

Catholic Church faces question from UN over handling of child abuse

Posted: Thu, 16th Jan 2014

The Vatican will today be questioned about its record on child sexual violence by a UN Committee.

The Holy See will face questions over its compliance with the Convention on Rights of the Child, and will be expected to answer allegations that it enabled the sexual abuse of thousands of children by protecting paedophile priests at the expense of victims.

This is the first time the Holy See has been pressed on child sexual abuse by the UN.

In July the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) published a list of detailed questions over clerical child abuse for the Holy See to address before its examination before the Committee.

In its response, the Vatican failed to answer detailed questions insisting that it was "separate and distinct" from the Roman Catholic Church, and that it was not its practice to disclose information about the religious discipline of clergy unless requested by the authorities in the country where they were serving.

Victims' groups and the National Secular Society have [submitted reports](#) to the UNCRC detailing how the Holy See has violated the core principles of Convention. The NSS was invited along with abuse survivors' groups, on the basis of written submissions, to give oral evidence to the Committee's private session in June.

Keith Porteous Wood, National Secular Society executive director, who is attending the session in Geneva, commented: "We are all motivated by concern that children all over the world have suffered from sexual and other violence perpetrated by clerics who have been shielded from justice because of the Church's power and status.

"We hope the Committee will hold the Holy See to account for its continuing shielding of abuse perpetrators from justice. Pope Francis's reputation cannot survive unless he intervenes and instructs the worldwide Church to report suspected abusers to civil authorities and hand over the evidence it holds to assist prosecutions."

Today's session will take place between 9am and 12pm and a live webcast is available here: <http://www.treatybodywebcast.org/treaty-body-webcast-i/>

- [Share on What's App](#)
- [Share on Facebook](#)
- [Share on Twitter](#)
- [Share on Email](#)
- [Subscribe to RSS Feed](#)

Tags: [Abuse](#)

Related Campaigns

-

[End abuse in religious settings](#)

Religious privilege must not undermine safeguarding and justice.

[Read More](#)

Related Articles

[NI assembly votes in favour of inclusive, evidence-based RSE](#)

MLAs speak of "twisted" RSE teaching that thoughts of sex are "sinful" and same-sex relationships "laughed at". [Read More »](#)

[Experts speak out against religious abuse](#)

Public authorities failing to tackle abuse in religious settings, panellists say at NSS event. [Read More »](#)

[Report: CofE safeguarding “below standards” of secular institutions](#)

Most victims and survivors unsatisfied with safeguarding approaches, while safeguarding 'weaponised' to remove those "seen as a nuisance", report finds. [Read More »](#)

[Faith school banning parts of geography lessons, Ofsted finds](#)

Ofsted finds faith school prohibiting parts of lessons it judges incompatible with its religious beliefs. [Read More »](#)

NSS to hold event on tackling abuse in religious communities

Safeguarding experts in panel discussion in Manchester this March. [Read More »](#)