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‘Free to Believe’ – United Nations resolution

Open Doors is mounting a coordinated advocacy campaign - “Free to Believe”. We aim to raise awareness of the resolution raised by the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) known as the ‘Defamation of Religious Resolution’ and to prevent it from being passed by the General Assembly of the United Nations, this December in New York. The campaign includes:

- Organising a global petition to collect signatures from across the world in support of religious liberty and urging the rejection of the ‘Defamation of Religions Resolution’.
- Raising awareness of the issue through a media campaign.
- Working on advocacy at the United Nations to prevent the resolution being passed.

The voices of Christians around the world are vitally important to defeat the ‘Defamation of Religions Resolution’. To join the Open Doors advocacy, go to opendoors.org.au. Open Doors encourages you to sign the global petition to say **YES** to “Free to Believe” and **NO** to the ‘Defamation of Religions Resolution’.

The ‘Defamation of Religions Resolution’, originally “defamation of Islam” and first introduced to the Human Rights Commission in 1999, seeks to criminalise words or actions that are deemed to be against a particular religion, namely Islam. Although proponents justify the “defamation of religions” concept as protecting religious practice and promoting tolerance, it really promotes intolerance and violates the freedoms of religion and expression for religious minorities – especially Christians – in these countries.

The OIC, an inter-governmental organisation of 57 countries with majority or significant Muslim populations, has been the driving force behind the resolution. The OIC is expected to bring the Defamation of Religions resolution to the UN General Assembly once again this December.

Nigel Rooke CEO of Open Doors Australia says “many Christians living in these mostly Muslim countries are already severely impacted by restrictive laws – especially those living under strict Sharia law. From the right to worship freely to the ability to share the Gospel to validate blasphemy laws in countries like Pakistan, the ‘Defamation of Religions Resolution’ threatens to justify local laws that already marginalise Christians. The ‘Defamation of Religions Resolution’ gives a cloak of international respectability to persecution.”

Open Doors believes every person, has the right to choose and practice their religion based on their convictions and conscience, rather than their family of birth, ethnicity or people group.

As a result, There has already been a significant decrease in support for the resolution over recent years and organizations like Open Doors are very near to defeating it this year. Concerted action now could make all the difference.

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