

Statement of Bangladesh Delegation

First of all, let me join others in commending the Special Rapporteur Mr. Doudou Diene for his excellent report. The Report is yet another testimony of his professional distinction and unwavering commitment to his mandated responsibility. He has been resolute in depicting a true picture of racial discrimination and ^(exists in our societies) related intolerance. His remark that the defamation of religion cannot be dissociated from a profound reflection on the racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia is particularly praiseworthy.

The Special Rapporteur alluded to an alarming trend of manifestation of defamation of religion particularly of Islam and spread of Islamophobia in some parts of the world. A systematic campaign of incitement to racist and religious hatred has been waged by certain quarters. It is imperative that we look into this phenomenon very seriously and with resolve. We have to fight this scourge in both legal and political front. The countries should put in place legal and administrative mechanisms, in line with DDPA. These measures alone ~~cannot~~ ^{may not be} enough to combat contemporary form of racism and racist manifestations. As it is revealed that even the countries with excellent legal framework are not immune from such occurrences. Either there is lack of ^{adequate} political will or the existing international, ^{legal} national framework is not adequate to fight this trend. In our view, there is a need to strengthen our efforts on both areas.

First, on the political front. It is disturbing to know that increasing number of democratic parties are resorting to the language of fear and exclusion, targeting ethnic or religious minorities, particularly the immigrants and refugees. Ideological ^{Terrorist} ~~acceptance~~ of racism, particularly in dealing with the question of immigration, asylum and most importantly in the fight against terrorism must be rejected. ~~We must stop~~ Democratic legalization of the racism by spreading racist and xenophobic platforms for ^(must be stopped) electoral exploitation. Media should be more respectful and responsible and avoid conducting programmes ~~in the name of intellectual~~.

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~~discourse~~ that foments hatred and intolerance. In fighting terrorism and adopting anti-terrorism measures utmost care should be taken so that such measures do not result in intolerance to certain ~~religious~~ ^{human rights} faiths. Establishment of dogmatic or ideological hierarchy of ~~the freedoms~~ ^{human rights} such as freedom of expression to the detriment of other human rights ~~must be rejected~~. We are glad that ^{can not be acceptable} (This view has also been reflected in the report of the Special Rapporteur.

We have witnessed an unhealthy tendency to hurt or insult the deep-rooted religious feelings of individuals or groups by publishing caricature, cartoons or articles. Some States condone these acts in the name of freedom of expression. Such do not contribute to the creation of an environment of peaceful coexistence of nations and societies. I fully share with the views of the Special Rapporteur that freedom cannot be absolute or infinite. It must be exercised with respect and responsibility.

Secondly
~~On the other hand~~, we must study carefully possible normative gap existed in the international legal framework ~~in dealing with the contemporary racist~~
~~manifestations~~ and adopt complementary standards or separate instruments in
dealing with the contemporary forms of racism
and related intolerance.