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41st SESSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

General Debate Item-9 - Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance, follow-up and implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

Remarks by Pakistan

8 July 2019

Mr. President,

Pakistan is also deeply concerned at the rise of racism, xenophobia and intolerance, and rejects these in the strongest possible terms.

In the contemporary world, xenophobia, racism and anti-migrant policies, pursued on the plank of populist platforms by mainstream political parties, are on the rise. This new xenophobic political discourse and ideologically motivated hate speech is being practiced in the garb of patriotism, which incites religious and racial hatred. The ideologies of hatred, anti-Islamism, anti-Semitism and discrimination and growing trends of “state egotism and nationalism” in Europe are deeply worrying.

There is an urgent need to strengthen the legal and policy framework for addressing discrimination, hate speech and xenophobia that underwrites chauvinistic nationalism. Campaigns to ridicule religions, religious personalities and religious symbols incite hatred and violence. It must be stopped. Freedom of expression cannot be used as a pretext to defame any religion or insult its sacred beliefs and personalities.

Mr. President,

Pakistan has been at the forefront of global efforts in combating colonialism and racial discrimination. Pakistan has played an important role in the promotion of inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue. We have always sided with forces that work to unite humanity and opposed those who seek to provoke violence through hate speech and defamation of religions. We are committed to continue our efforts to build bridges of understanding and to challenge and resist those who seek to construct walls of bigotry and hatred, which threaten to reverse the march of modern civilization.

Mr. President,

We believe such divisive forces pose a grave threat to international peace and security and can undo the work of peacemakers by disrupting the momentum for peaceful coexistence and mutually beneficial cooperation.

We must address the underlying causes of the problems witnessed today, which are rooted in marginalization, inequalities, discrimination and hatred. The international community should come out in support of the collective values of peace, human dignity and welfare of humankind to ensure a future of peaceful co-existence and intercultural harmony.

I thank you.