

Aboul-Fotouh: Religions Freedom Report Targets Political Blackmail



2006 annual US Department of State report around the religious freedoms has condemned the retreat of the situation of religious freedoms in many countries, including Egypt. The report declared that despite latest constitutional amendments which stressed on the principle of equality of citizenship rights regardless of religion, there are still clear injustices and repressions¹ of course beside some improvements.

For his part, Dr. Abdel Moneim Abul Fotouh, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) executive office, rejected the content of this report.

¹ America should rather condemn itself first, and then issues reports against others are issued. The status quo is sour in Egypt, but we reject any intervention from the US administration for a blackmail .²

He said he doesn't want to comment of such a US report because the truth and neutrality of the US administration in issuing the reports is questioned and because it also exploits such reports to blackmail regimes in various countries.

It doesn't aim to apply results of such reports results for the good of nations.

As for the religious freedoms in Egypt, he said: "Egyptian regime persecutes all Egyptians in general³ Muslims, Copts or any other. It exercises a political and social exclusion against all political and social powers in Egypt .⁴

Regarding the effect of such reports, Dr. Abd Al-Moneim said: "Undoubtedly, this report may increase the gap between Muslims and other sects in Egypt. This is because the report contains a flagrant exaggeration which is divorced from reality. There is no shred of accuracy in this report."⁵

⁶Some parties in Egypt may exploit such a report to achieve their interests, also through showing Copts in Egypt as oppressed, which is actually divorced from reality⁷.

'If we compare between rights given to our Coptic brothers in Egypt, with rights given to Muslims in France or any other western country in general, we will find that situations in Egypt are much better than many other countries', added Dr. Abd Al-Moneim.

Regarding the MB view towards the freedom of religions, Dr. Abd Al-Moneim said: 'We believe in the Quranic verse ' He who wills believes and he who wills disbelieves'.

'We also differ between that a human being has a freedom of choice of religion and the creed he wants, and between absurdities. What is currently taking place in Egypt is absurd and an offense to religions. The misunderstanding comes from here.

We believe in the human freedom in choosing with a complete will whatever creed or religion the one chooses. Otherwise, the one will become a hypocrite as he embraces a religion although he isn't convinced because he fears repercussions, something that Islam totally rejects.

'Islam believes in the full freedom in choosing religions on the basis of a really free will, away from any effects or attempts of a political or partisan exploitation from some specific parties which is unfortunately taking place'.