



THE PERMANENT MISSION  
OF MALTA TO THE UN GENEVA

## HRC 52 – Item 3 - Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief 14 March 2023

Statement by Mr. Bernard Charles Mifsud, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Malta to the UN and Other International Organisations in Geneva

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*Check against delivery*

Thank you, Mr. President,

Malta aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union.

We thank Special Rapporteur Ghanea for her report providing an overview of what is being done to uphold the right to freedom of religion or belief, and applaud her for her active participation in various fora since August.

Despite the multiple international instruments and Conventions aimed at recognising and upholding the right to freedom of religion or belief, it is regrettable that so many people around the world are still being deprived of this right. More action is needed by everyone starting from individuals in communities, to leaders of international organizations to raise awareness of this right, and to ensure that it is upheld by all for all.

We consider the three key dimensions on which the Special Rapporteur will be focusing her efforts to be pertinent and comprehensive. Everyone's right to freedom of religion or belief, free from discrimination or persecution must be ensured. Moreover, religion or belief should not be considered to be grounds for violence or conflict against persons or groups.

The next report of the Special Rapporteur will look into the role of local and national actors in supporting states to uphold FoRB. How important would you consider the role of the media to be in this regard?

Thank you.