

**Statement to the General Assembly of the  
Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions  
following the attacks in Brussels on 22 March 2016**

We all have been struck by the events that shook Brussels this Tuesday morning. The attacks killed many persons and wounded countless others. This time, the attacks affected our Belgian friends, who for Luxembourg are our neighbours. Beyond this friendship that binds us, the entire international community is affected. And it is to this community, which includes all of you, that I address these few words. I would like to join with you all to express that we feel close to the victims and to their families. I would like to be the sounding-board for our compassion and solidarity.

The words that I would like to add are also addressed to all countries which have been the target of attacks: Burkina Faso, Turkey, Iraq, Afghanistan, and I could cite others. I speak as a citizen of the world.

Each attack makes our work to protect human rights more difficult, but also makes this work even more important and justified. These attacks kill and wound, but more than that: they hold hostage the psyches of citizens. Each attack triggers a wave of anxiety and fear, and puts in a state of crisis the need for security, which each of us carries within us. Indeed, human beings aspire to live in a safe and reassuring environment: this is fundamental to each person's personality. Often, following terrorist attacks, governments, in order to reassure, take short-term measures, making up for their loss of authority through a slippery slope of measures violating human rights. It almost seems like this freedom-destroying policy were also held hostage by the terrorists, who expect no less.

It is for this reason that we must reach out to persons who are afraid, and explain to them that defending human rights also serves to create more security.

This is the important task that will enable us to move forward towards a more just and peaceful world.

Gilbert Pregno  
Président of the Commission consultative des Droits de l'Homme (NHRI) of  
Luxembourg

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