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Statement

by

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before

**the Preparatory Process of the Organizational
Durban Review Conference**

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In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Madame Chairperson,

At the outset I would like to congratulate you on your election as the Chairperson of the Preparatory Committee for Durban Review Conference and assure you of my delegation support throughout the preparatory process.

The adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action was a defining moment in the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. The historic 2001 Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination underscored the international community's renewed commitment to combat racism, in all its forms, especially the contemporary forms.

The establishment of the follow-up mechanism for the effective implementation of Durban outcome specially the Intergovernmental Working Group on the effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, set the tone for the international community to advance the global agenda for combating racism. We appreciate the valuable work done by those mechanisms to translate the commitments made at the Durban Conference into concrete action.

Despite all efforts, the follow-up to the Conference has proven to be a slow process and the political will to implement the commitments the international community undertook in Durban, is sorely lacking. Moreover, emerging of new forms of racism in the aftermath of Durban Conference, particularly after September 11 and under the pretext of so called war against terror, reflects the visible rise of contemporary manifestations of racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia throughout the world especially against Muslims.

The increase in racist violence and xenophobic ideas in many parts of the world, in political circles, in the sphere of public opinion and in society at large, as a result of the resurgent activities of associations and political parties established on the basis of racist and xenophobic platforms and charters, and persistent use of those platforms to promote or incite racist ideologies are alarming.

Increased trend on defamation of religions endangers peaceful and harmonious co-existence among societies and civilizations. Political resistance to cultural diversity has led to the denial of the very humanity of the immigrant, indigenous people and foreigners.

These include the visible rise of Islamophobia with its most visible upsurge in the western countries, the reinterpretation and unlawful extension of the prohibition of visible signs of religion and culture in the schools, the growing debate in some countries including at the level of political leaders that head scarf is antisocial and the selective profiling of people with an allegedly Islamic appearance.

Madam Chairperson,

The Islamic Republic of Iran welcomes the timely decisions of the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council to start the Durban review process. In our view the Durban Review Conference and its preparatory process will provide the international community with an opportunity to take stock of the Durban commitments as well as to further strategize the global fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

As indicated in operative paragraph of the Human Rights Resolution 3/2 the objective of the Durban Review Conference shall be the implementation of Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, and to address and elaborate the contemporary and emerging scourges of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance including through adoption of further initiatives and actions. In this regard, the review process should give special attention to the new trends in the context of fight against racism.

The normative gaps in the struggle against racism have led to continued manifestations of racism and intolerance including racial and religious profiling, and rise in Islamophobia incidents. Therefore it is vital for the review process to address the gaps in the existing normative framework and to deal with racism in a comprehensive manner.

As reflected in the relevant articles of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the right to freedom of expressions is not absolute and it should not be used to incite racial or religious hatred such as the defamatory cartoons crisis.

Finally, the review process should focus on enhancing the effectiveness of the existing mechanisms established in follow – up on the Durban Outcome in promoting endeavor against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

Thank you