



ADF INTERNATIONAL

36th Session of the Human Rights Council
UPR Outcomes (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), Item 6

Mr. President,

ADF International is disappointed that its concerns raised and recommendations made with respect to the United Kingdom do not seem to have been taken into account in its review by the Working Group on the UPR.

We wish to have a clear commitment given by the British government that it will not liberalize abortion laws in the United Kingdom any further than it already has, particularly that it will not remove abortion from the *Offences Against the Person Act 1861*, thereby effectively making any time limits and procedural safeguards in the *Abortion Act 1967* completely unenforceable. Abortion is already an egregious violation of the right to life under Article 6 of the ICCPR, especially in light of sub-article (5), and to take this a step further by decriminalizing it entirely is, in the words of Jacob Rees-Mogg MP, morally indefensible.

Moreover, it is crucial that provisions exempting medical professionals from having to participate in any way, directly or indirectly, in an abortion-related service continue to exist and are bolstered in their scope, contrary to the agenda of certain organizations that support abortion. Article 18 of the ICCPR guarantees the right to freedom of thought, religion, and conscience to everyone, and it is a well-established principle in international human rights law that where the obligation to use any sort of lethal force seriously conflicts with one's freedom of conscience and religion, the right to conscientious objection is guaranteed.

In addition to this, it is of the utmost importance that the so-called "Counter-extremism and Safeguarding Bill," first proposed by the current Prime Minister in her capacity as Home Secretary, never again see the light of day. Its vague and undefined concepts of "British values" and "nonviolent extremism" open the door to what Simon Cole, the police lead for the government's counter-radicalization program, has called "thought policing."

If a so-called "counter-extremism commission" is to be established, its scope should be mediatory rather than regulatory or having the power to pursue legal action. In the latter case, such a path would lead to the shutting down of legitimate speech and freedom of expression under the guise of "combatting terrorism," in total violation of Articles 19 and 20 of the Covenant. Under no circumstances can this be permitted to occur.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Une alliance consacrée à la défense juridique de la liberté

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