



Coordination des Associations et des Particuliers pour la Liberté de Conscience

FECRIS, a NGO financed by the French government

The *Coordination des Associations et des Particuliers Pour la Liberté de Conscience* (Coordination of Associations and Individuals for Freedom of Conscience) was created in 2000 to defend religious minorities against discrimination in France and in Europe.

The Coordination is a NGO that is recognized by the UN.

Mr. Valls, the current Prime Minister of France, recalled some weeks ago at the National Assembly that in France there is no legal definition of the word « sect/cult ».

However, the department of French PM fully finances (100%) an association called FECRIS (European Federation of Research and Information Centers on Sectarianism), which is recognized by the Council of Europe and the UN as a NGO and the objective of which is, according to its bylaws, to identify « as a sect/cult or a guru the organization or the individual which misuses beliefs and behavioral techniques for his own benefit ».

How can a Prime Minister declare that there is no legal definition of a sect/ cult in France and at the same time finance at the level of 100% a NON-GOVERNMENTAL association whose objective is to point at “sects/cults”?

Moreover, FECRISⁱ says in its bylaws that « the action of the Federation is neither religious nor political ».

If the action of FECRIS is not religious and claims to be neutral in this regard, how can it explain that an organization registered in a secular state – France – is massively financed with the money of all French tax-payers, while its vice-president, Alexander Dvorkin, a Russian citizen is blessed and financed by the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church for its anti-sect activities. This same Russian Orthodox Church which, along with Putin, has been persecuting religious minorities for years in Russia.

Moreover, some time ago, Alexander Dvorkin fiercely criticized Falun Gongⁱⁱ.

How can Alexander Dvorkin, vice-president of FECRIS, attack Falun Gong while the persecution of its members has been extensively denounced in UN reports since the years 2000ⁱⁱⁱ ?

How can France go on financing an association like FECRIS which attacks a group like Falun Gong whose persecutions are recognized by the UN ?

Even the current Prime Minister of France, Mr Valls, had expressed his deep concerns about the situation of Falun Gong practitioners in China when he was a member of the National Assembly. At that time, he had raised the issue of the fate of the Falun Gong practitioners in China with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France^{iv}.

A few years ago, FECRIS and its member associations have attacked an Italian sociologist because her report about a specific religious minority was not in line with the expectations of FECRIS and Italian anti-sect/cult associations^v.

Now, FECRIS attacks a minority group in Ukraine, as Human Rights Without Frontiers has recently reported^{vi}.

We therefore ask Mr Valls, France's Prime Minister, to put an end to the financial support of FECRIS, sending it back to its status of NON GOVERNMENTAL organisation.

ⁱ <http://chasseauxsorcières.fr/la-fecris/>

ⁱⁱ <http://www.hrwf.net/publications/reports/year-2012/473-freedom-of-religion-or-belief-anti-sect-movements-and-state-neutrality-a-case-study-fecris>

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.falunhr.org/index.php?option=content&task=category&id=111>

^{iv} <http://questions.assemblee-nationale.fr/q12/12-121026QE.htm>

^v <http://www.dimarzio.info/it/articoli/recensioni/102-recensioni-di-rdm/libri-e-riviste/239-un-caso-di-studio-la-fecris.html>

^{vi} <http://hrwf.eu/ukraine-followers-of-jewish-psychiatrist-leopold-szondi-accused-by-fecris-vice-president-alexander-dvorkin-of-belonging-to-a-cult/>