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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 OIC

8 July 2019

Mr. President,

The OIC Member States strongly believe in the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms of all peoples, without any discrimination on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, colour or socio-economic status. The UN Secretary General, during the launch of the United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech last month, rightly pointed out that ‘around the world, we see a groundswell of xenophobia, racism and intolerance, violent misogyny, and also anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim hatred’.

2. OIC Member States are concerned over the increased incidents of anti-Muslim attacks and sentiments. We believe that such acts are criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation, wherever, whenever and by whomsoever committed. They are further warning on the obvious dangers of hate, intolerance, and Islamophobia.

3. Such incidents are impediments to the promotion and protection of human rights and a clear incitement to racial divide and violence. Other manifestations of such acts, like racial profiling, attacks against hijab, revocation of citizenship on ethnic/racial considerations and acts of cow vigilantes, must also be condemned. There is need to hold perpetrators, organizers and supporters of such reprehensible acts accountable and bring them to justice.

Mr. President,

4. In many instances, these incidents are motivated by the populist frenzy and provoked by misguided media. While in many others, these attacks are also linked with obvious double standards that portray Muslims as violent aggressors. Such blatant human rights violations perpetrated against Muslims are completely ignored at the pretext of bilateral political relations with the powers that perpetrate or support them.

Mr. President

5. Resolution 16/18 on "Combating intolerance, negative stereotyping and stigmatization of, and discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against persons based on religion or belief" is an important milestone to combat violence on the basis of religion. It also provides a Plan of Action for the States to combat the ever-increasing instances of xenophobia, Islamophobia, intolerance, negative stereo-typing, stigmatization, discrimination and violence all over the world.

6. The OIC member States join the UN Secretary-General in reiterating that Addressing hate speech does not mean limiting or prohibiting freedom of speech¹. It is therefore important that the OHCHR in cooperation with the international community, makes efforts to bring an end to acts of hate crimes, hate speech, discrimination, intimidation, incitement to religious hatred, and denigration of venerated personalities, resulting from defamation and negative stereotyping of religions.

I thank you.

¹<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2019-06-18/secretary-generals-remarks-the-launch-of-the-united-nations-strategy-and-plan-of-action-hate-speech-delivered>