



National statement, delivered by Mr. Junaid Suleman, First Secretary, during the 14th session of the Forum on Minority Issues

Theme: Conflict Prevention and Protection of Human Rights of Minorities

02 December 2021

Madam Chair,

Identity politics has emerged as a major incubator and driver of societal tensions, leading to violence and conflict. Very often, minorities are the first victims and targets.

Increasingly, diversity of religion, race, nationality, and ethnicity is being instrumentalized towards political objective, and electoral gains under the misguided notion of patriotism and nationalism.

As a result, this process of ‘otherization’ has accentuated demonization, structural bias, and stigmatization of minorities, thereby normalizing discrimination, violence and eventually, conflicts.

Unfortunately, the global surge in populism, Islamophobia and hate-based ideologies, amplified through laissez-faire digital platforms, is trampling rights and dignity of minorities.

We are particularly alarmed by the complicity of some States, powerful politicians and State officials in this enterprise of hate, discrimination and violence against minorities.

The dangerous embrace of the ideology of ‘Hindutva’ by one State in our region represents a textbook example of this enterprise.

The proponents of this exclusivist ideology have weaponized hate speech and disinformation to dehumanize Muslim individuals and communities, attack their religious places, obliterate their cultural heritage, strip them of their citizenship rights, and in some cases, perpetrate senseless violence against them.

One whistleblower of a leading social media company has testified to parliaments that the employer chose not to remove hateful anti-Muslim posts of several ultra-nationalist ruling leaders in a country of our region to safeguard its business interests.

The State-orchestrated pogrom against Muslim population last year in the national capital of this country illustrates the devastating human toll of State-driven anti-Muslim animus, but also the nexus between politics and profits.

Prevention is, of course, always better than cure.



It is, therefore, both essential and urgent for the international community and UN, especially its human rights arm, to address the incubators and drivers, such demonization and dehumanization of minorities, identity politics, and State-sanctioned hate speech in all its forms, and call out and hold to account the purveyors of violence against minorities.

The symbiotic relationship between peace, development and human rights is best advanced through a combination of prevention, dialogue and engagement. Should this fail, impunity should be called out, and accountability of big and small ensured. These mutually reinforcing measures can help advance protection of minorities effectively and sustainably. I thank you.