



**Statement on behalf of OIC by Ambassador Khalil Hashmi, Permanent Representative of Pakistan during Interactive Dialogue with Special Rapporteur on Racism**

**5 July 2022**

**Madam Vice President,**

The OIC thanks the Special Rapporteur for the report and commends her advocacy to counter the growing challenges and manifestations of racism, xenophobia and growing intolerance across the globe.

We express our serious concerns over systematic targeting of individuals and communities especially on the basis of their religious beliefs.

We unequivocally condemn the practice of insulting Islam, Christianity, Judaism and any other religion.

Publishing caricatures in France, burning the Holy Quran in Sweden and hateful remarks by spokespersons of India's ruling party are ugly manifestation of this condemnable trend.

Allowing individuals or entities to denigrate personalities and Holy books deeply revered by a large part of humanity for over a millennia, is no freedom of expression. It must be called for what it is- deliberate "hate speech".

Failure to act against such incidents perpetuates their recurrence and eventually leads to institutionalized discrimination on the basis of religious beliefs. States and social media companies must act against these incidents before these are normalized.

We call on the High Commissioner and Special Procedures to speak out against such troubling incidents and demand accountability for incitement to hatred and increasingly violent behaviors.

The OIC remains committed to finalizing an additional protocol to ICERD to combat discrimination on the basis of religion.

We also welcome the consensus adoption of UN General Assembly resolution, declaring March 15 as International Day to combat Islamophobia.

We reiterate our call on the international community to take meaningful legislative and administrative steps to prevent the growing plague of racism in all its contemporary forms and manifestations.