

MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR
OF OVERSEAS
AND OF THE TERRITORIAL COMMUNITIES

DIRECTION OF THE PUBLIC LIBERTIES
AND OF THE JURIDICAL AFFAIRS

Sub direction of public liberties

29 JUNE 2009

CENTRAL BUREAU OF RELIGIONS

Subject followed by: M. SIMON
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References to mention:
S 865 AL - PC 43.01.01

Nº – 194

Madame,

In your letter of 24 May 2009, which reached my service on 26 June 2009, you expressed your worry about the fact that the movement of which you are a member has been qualified as “sect”.

In the regime of secularism, it is not up to the State to define what would be a “sect” or what would be a “religion”. This absence of definition stems from the French concept of secularism, which finds its basis in article 10 of the Declaration of Man and the Citizen which states that “nobody should have to worry for his opinions, even religious, on the condition that their manifestation does not violate public order established by the Law”, and which thus clearly lays down the principle of the neutrality of the State in relation to religious convictions. Therefore any way of thinking can freely be expressed, as long as it is done within the frame of the Law.

Consequently, such a list could not have a normative effect and the State will not make one.

Sincerely Yours,

For the minister and by delegation
for the sub director (held up),
Chief of central bureau of religions

Bertrand GAUME

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