



Bern, 23 May 2017

**A Press Release on the Manchester terrorist attack submitted by the International Association for the Defence of Religious Liberty (AIDLR)**

**In solidarity with Manchester**

The representatives of 13 European countries (Portugal, Spain, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria) in a meeting of the International Association for the Defense of Religious Liberty held at the University of Friedensau, Germany, 21-23 May 2017, stand in shock today and in complete solidarity with Manchester. While in a different country and a city distant from us, we are traumatized by the terrorist attack which took place in the late evening of 22 May following a concert, where so many youth and children died and many were injured.

We strongly condemn such acts and hold sacred all human life whether in Manchester or any other part of world. We pray for and express compassion and solidarity with the British people and all families affected. In a meeting where we uphold the virtues of religious liberty, freedom of expression, and freedom of choice, we stand beside those victims and their families who had no choice and who have been affected by an act of such violence.

We believe that Christians, Muslims and adherents of all other religions should be peace-makers. We also believe that interreligious and intercultural dialogue, education and training regarding diversity, the respect for dignity of every person and protection of life and human rights, religious freedom or belief, freedom of expression and understanding between followers of different religions, need to be encouraged strongly and intensively in every part of the world, with the support of different stakeholders, i.e. religious leaders, diplomats, politicians, scholars, non-governmental organizations and the media.

We recognize that there is need for wisdom and prudence on not confuse any religion with acts of some extremists toward violence and terrorism. We pray and are united and in solidarity with the people of the UK and Manchester as we support global peace.

At our meeting held at the University Friedensau, Germany, we observed a minute of silence in memory of the victims of the terrorist attack that took place in Manchester on 22 of May 2017.

Dr. Liviu Olteanu  
AIDLR Secretary General