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to the United Nations
New York

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Statement by
The Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations
Before the General Debate of Third Committee on
Item 67: "Elimination of Racism and Racial Discrimination"

5 November 2012

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Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, Egypt wishes to express its appreciation to the efforts of the Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, in particular the last report, and express appreciation for the valuable presentation made during the interactive dialogue with the Committee. We stress in this regard the importance of the cooperation of all States without exception with the Special Rapporteur in order to allow him to effectively carry out his mandate. Egypt aligns itself with the statement of Algeria delivered on behalf of the G77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

The international community suffered from the phenomena of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerances. It has struggled for long decades to eliminate them, and as member states we succeeded in eliminating their manifestations such as slavery, discrimination and apartheid. Today we must intensify our efforts to eradicate these phenomena from within the communities and individuals, as we now face the challenges of the past, but in the form of the individual, and political and social movements exploiting our technological development to promote messages of discrimination and incite hatred and violence, which in turn undermine our efforts to ensure international peace and security.

The Political Declaration of Durban adopted by the General Assembly during its 66th session, the Durban Declaration and Program of Action of 2001, and the Durban review document of 2009 constitute the international framework to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerances.

The international community's efforts must be based on the political commitment to comprehensively implement the outcomes of the Durban process, within a framework that is consistent with our obligations in accordance with the Convention on the Elimination of slavery, the International Convention on the Elimination of All

Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. A framework which embraces the principle that the diversity of civilizations, cultures, and religions of our societies in itself enriches our ability for peaceful coexistence, and reinforces the principles of democracy and dialogue.

Mr. Chairman

Real democracy and the rule of law are incompatible with racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, religion and colour. The recent international developments confirmed the seriousness of the consequences that ensue from the exacerbation of such manifestations, in particular within well-established democracies that place respect of human rights on top of their international political and social priorities. The proliferation of radical and racist right-wing movements in such democratic societies represents an alarming concern, particularly when such movements base their political and social agenda on inciting xenophobia, hatred and violence on the basis of ethnicity, colour and religion, which conflict with the principles of tolerance, understanding, mutual respect and peaceful coexistence within our societies, and at the international level; and jeopardize our international endeavours in the fight against terrorism and combating violence; and have serious implications on international peace and security.

While many member states are undertaking efforts to contain such extreme social and political movements, however, other efforts are still lagging behind in confronting such agendas that give stamina to these phenomena; as they lack important principles most notably admitting that the enjoyment of the right to freedom of expression and opinion is not absolute as it is associated with responsibilities towards the society and individual. While this right is essential for strengthening the principles of democracy and dialogue within the society, thus reinforcing the values of tolerance and understanding; we have to be wary about its possible misuse to incite hatred and discrimination against migrants, and foreigners in the recipient societies, or against certain cultures and religions.

Mr. Chairman,

Today we face a new challenge where some misuse our breakthroughs in communications and information technologies to incite hatred, violence, and racism. Such technological developments have consequently changed the traditional role of the individual and society from a recipient of information to an active contributor and participant in their dissemination, thus requiring a comprehensive assessment of the benefits, challenges and, responsible regulations for having more than 2 billion people access modern information and communication technologies.

Egypt supports the recent report of the Special Rapporteur on the positive role that can be played by the media, civil society, and the information society to combat racism, xenophobia, discrimination and incitement to hatred and violence, especially on the basis of religion. And confirms that the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action had already highlighted this challenge, and explained the gains that can be

achieved through it. It is therefore important that we work together to achieve the following:

1. Establishing a comprehensive international framework, with the active participation of all stakeholders, to evaluate the experiences gained and lessons learned, and to develop a comprehensive approach involving all international and regional initiatives on the culture of peace, dialogue among civilizations, cultures and religions, with a view to assess the best ways to optimize the use of modern communications and information technologies for the promotion of the principles of tolerance, understanding, mutual respect, and acceptance of others, and to promote all human rights through education and training, and to strengthen our fight against racism, xenophobia, and incitement to hatred and violence based on religion.
2. Creating an international dialogue between governments, the media, civil society, and the information society to discuss the challenges facing the international community as a result of the possible misuse of modern communications and information technologies, and to identify possible means to address these challenges while fully respecting our commitments to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with our obligations as Member States under International human rights instruments.
3. Develop and strengthen the legal, administrative, and executive frameworks within member states in order to prevent incitement to racism, racial discrimination, and hatred in all their forms, especially through the internet and social media, and to ensure accountability and combat impunity, through the provision of necessary training for those in charge of the implementation of such frameworks, as well as providing appropriate means of redress and compensation for victims of such practices.

Mr. Chairman,

Egypt stresses the importance of international cooperation, including within the United Nations, to fight racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerances. It reaffirms the need to strengthen the International Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, in tandem with enhancing the follow-up mechanism for the implementation of our joint commitments, especially with regard to discrimination against national, ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities, and immigrants, who are facing varying degrees of social and economic marginalization and discrimination, as well as ongoing attempts to blur the specificities of their cultures and traditions, thus possibly forcing them to hide their religious, ethnic or linguistic affiliations. Finally, Egypt reiterates its support to the work of the special rapporteur, in accordance with his mandate, to achieve and realize these international commitments.

Thank you.