

## ACT! FOR CANADA



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## OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 2013

### INTERVENTION

#### Session 6 Freedom of Religion or Belief

Distinguished delegates, it is a pleasure to talk on the vital topic of freedom of conscience.

[The Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) guarantees the freedom to adopt a religion, change one's religion, or have no religion at all. In practice this right is frequently denied, even within the OSCE participating states.

In Canada, several years ago a young woman named [Aqsa Parvez](#) was brutally murdered by her father and her brother for refusing to wear the hijab, the Islamic veil.

And the [Shafia Sisters](#) were honoured killed for wanting to embrace Canada's values of religious freedom.

Ms. Parvez and the Shafia Sisters were thus denied their natural right to express their faith, or lack of faith, without interference.

ACT! for Canada recommends that participating states practice due diligence in enforcing laws against violence and intimidation that prevent the free expression of religion.