



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE HOLY SEE  
TO THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY  
AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE**

**STATEMENT BY MONSIGNOR MICHAEL W. BANACH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE HOLY SEE,  
AT THE 846<sup>th</sup> (SPECIAL) MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

**13 JANUARY 2011**

**RE: TERRORIST ATTACK AGAINST COPTIC CHRISTIANS IN  
ALEXANDRIA (EGYPT)**

Mister Chair,

1. The Holy See would like to thank the European Union for raising the issue of the terrorist attack committed against the faithful of a Coptic Church in Alexandria.

Mister Chair,

2. The December 31 brutal terrorist bombing at the Coptic Church of the Saints in Alexandria that claimed the lives of twenty-three Christians as they prayed is a despicable act of death which offends God and the whole of humanity. Such a strategy of violence that is targeting Christians has profound consequences on the entire population. So many innocent lives lost to such senseless violence calls for the strongest condemnation by all religious leaders and by persons of conscience everywhere. Believers, together with all men and women of good will, need to be encouraged to work for peace, reconciliation and the religious freedom of all people and to adopt concrete and efficient measures in this direction to impede the diffusion of extremism and terrorism.

3. The Holy See stands in solidarity with the whole Egyptian people who have been struck by the recent terrorist attack in Alexandria – a shocking assault on human life and religious freedom. Furthermore, in recalling what Pope Benedict XVI has recently said, that religious freedom is essential not only as a human right, but in ensuring world peace, the Holy See fully shares

the Government of Egypt's concern to avoid the escalation of recent religiously motivated clashes and tensions, and appreciates the efforts undertaken by the Egyptian Authorities to that end.

Thank you, Mister Chair!