



The French delegation is pleased to take part in this commission since we are deeply engaged in the task of guaranteeing Human Rights. Rights which are sometimes forgotten these days. The French government is really concerned about two main issues, religious freedom and the access to contraceptives.

Religious oppression has existed since the very beginnings of mankind. This issue is an actual concern for the French government. Article number 10 of the Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen, signed in 1789, defends the right of every person to have different religious views. So does article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) by the United Nations (UN) and the French constitution.

Our legislation was not aimed at being a weapon against religion but it intended to guarantee the peaceful co-existence among religions in respect of the laws and principles of the Republic. Nowadays, religious diversity is bigger than ever and that is why secularism is vital.

Even if our national values have been tested with attacks by Islamic-extremist groups these last years, starting with the Charlie Hebdo attacks on January 2015, our nation firmly believes that religious freedom must be respected and protected.

Access to contraceptives is another big concern for the French government. Contraceptive use in France has been legal for the last 30 years. As well as the right to religious freedom, the right to access to contraceptives has been recognised by the UN in order to promote the full realization of women's and adolescents' fundamental rights.

We believe that access to contraceptives should be allowed for every person for two main reasons:

- The first one is related to abortion. Abortion in France is allowed up to 12 weeks after conception. As there is some criticism against abortions carried out by pro-life associations, giving access to every women to contraceptives may be a way for the percentage of pregnant women to decrease and consequently abortion rate too.
- The second one is related to sexually transmitted diseases. Because of the denial of some countries to the access of contraceptives, there is a high rate of sexually transmitted diseases such as the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). Ensuring the access to contraceptives might decrease the rate of sexually transmitted diseases, particularly in non-developed countries where there are not enough medical facilities.