

Beat: Politics

## Spain stresses the role of the West in the fight against fanaticism

### And in defense of religious freedom

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**USPA NEWS** - The Spanish Minister of Justice, Rafael Catala, said Monday, during his speech at the opening of the seminar on religious freedom organized by the Arab House of Madrid, the role that the West should play to secure the respect and protection of religion as an asset in the fight against fanaticism.

In this sense, Catala, which considers religious freedom as an essential element in any democratic and civilized society, as an example recent legislation passed in Spain in this direction. Including the reform of the Penal Code has established measures to prevent, combat and tackle racist and xenophobic behavior, compounding the penalties in cases of incitement to discrimination, hatred or violence. Similarly, new criminal acts such as acts of humiliation or contempt, in which the penalty is increased when such offenses are committed via the Internet or other media are contemplated.

In the same direction the new standing of victims in which the special protection of victims of anti-Semitic crimes or related ideology, religion or belief is collected proceeds. The minister also affected the role that religions themselves can play in defense of religious freedom and the commitment to combat all forms of intolerance and fanaticism. Is in the hands of the religious communities themselves, he said, it may show that religions are instruments of peace and should be encouraged publicly initiatives expression of mutual respect between different religious groups.

Rafael Catala appreciated the meeting held last October between different world religious leaders to mark the 50th anniversary of the Declaration Nostra Aetate and the recent message of Pope Francisco, he enunciated clearly and solemnly in a Roman synagogue: "No to all forms of anti-Semitism." Finally, the acting Spanish Minister of Justice stressed the need to build a strong international cooperation should become a key tool in combating effectively all phenomena related to violence, discrimination and hostility towards the religious phenomenon or to any religious minority.

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