

Kardinaal: godsdienstvrijheid Europa's 'grote toekomstprobleem'

Katholiek Nieuwsblad, 17 juni 2021

De coronacrisis heeft laten zien dat godsdienstvrijheid in Europa kwetsbaar is, zegt de Luxemburgse kardinaal Hollerich. In een interview zei de kardinaal tevens dat de Kerk haar geloofwaardigheid moet herwinnen.

Volgens kardinaal Jean-Claude Hollerich worden aanvallen op religieuze vrijheid het grote probleem dat Europa in de toekomst zal ervaren. "Nu wordt de Kerk niet vervolgd; dat zou overdreven zijn", zei de kardinaal in een recent interview met het Italiaanse persbureau ACI Stampa. "Maar in sommige landen zijn er op bepaalde niveaus wel kleine aanvallen op de godsdienstvrijheid. Daarvoor moeten we op onze hoede zijn."

Fundamentele rechten herstellen

Hollerich is aartsbisschop van Luxemburg en voorzitter van de Commissie van de Bisschoppenconferenties van de Europese Unie (COMECE). Deze commissie werd in 1980 opgericht en bestaat uit de bisschoppenconferenties van de 27 EU-lidstaten.

Vorig jaar sprak COMECE zich uit tegen het langdurig dichthouden van kerken tijdens coronalockdowns met betrekking tot vrijheid van religie en vrijheid van erediensten. "COMECE benadrukt dat de afkalving van fundamentele rechten zoals godsdienstvrijheid in de huidige noodsituatie niet de nieuwe norm mag worden. Deze rechten moeten zodra het mogelijk is weer volledig hersteld worden", liet de commissie destijds weten.

Geloofwaardigheid herwinnen

In het gesprek met ACI Stampa noemde Hollerich het aantal katholieken dat tijdens de pandemie een Mis mocht bijwonen in België "belachelijk". Lange tijd mochten er slechts vijftien mensen per Mis aanwezig zijn in België; sinds deze maand is dat aantal opgeschroefd naar honderd. Ook bekritiseerde de kardinaal het langlopende verbod op openbare Missen in Ierland. Volgens de kardinaal heeft de Kerk in beide landen "een slechte reputatie".

"De Kerk moet zich op een eerlijke manier profileren om geloofwaardigheid te herwinnen", aldus kardinaal Hollerich. "Na de zaken van seksueel misbruik is dat hoognodig, zowel voor de samenleving als voor gelovigen, omdat veel mensen alle vertrouwen in de Kerk verloren hebben. Dit moet veranderen. We moeten ons zeer bescheiden opstellen en transparant zijn."

Eerder dit jaar zette Hollerich ook zijn vraagtekens bij een wetsvoorstel in Denemarken, dat eist dat alle preken in het Deens vertaald worden. Volgens de kardinaal zou dat een beperking van de godsdienstvrijheid zijn.

Recht op abortus

Momenteel houdt COMECE volgens kardinaal Hollerich een rapport voor het Europees Parlement in de gaten waarin gepleit wordt voor een "recht op abortus" en waarin gewetensbezwaar "onthouding van medische zorg" genoemd wordt. Het rapport is een poging "om het Europees Parlement te laten stemmen voor abortus als mensenrecht en tegen de vrijheid van geweten", zei Hollerich. "Daar zijn wij het natuurlijk niet mee eens." Over dat rapport zal het Parlement op 24 juni stemmen.

"Ik denk dat we duidelijk moeten maken dat zo'n rapport tegen het subsidiariteitsbeginsel is", aldus de kardinaal. Het subsidiariteitsbeginsel houdt in dat hogere instanties niet iets moeten doen wat een lagere instantie kan doen. "Abortuswetgeving is een aangelegenheid van landen, niet van de EU. Daarom zou het een

grote zonde zijn als de EU geen respect heeft voor de subsidiariteit die zij zo hoog in het vaandel heeft staan.” Volgens kardinaal Hollerich is dat het beste argument om EU-politici ervan te overtuigen om tegen de voorstellen uit het rapport te stemmen.

Overgenomen met toestemming van [Katholiek Nieuwsblad](#).

Matić rapport: COMECE roept EU parlement op met verantwoordelijkheid te stemmen

CEMCE, 17 juni 2021

The Secretariat of the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Union (CEMCE) released a position paper on the 'Matić Report' on Thursday 17 June 2021, ahead of its final submission to the upcoming EU Parliament Plenary session. The Catholic Church recognises the importance of protecting the health and rights of women and calls on all MEPs to take into account the sensitive and complexity of the issue at stake, which *"requires a lawful and ethical balancing of all rights involved"*.

In view of the final vote on the draft report on *"The situation of sexual and reproductive health and rights in the EU, in the framework of women's health"*, often referred to as the 'Matić Report', the Secretariat of CEMCE releases a position paper highlighting the importance the Catholic Church gives to human health as *"an essential basis for a dignified life"*.

In the document, the Secretariat of CEMCE welcomes *"the fundamental concern of the report to protect the health and rights of women"*, while expressing objections to several representations and arguments made in the draft resolution.

In violation of the subsidiarity principle, the draft resolution disregards the responsibility of the Member States to define their health policy and the organisation and delivery of health services and medical care. *"This is also and especially true in highly sensitive areas such as the regulations adopted by the Member States on the conditions for abortion"* - reads the statement.

The CEMCE position paper notes with regret that *"the draft resolution is characterised by a one-sided perspective throughout, particularly on the issue of abortion, which does not take full account of the life situations of the persons concerned and of their corresponding human rights"*.

According to the CEMCE Secretariat, the Matić Report also *"negates the fundamental right to conscientious objection, which is an emanation of freedom of conscience as foreseen by Article 10.1 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union"*.

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In consideration of the above-mentioned elements and ahead of the June 2021 EP Plenary session, the CEMCE Secretariat calls on all MEPs to duly consider the sensitivity and complexity of medical accompaniment, which requires a lawful and ethical balancing of all rights involved.



[Matić rapportDownload](#)



[COMECE position paper on Matić reportDownload](#)

Vaticaanse diplomaat bij VN: Reproductieve rechten betreffen niet abortus

Statement of H.E. Archbishop Bernardito Auza, Apostolic Nuncio, Permanent Observer of the Holy See

Fifty-Second Session of the Commission on Population and Development, Agenda Item 3(b): Review and appraisal of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and its contribution to the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

New York, 3 April 2019

Mr. Chair,

As we call to mind the 25th anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo and consider the follow-up to its Program of Action in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, my Delegation is aware of the many challenges that the international community still faces to achieve the goal of greater, integral human development.

The ICPD was an important milestone in the world's understanding of the interrelationship between population and development, indeed considering the linkage between these two for the first time. All forms of coercion in the implementation of population policies were rejected. The family, based on marriage, was recognized as the fundamental unit of society, and as entitled to comprehensive support and protection. Strong impetus was given to the improvement of the status of women throughout the world, particularly with regard to their health, and their full and equal participation in development. The expanding phenomenon of migration was considered along with its impact on development.

Since then, development has been and remains the proper context for the international community's consideration of population issues. Within such discussions there naturally arise questions relating to the transmission and nurturing of human life. To formulate and position population issues, however, in terms of individual "sexual and reproductive rights" is to change the focus from that which should be the proper concern of governments and international agencies. Suggesting that reproductive health includes a right to abortion explicitly violates the language of the ICPD, defies moral and legal standards within domestic legislations and divides efforts to address the real needs of mothers and children, especially those yet unborn.

Moreover, questions involving the transmission of life and its subsequent nurturing cannot be adequately dealt with except in relation to the good of the family, which the Universal Declaration of Human Rights defines as "the natural and fundamental group unit of society." [1]

Governments and society ought to promote social policies that have the family as their principal object, assisting it by providing adequate resources and efficient means of support, both for bringing up children and looking after the elderly, to strengthen relations between generations and avoid distancing the elderly from the family unit.

Mr. Chair,

Another landmark of the ICPD was the link between migration and development. Ever since, there has been increased sensitivity, research, cooperation and effective policies in this field, leading to the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. Migration is a global phenomenon; one which is linked to development and poverty, as well as to financial and health security. In particular, migrants are now seen as proactive agents of development. Nonetheless, negative stereotypes of migrants are, at times, exploited to promote policies detrimental to their rights and dignity, and migrants, especially children and women, are often victims of trafficking. These are issues that demand our attention when tackling problems concerning population and development.

This topic also has strong environmental implications. While population growth is often blamed for environmental problems, we know that the matter is much more complex. Wasteful patterns of consumption, growing inequalities, the unsustainable exploitation of natural resources, the absence of restrictions or safeguards in industries, all endanger the natural environment. Research across several decades shows, with insignificant variations, that inequalities in consumption are stark. Globally, the 20% of the world's highest-income people account for 86% of total consumption, while the poorest 20% a mere 1.3%. Confronted with these and other data that demonstrate drastic inequalities, Pope Francis exhorts us to an "ecological conversion,"^[2] which calls for a change to a more modest lifestyle and responsible consumption, and for a greater awareness of the universal destination of the world's resources.

Mr. Chair,

The Holy See is fully aware of the complexity of the issues involved in the review and appraisal of the ICPD Programme of Action. This very complexity requires that we carefully weigh the consequences for present and future generations of the strategies and recommendations to be proposed. Fundamental questions like the transmission of life, the family, and the material and moral development of society, need very serious consideration. The Holy See stands ready to make its contribution toward finding ways to building a world of genuine equality, fraternity and peace.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Notes

1. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 16.3.
2. Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*, 216.