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REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Draft Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Religious
Intolerance

Note by the Secretary-General.

Addendum

The comments received from the Government of Norway are as follows:

NORWAY

[Original: English]

The principle of freedom of religion is embodied in Section 2 of the Norwegian Constitution, which reads as follows: "All inhabitants of the Realm have the right to freedom of religion."

It follows from the travaux préparatoires that the said provision protects equally the right to adhere to any religion and the right to maintain any non-religious belief. Norwegian legislation is therefore fully in accordance with article 1 of the draft declaration on the elimination of all forms of religious intolerance.

However, for historical reasons, the Lutheran religion is, as laid down by the Constitution, the official religion of Norway. The Constitution accordingly contains provisions to the effect that the King and more than half the members of the Cabinet must adhere to the Lutheran faith. The priests and bishops of the Lutheran Church are appointed and salaried by the State. Furthermore, the elementary and high schools are confessional and it is therefore required that officials who are responsible for the instruction of religion must belong to the State Church. The Norwegian Government would firmly underline, however, that the existence of a State Church and confessional schools does not in any way conflict