

SAMPLE LETTER FOR ALGERIAN EMBASSIES

Dear

Algeria has been making steady progress in developing a more democratic and open civil society. Increasing religious freedom for peaceful minority groups has been welcomed by many people around the world.

I am therefore writing to express my great concern about the new regulations in Algeria (ref Ordonnance n° 06-03 - 29 Moharram 1427) regulating religious activity of non-Muslims which were signed by President Abdelaziz Bouteflika on 28th February 2006.

It is stated in Article 4 that religious discrimination is forbidden yet the rest of the regulations in Articles 5-16 then proceed to legislate against non-Muslim citizens in the most pernicious and discriminatory way. Non-Muslims are subject to legal regulations that are not applicable to Muslims, non-Muslims are subject to fines and imprisonment that are not applicable to Muslims, and other religions are subject to restrictions that are not applicable to Islam.

It is a travesty of justice that the law in Algeria is being changed to persecute those citizens of a minority faith and those who convert from Islam to another faith. These new regulations clearly contravene the Algerian Constitution (articles 29, 32 and 41), as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 (article 18) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966 (articles 18 and 19) both of which have been signed by Algeria.

I therefore would like to register my protest at this backwards step taken by Algeria which is instituting discriminatory rules that infringe the religious liberties of a significant number of the loyal citizens of that country.

I am writing on the same subject to my government.

Yours faithfully,