



**Statement, delivered on behalf of OIC by Ambassador Khalil Hashmi,
Permanent Representative to the UN, during General Debate Agenda Item No. 9**

19 March 2021

Madam President,

Islam advocates virtues of social equality, peaceful co-existence and inter-faith harmony. It also prohibits discrimination on any ground.

The Holy Quran states:

“Allah Almighty created humans of a male and female and made them as tribes, families and nations so they may know each other. The most honorable of the humans is the one who acts rightly”.

According to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH):

“There is no superiority of a white person over a black person and no superiority of a black person over a white person. Superiority is on acting rightly”.

With such clear injunctions, the OIC rejects any discrimination on the basis of race, sex, creed, color and religion.

The OIC is equally concerned over several forms of discrimination such as defamation of religion. We condemn and call for an end to incitement to violence through denigration of revered religious personalities and symbols, including by holding caricature competitions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), destruction of mosques; State-sponsored marginalization of Muslim communities, provocative statements by public leaders and government officials that insinuate stereotyping of Muslims and Islam with terrorism and separatism, and the imposition of ban on the construction of minarets.

The OIC registers its deep concerns over the ban on facial veils in some European countries, including the recent one in the host country to this Council. This step is a clear violation of the principles of international human rights law and contradicts the ideals of tolerance and pluralism. We call for ending such Islamophobic actions and upholding the fundamental freedoms, including of Muslim women and girls.

We reject any effort to legislate discriminatory and targeted measures against Muslim individuals and communities under the garb of countering terrorism in certain European countries.



We strongly condemn burning of the Holy Quran in some European countries and republication of caricatures denigrating religious personalities and symbols under the pretext of freedom of expression.

The OIC values the importance of the right to freedom of expression. However, we remain of the firm view that freedom of opinion or expression does not grant a license to hate speech, deliberate ridicule or willful insult of other people's religion, religious personalities and sensibilities.

Article 20 of ICCPR prohibits any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence. HRC Resolution 16/18 also, inter alia, calls for preventive and affirmative measures to combat hate speech and xenophobic acts.

The OIC, therefore, calls upon states to halt and reverse acts that contravene international human rights law and principles and hold those responsible for such actions – accountable.

I thank you.