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**40TH SESSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

**Statement by Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)**

**Agenda Item-2: of ID with High Commissioner**

7 March 2019

Mr. President,

On behalf of the OIC, I thank the High Commissioner for her report and the oral update.

2. The OIC welcomes the High Commissioner's focus on global human rights challenges in the context of inequalities, deteriorating democratic values, ongoing and protracted conflicts, forceful displacement of millions of people, and racial and other forms of discrimination. The OIC urges objectivity, independence and impartiality and favors constructive dialogue and cooperation. We will support OHCHR's endeavours to promote global human rights, bearing in mind the existing challenges and particular circumstances of Member States.

3. Human rights violations of the people suffering longstanding violent disputes and conflicts like Palestine, Myanmar, Jammu and Kashmir, Nagorno-Karabakh warrant focused attention. In this regard, the OIC hopes that the OHCHR will build on the important work done in the past and advocate measures that not only address the plight of the people but also ensure peaceful political settlement.

4. Regarding OHCHR's work, the OIC underlines the need to make activities more transparent and ensure that its staff composition is geographically more diverse.

Mr. President,

5. In the last five months since this Council last met, armed conflicts and humanitarian crises have shown little signs of settlement. The ongoing refugee and IDP situations are deeply worrying for OIC as all the leading refugee hosting countries happen to be OIC Member States. These OIC Members are facing

incalculable demographic pressures, with long term social and economic consequences.

6. The OIC expresses its deep concerns on Islamophobia, xenophobia, racism, religious prejudice and ethnic hatred. Regretably, populist political leadership fans such hatred and intolerance. Systemic ethnic cleansing and deprivation of citizenship rights to certain ethnic minorities particularly Muslims, and discriminatory immigration policies targeting the followers of a certain faith are serious violations of fundamental human rights. Such policies must end to avoid misunderstanding among communities, countries and civilizations.

7. The OIC underscores the importance to foster an environment of mutual respect and understanding to effectively address numerous human rights situations brought before the Council. We strongly believe in objective, fair and even handed discourse to ensure the credibility of global human rights agenda, through constructive dialogue. Such a discourse must feature in the work of OHCHR and in the collective deliberations of this Council.

I thank you.