

International Council of Jewish Parliamentarians (ICJP)

RESOLUTION

Freedom of Religion and Practice Regarding Young Male Circumcision in Europe

Whereas, the circumcision of young boys in Judaism and Islam is an ancient and important ritual that has been practiced for thousands of years;

Whereas, banning circumcision of young boys would be a breach of religious freedom;

Whereas, on October 1, 2013, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted Resolution 1952, Children's Right to Physical Integrity, in which the circumcision of young boys for religious reasons is referred to as a "violation of the physical integrity of children."

Whereas, on September 30, 2013 in Oslo, the children's ombudspersons from the five Nordic countries (Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark, and Iceland), and the children's spokesperson from Greenland, in addition to representatives of associations of Nordic pediatricians and pediatric surgeons, agreed to work with their respective national governments to achieve a ban on non-therapeutic circumcision of young boys;

Whereas, article 5(1) of the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief states, "The parents or, as the case may be, the legal guardians of the child have the right to organize the life within the family in accordance with their religion or belief and bearing in mind the moral education in which they believe the child should be brought up.";

Whereas, freedom of religion is enshrined in Europe under Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights;

Whereas, in December 2012, the German Bundestag lower house overwhelmingly passed a law protecting the right to circumcise infant boys, and German Justice Minister Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger stated "it is not the job of the state to interfere in children's upbringing."

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved,

The International Council of Jewish Parliamentarians (ICJP) views male circumcision as a religious right protected under international law;

The ICJP encourages the European Union legislative bodies to reject any current and future proposals to ban circumcision for young boys on the grounds that it would be a breach of religious freedom;

The ICJP encourages all individual countries within Europe to adopt legislation protecting the religious right to practice ritual circumcision on young boys.