

Press release: UK co-sponsors a UN resolution to commemorate victims of acts of violence based on religion or belief

Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) intersects with many other human rights. Where FoRB is under attack, other human rights are often threatened too.

The UK remains deeply concerned about violations of Freedom of Religion or Belief in many parts of the world. This year alone, we have seen a staggering number of attacks on places of worship: from the Philippines to Burkina Faso; New Zealand to Sri Lanka. All faiths and beliefs are vulnerable, and there is an urgent need to strengthen efforts to protect and promote the right to FoRB for all individuals.

The Resolution, tabled by Poland, marks an important step taken by the international community to defend the right to FoRB, and shows solidarity with victims of violence who are targeted because of their faith or belief.

The Resolution raises awareness within the international community of the scale of violence motivated by intolerance, and it promotes inter-religious and intercultural dialogue. It also encourages States to provide support and assistance to victims and their families.

The Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, said:

I welcome the adoption of the Resolution tabled by Poland. Violence and discrimination based on religion or belief blight the lives of millions of people around the world.

Protecting the right of people to practise their faith, or to have no faith at all, is an ongoing battle. No country is immune from intolerance.

I am proud that the UK co-sponsored this important resolution and call on all states to maintain momentum on combating intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief.