



### **YEPP Resolution:**

## **"Stop the violence and persecution of Christians!"**

### **Recognizing that:**

- millions of Christians worldwide cannot observe their faith freely.
- Christians are the largest group of people discriminated against on religious grounds.
- Copts are the most prominent minority in Egypt.
- Copts in Egypt are the victims of bureaucratic and social discrimination.
- social discrimination in Egypt manifests itself in several ways, including difficulties obtaining important positions in universities or in the civil service.
- in Egypt exist difficulties associated with church building.
- in the New Year's bomb attack on the Coptic al-Qiddissin Church in the city of Alexandria, 21 people were killed and more than 90 injured.
- on October 31<sup>st</sup> 2010 fifty-two hostages and police were killed when an attempt by Iraqi security forces to free more than 100 Catholics held in a Baghdad church by al Qaeda-linked gunmen turned into a bloodbath.
- thousands of Iraqi Christians had to avoid the Christmas masses, as terrorist attacks continued.
- a series of church attacks and explosions on Christmas Eve 2010 left at least 38 people dead in two Nigerian cities and at least six wounded in the Republic of the Philippines.

### **Acknowledging that:**

- at least 100 million Christians around the world are currently suffering persecution.
- Egyptian government does not make efforts in order to stop and avoid the continuing violence against Christians.

- in Iraq, the number of Christians had fallen from 1 million in 2003 to about 675,000 in 2008.
- Nigeria, a country of 150 million people is almost evenly split between Muslims in the north and the predominately Christian south.
- dozens of states across the world are closing their eyes before the violence of religious rights of Christians.

**YEPP calls on:**

- the Egyptian government to do everything possible to protect Christians and other religious groups from attacks and violence carried out by extremists.
- the Egyptian authorities to exhaust all avenues to find those responsible.
- to take concrete steps to counter the persecution of Christians around the world.
- Egyptian, Iraqi and Nigerian authorities to stop the continuing violence against Christians and to hold an independent inquiry by taking the suspected terrorists to the court.
- Egyptian, Iraqi and Nigerian authorities to make stronger efforts in order to stop and avoid the continuing violence against Christians.
- EU to condemn all the attacks and discrimination against Christians and other religion's followers around the world.
- the EU member states not to close their eyes in bilateral relations with countries which allow the violation and disregard of religious rights and human dignity.
- the EU to raise political sanctions against the governments where the religious rights are being violated or continuously ignored.
- to defend Freedom of faith and conscience as part of our system of values and to stand up for the rights of Christians.

*Adopted by the YEPP Council in Caserta on February 5, 2011.*