

**41<sup>st</sup> SESSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

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

**General Debate on the Report of the High Commissioner**

June 25, 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 continued attention to the root causes of global human rights challenges, such as inequalities, deteriorating democratic values, ongoing and protracted conflicts, forceful displacement of millions of people, and racial and other forms of discrimination.

3. The OIC countries are concerned that racial and religious prejudice are fanned by political leaders in certain regions. This issue has generally been responded by a nervous silence, allowing bigotry and prejudice to become entrenched in mainstream national policies on the pretext of counter-terrorism and security threats. We request the High Commissioner to continue to pay attention to such trends.

Mr. President,

4. Human rights violations of the people suffering longstanding violent disputes and conflicts like Palestine, Myanmar, Jammu and Kashmir, Nagorno-Karabakh warrant focused attention. The OIC urges the High Commissioner to continue to pay due attention to these situations common to the agenda of both the UN and the OIC.

5. Grave violations of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) continue to occur each day with impunity. Uninterrupted occupation and colonization, going on for more than 50 years in OPT, is gravest violation of human rights. Failure to report these violations is another green light to Israel to continue acting above the law with complete impunity.

6. 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.

7. Ongoing armed conflicts and humanitarian crises have shown little signs of settlement. As all the leading refugee hosting countries happen to be OIC Member States, the OIC countries are deeply concerned at the refugee and IDP situations caused by such conflicts. Refugee hosting OIC States are facing incalculable demographic pressures, with long term social and economic consequences.

Mr. President,

8. The OIC expresses its deep concern at the prevailing 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 or nationality are serious violations of fundamental human rights. Such policies must end.

9. The OIC reiterates the importance of bringing more transparency in the work of the OHCHR and ensuring that its staff composition is geographically more diverse, balanced and promotes employment of more women in decision making positions.

10. The OIC believes in objective, fair and even handed discourse to ensure the credibility of global human rights agenda, through constructive dialogue and cooperation. We must strive to foster an environment of mutual respect and understanding to effectively address contemporary human rights challenges.

I thank you.