



EUROPEAN UNION
Permanent Delegation to the United Nations Office
and other international organisations in Geneva

**FORUM ON MINORITY ISSUES:
Beyond Freedom of Religion or Belief: Guaranteeing the rights of
religious minorities**

6th session, 26-27 November 2013

**Item 5 – Promotion of constructive interfaith dialogue, consultation
and exchange**

EU Intervention

Madam President,

Fostering interfaith dialogue and promoting a culture of understanding and a spirit of acceptance, as foreseen in draft recommendations no. 53-56, is of the utmost importance for the creation of a society where all human rights are fully respected, without discrimination of any kind. The EU is fully conscious of this fact, and strives to create an environment conducive to the full enjoyment by all persons of freedom of religion and belief.

In this connection, we have undertaken to encourage influential actors, including States and religious actors, to foster inter- and intra-religious dialogue, to support initiatives to promote an atmosphere of respect and tolerance between all persons regardless of their religion or belief, and to defuse emerging tensions.

We ourselves are making use of all available tools, including financial instruments, to promote a culture of mutual respect, diversity, tolerance, dialogue and peace, and are eager to cooperate with international organizations and regional mechanisms to reach that goal.

We would also like to seize this opportunity to call on other States to promote, through the educational system and other means, respect for diversity and mutual understanding by encouraging a wider knowledge of the diversity of religions and beliefs within their jurisdiction.

Thank you.