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42nd SESSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

**Statement by Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)
General Debate on the Report of the High Commissioner**

17 September 2019

Mr. President,

I am delivering this statement on behalf of OIC group of countries.

2. ‘Islamophobia’ remains a serious concern for the OIC. It has taken many dreadful forms including inter alia attacks on women wearing hijab, murders of innocents by cow vigilantes, denigration of venerated religious symbols, negative profiling and negative campaigns against Muslims as well as OIC countries, and new challenges such as ‘hate speech in social media’. The spread of hate speech practices, hoaxes and negative disinformation through social media and internet, must be addressed in appropriate manner. We reiterate that the freedom of expression carries special duties and responsibilities, and restrictions on it should only apply in compliance to applicable national and international law.

3. Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission of the OIC has been sharing its concerns on human rights situations that need Council’s special attention. Close working relationship between the Council mechanisms and the IPHRC can help in enhancing our efforts for the promotion and protection of all human rights.

4. Conflict and dispute resolution is important to address many of the human rights challenges being faced today. The loss of life due to such tragedies has been immense. A number of crises like protracted refugee situations and forcible displacement around the world are the direct consequences of persecution, apartheid, discrimination, armed conflicts and violence, causing unimaginable suffering to the people especially the vulnerable

segments of the society. The international community must play its role in conflict and dispute resolution for ensuring the respect of all human rights. Moreover, we must join hands to achieve durable solutions for refugees and forcibly displaced people, while reiterating the need to duly address the root causes of such humanitarian crises in this process.

5. The OIC once again stresses the importance of ensuring objectivity, non-selectivity and a balanced approach in the consideration of human rights issues, and the elimination of double standards and politicization. Human Rights are universal; therefore, our approach should also be universal. We believe that the human rights bodies and mechanisms must respect relevant matters associated with historical, cultural, social and religious sensitivities while exercising their mandates, especially when these matters have no foundation in International Human Rights Law.

I thank you Mr. President.