

Joint statement on addressing anti-Semitism Human Rights Council 38th session Item 9

Mr. President, I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of a cross-regional group of countries.

We commend the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance for her reports presented to HRC38. In one of the reports she „notes that the resurgent xenophobic and racist rhetoric and policies rooted in ethno-nationalism [...] make formal citizens who are ethnic, racial or religious minorities vulnerable to discrimination and intolerance.”

We are deeply concerned about increasing acts of intolerance and violence based on religion or belief in every region of the world. Anti-Semitism is a violation of the universal right to freedom of religion or belief and a manifestation of racism, xenophobia, religious intolerance and discrimination. As other forms of discrimination it not only poses a threat to the peaceful enjoyment of human rights of all peoples but also contributes to the evolution of a hostile climate feeding on extremism, terrorism and criminality.

Religious based intolerance and violence are increasing. Jewish communities are enduring growing threat manifested in hate speech, harassment, vandalism and physical violence in several regions. Incidents of anti-Semitic violence targeting Jewish or non-Jewish individuals, their property as well as educational facilities, cultural and religious heritage sites are seen as attacks on our core values and identity.

The worrying rise of anti-Semitic hatred and violence, however, is not a problem for Jewish communities alone but an affront against humanity that affects the societies in which it rises and which needs to be countered by the international community as a whole. The reinforcement of our democratic values, engagement in local, regional and international dialogues and education are crucial means in the pursuit of our goal to protect each and everyone's right to freedom of belief and cultural heritage.

Based on our joint responsibility to step up against all forms of religious intolerance – referring to the recommendations by the Special Rapporteur in the above-mentioned reports – we invite all member states - to continue taking steps through national legislation in accordance with international human rights law, aimed at preventing hate speech and incitement to violence; - to strengthen dialogue with civil society to promote mutual respect, tolerance and understanding for combatting discrimination based on ethnic origin, religion or belief as well as for bringing justice to those whose rights have been infringed; - to ensure that education systems are capable of building resilience of young people to anti-Semitic ideas and ideologies which discriminate based on religious belief through critical thinking and respect for others; - to promote policies of public condemnation of anti-Semitic and xenophobic statements, and urge online intermediaries to take action to prevent and combat hate speech online;

- to raise public awareness through the media with a view to encourage dissemination of information among all stakeholders to combat anti-Semitic prejudices; - to take actions and adopt policies with a view to preserve Jewish culture and religious heritage.

In line with our strong dedication to the realization of all people's human rights we reaffirm our commitment to stay united and build a community, which cherishes the freedom of religion or belief, promotes religious pluralism and eradicates all forms of intolerance