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## **Press Statement from H.E. Silvano M. Tomasi, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva, on "Supporting the Human Rights of Christians and other Communities, particularly in the Middle East"**

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As an act of solidarity with those Christians and persons from other communities suffering from grave and continuous violations of their human rights, a core group composed of the Russian Federation, Holy See and Lebanon, has formulated a Joint Statement entitled "Supporting the Human Rights of Christians and other Communities, particularly in the Middle East." While highlighting the perilous situation that Christians face in that region, the statement clearly recognizes the abuses that are suffered by persons from any religious, ethnic and cultural background simply because they want to exercise their freedom of religion and belief without being persecuted or killed.

The declaration has been formally accepted and signed by a wide number of States which manifests a positive political will to support human rights and to move toward an elimination of these violations.

The statement will be presented on Friday, March 13, during the assembly of the 28th Session of the Human Rights Council in the Palais des Nations, Geneva

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