asp?id=1593](http://tlhrc.house.gov/press_display.asp?id=1593).

## European Union: 1

The EU fully complied with its commitment to support religious freedom through various instruments in the European Commission and the European Parliament.

On 20 December 2006, the European Parliament and the Council had passed the legislation that established the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) within the Commission.<sup>65</sup> For the period of 2007-2013, the EIDHR secured a budget of EUR 1.104 billion to provide support for projects and organizations that promote human rights and democracy in non-EU countries.<sup>66</sup> The EIDHR is funding the protection of individuals who are persecuted or discriminated against on religious grounds.<sup>67</sup> On 25 June 2012, the Council adopted the EU Strategic Framework and the Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy, which encompassed new guidelines on freedom of religion or belief.<sup>68</sup> On 19 October 2012, in accordance with the guidelines, the EU hosted the first consultation round with civil society, *i.e.* religious, non-religious, and philosophical groups, in Brussels.<sup>69</sup>

On 17 December 2012, a group of like-minded Members of the Parliament established the European Parliament Working Group on Freedom of Religion or Belief (EPWG on FoRB) in order to “promote and protect [freedom of religion and belief] in the EU’s external actions.”<sup>70</sup> In April 2013, European Parliament Vice President Lazlo Surjan and the EPWG on FoRB co-hosted an event on religious freedom in the world in 2012.<sup>71</sup>

The EU’s external action on human rights is wide-ranging. In addition to the freedom of religion, the EU seeks to promote women’s rights, abolition of the death penalty, children’s rights *etc.* Regarding women’s rights, the EU had set up “The Guidelines on violence against women and girls” in 2008, and it is still in place.<sup>72</sup> Thereby, the EU has addressed safety and gender components of the G8 commitment.

The EU has provided financial assistance for projects and organizations aimed at the protection of human rights through the EIDHR. The EPWG on FoRB also worked in the European Parliament to support the EU’s external actions. Therefore, the EU received the full compliance score of 1.

---

<sup>65</sup> A financing instrument for the promotion of democracy and human rights in the world (2007 – 2013), The European Union (Brussels) 15 October 2009. Date of Access: 9 December 2013.

[http://europa.eu/legislation\\_summaries/development/general\\_development\\_framework/114172\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/development/general_development_framework/114172_en.htm).

<sup>66</sup> European Instrument for Democracy & Human Rights (EIDHR), The European Commission (Brussels) 17 February 2012. Date of Access: 9 December 2013. [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/eidhr\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/eidhr_en.htm).

<sup>67</sup> EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World in 2012, The Council of the European Union (Brussels) 13 May 2013. Date of Access: 9 December 2013.

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&t=PDF&gc=true&sc=false&f=ST%209431%202013%20INIT&r=http%3A%2F%2Fregister.consilium.europa.eu%2Fpd%2Fen%2F13%2Fst09%2Fst09431.en13.pdf>.

<sup>68</sup> EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy, The Council of the European Union (Brussels) 25 June 2012. Date of Access: 9 December 2013.

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/131181.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/131181.pdf).

<sup>69</sup> EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World in 2012, The Council of the European Union (Brussels) 13 May 2013. Date of Access: 9 December 2013.

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&t=PDF&gc=true&sc=false&f=ST%209431%202013%20INIT&r=http%3A%2F%2Fregister.consilium.europa.eu%2Fpd%2Fen%2F13%2Fst09%2Fst09431.en13.pdf>.

<sup>70</sup> About us, European Parliament Working Group on Freedom of Religion or Belief. Date of Access: 9 December 2013. <http://www.religiousfreedom.eu/about-us/>.

<sup>71</sup> Events, European Parliament Working Group on Freedom of Religion or Belief. Date of Access: 9 December 2013. <http://www.religiousfreedom.eu/our-work/events/>.

<sup>72</sup> EU action to protect and promote women’s rights, European Union External Action. Date of Access: 21 January 2014. [http://eeas.europa.eu/human\\_rights/women/index\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/human_rights/women/index_en.htm).