

NAM STATEMENT
Interactive Dialogue with SR on Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and
Related Intolerance
Wednesday 30 September 2009

Thank You Mr. President

I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the NAM

The NAM condemns all forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance which constitute serious violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as impede equal opportunities. The Movement emphasizes the need to address with greater resolve and political will all forms and manifestations of these disturbing phenomena in all spheres of life and in all parts of the world, including all those under foreign occupation.

The NAM is deeply alarmed at the rising trends of discriminatory national laws and policies adopted and exercised against any religion, stigmatizing groups of people on the basis of religions under variety of pretexts relating to security and illegal immigration, particularly people from certain ethnicities and religious minorities following the events of September 11th 2001.

The NAM fully agrees with the SR that the implementation of the provisions of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and the Outcome Document of the Durban Review Conference in their entirety offers the most comprehensive framework to guide actions at the international, regional and national levels in the common fight against racism

The NAM noted that the Special Rapporteur on racism had not adequately covered in his report the issue of the manifestations of defamation of religions, and in particular on the serious implications of Islamophobia, on the enjoyment of all rights by their followers as requested by the Council in its resolution 10/22. Thereby, the Movement calls upon the Special Rapporteur to pay due attention in the future to this vital and crucial issue while discharging his mandate as it is the Movement's conviction that the UN human rights mechanisms are entrusted with thoroughly examining and studying all the rising phenomena and trends worldwide that have an impact upon human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Movement also calls upon the Special Rapporteur to examine in more depth and through following a comprehensive approach the interrelatedness and interconnectedness between defamation of religions and religious discrimination, hatred, and intolerance. The NAM invites the Special Rapporteur to study thoroughly the analysis undertaken by UN human rights mechanisms of the increasing trend in defamation of religions which indicated that this trend cannot be dissociated from the ominous trend of religious discrimination and that the more particular focus on former is central to the analysis of latter. These findings indicated that defamation of religions constitutes a form of incitement to religious hatred, hostility and violence against the

followers of these religions which in turn lead to the denial of their fundamental rights and freedoms.

The Movement expects from the Special Rapporteur in his future reports to examine the plethora of jurisprudence from innumerable jurisdictions that affirm that acts amounting to defamation, the contempt of religions and any form of speech which disseminates hatred of religions or threatens places of worship should not be allowed under any pretext.

It is becoming increasingly evident that the adoption by the elites, politicians and the media of a certain posture that ridicules or otherwise degrades that religion or belief plays a significant role in predisposing the general public to discriminate against a particular religious community. Although in general this posture is always defended as being a manifestation of legitimate expression of ideas, it creates an ideological environment that favors the existence and legitimization of discrimination.

Therefore, the Movement is of the view that it is necessary and important to address the underlying human rights concerns surrounding the issue of "defamation of religions". In NAM's view, the characterization of "defamation of religions" as a human rights issue emanates from its direct impact on the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms of the followers of religions or beliefs. It should be underlined that the rationale of raising this issue on the international human rights agenda is to tackle it from this specific angle which is its direct correlation with incitement to religious discrimination and hatred thereby it aims primarily at protecting individuals in the exercise of their rights and freedoms.

I Thank You