



OIC Draft Resolution on “Combating Intolerance, Negative Stereotyping and Stigmatization of, and Discrimination, Incitement to Violence, and Violence against Persons based on Religion or Belief”
A/HRC/49/L.5

Introduction, delivered by Ambassador Zaman Mehdi, Deputy Permanent Representative, on behalf of OIC

Mr. President

Pakistan, on behalf of the OIC, is pleased to introduce the annual draft resolution on “Combating intolerance, negative stereotyping and stigmatization of, and discrimination, incitement to violence, and violence against persons based on religion or belief”, as contained in document L.5.

It has been over a decade that the Human Rights Council continues to adopt through consensus its landmark resolution 16/18. This testifies the strong political commitment of States in countering the compounding scourge of religious intolerance, discrimination and violence. It also signifies that constructive engagement and dialogue across diverse perspectives should remain the driving force of the Council’s work.

The OIC thanks the EU for its cooperation in maintaining Council’s consensual outlook on the twin areas of religious intolerance and freedom of religion, as spotlighted in HRC respective resolutions.

Mr. President,

The resolution 16/18 is unique in the sense that it articulates an eight-point Action Plan to address the growing worldwide problem of discrimination, xenophobia, and incitement to violence against individuals and communities due to their religious beliefs.

This Plan calls for , inter alia, public condemnation of any advocacy of religious hatred; criminalization of hate speech; stamping out discrimination in fields of education, health, employment, and media; and fostering inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue and harmony at all levels.

The Istanbul Process is the implementation platform for this Action Plan. Through its eight meetings, the Process has facilitated exchange of views, perspectives and lessons learnt among States, civil society, faith community and other relevant stakeholders in this topical area.

The 8th meeting, hosted online by Pakistan, provided a useful opportunity to take stock of the progress made in last ten years, reflect on contemporary trends and concerns, and explore ways to further optimize implementation of the resolution 16/18.



Additionally, the annual mandated report by the High Commissioner, in pursuance of the resolution, is another important vehicle, which has promoted wider dissemination and visibility of good practices with regards to implementation of the Action Plan.

Mr. President,

The global landscape presents a sobering picture. The COVID pandemic has been accompanied by 'infodemic' and 'hate pandemic', especially targeted against religious minorities.

The OIC is particularly alarmed at the widely reported online smear campaigns and stigmatization of religious minorities as spreader of the deadly virus; denial of medical treatment on religious grounds; and selective ban on gatherings by followers of certain religions.

The disturbing exploitation of the COVID pretext to incite racial discrimination, xenophobia and Islamophobia is another sober reminder for upholding universal respect for human rights and dignity of everywhere everyone.

The OIC firmly believes that irrespective of our religion, belief and faith, it is in our collective interest to respect each other's religions, avoid denigration of religious personalities, and symbols, and combat deliberate provocation to violence.

We, therefore, sincerely hope that the consensual adoption of the draft resolution as well as full and effective implementation of the Action Plan contained therein will help advance realization of these shared objectives. I thank you.