



Statement on behalf of OIC, delivered by Amb. Zaman Mehdi, DPR, during Interactive Dialogue with Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief
55th HRC Session
5 March 2024

Mr. President,

We take note of the report by the Special Rapporteur.

The OIC group appreciates the consideration to address this topic.

The proposed transformative approaches to address root causes are important.

But we also underline that the portion of the report on the International Human Rights Law Framework has only reinforced our concerns that an over emphasis on technical approaches alone is insufficient to protect people from hatred based on religion.

We record our reservations, on this part, in the spirit of dialogue.

We have a strong basis to do so.

Despite passing of over a decade since HRC 16/18 was passed, hate based on religion, such as Islamophobia, has continued to rise, fostering systemic discrimination, inciting hostility and even violence, helping extremists build successful electoral careers and mainstream hate as national policies.

This worsening malaise calls for questioning the prescription.

Madam Special Rapporteur,

International human rights law framework is clear:

The ICCPR, HRC 16/18 and HRC 53/1 clearly calls for prohibiting certain advocacy of religious hatred as per the law – desecration of Holy Quran is one such crime;

Consistent with this, we view public and premeditated desecration of the Quran, targeting of Mosques and Churches in the OPT and elsewhere, and the Israeli invasions of Al Aqsa Mosque as grave forms of religious hatred.

We expect the Special Rapporteur to speak out against these incidents. It is part of her mandate.

I thank you!