

**EGYPT**



**مصر**

The Permanent Mission of Egypt  
to the United Nations  
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بعثة مصر الدائمة  
لدى الأمم المتحدة  
نيويورك

**Statement of  
The Arab Republic of Egypt**

**Before the Third Committee  
on**

**Agenda Item 68:  
“Elimination of Racism and Racial Discrimination”**

**Delivered by  
H.E. Ambassador Maged A. ABDELAZIZ  
The Permanent Representative**

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to start by concurring with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Pakistan on behalf of G77 and China. I also wish to thank Mr. Boudo Diane, the Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, on his valuable interim report, which provides sharp visions and insights for dealing with these important issues.

Humanity had undergone various symptoms of myriad social illnesses that were more too often related to colour, race, belief or religion, regrettably. Despite the serious steps taken by the international community to implement the International Convention on the Abolition of Slavery and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), and the ongoing efforts in following up on the implementation of the Durban Declaration, and despite the progress in realising the universality of the International Covenants of Human Rights, we still witness a expansion of new forms of racism in our contemporary world. This is particularly so notwithstanding the burgeoning need on the part of the international community to benefit from the civilisational, cultural and religious diversity in promoting understanding, integration, and the achievement of the common interests of societies, regardless of their backgrounds.

Undoubtedly, the indicators that delineate a growth in extremist rightwing tendencies, racism and xenophobia, as reflected in the report of the Special Rapporteur, raise serious concern, especially that a large number of these new phenomena emerge from under the shades of established democracies that place the respect of human rights high on their political and social priorities. The report attributes them to the ideological void resulting after the end of the cold war and the inability of some societies to absorb the concepts and cultures accompanying the migration influx. The report links them either to the lack of political strategies and programmes aiming at spreading the spirit of tolerance and peaceful coexistence, or lack of legal instruments to curb racism and xenophobia in some cases, or the inability of communities to adjust to the cultural diversity necessitated by globalisation in other cases.

The most alarming of these indicators is the retreat in the efforts of a number of governments in combating racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia. More importantly is that the platforms of political parties participating in some governments include agendas that give stamina to these phenomena, based on an illusion of superiority, be it on the grounds of race, culture, religion or thought. In addition, some governments are encouraging the defamation of religions, their symbols and prophets, in a clear abuse of the freedom of opinion and expression. Such freedom in fact are necessary to enhance democratic dialogue, and should not be employed to target migrants in the receiving societies or those belonging to certain civilizations and religions in order to achieve private political goals that do not realise the international interest.

Equally alarming is the existing conflation that some have between combating terrorism on the one hand, and the unjustified discrimination against individuals and groups on ethnic or religious basis on the other. The nuisances that members of these groups face under security allegations, and within the context of politicising the regulations for migration, asylum and protection of national identity have become recurrent symptom which require serious review in order to avoid undermining our efforts to promote mutual understanding and dialogue among peoples and civilizations.

Facing these serious negative phenomena requires the international community to strengthen its resolve to eliminate them, along with our pursuit to reinforce the principles of democracy and respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Accordingly, the multifaceted unified approach proposed by the Secretary-General in his report gains increasing importance, starting with entrusting the Human Rights Council with the elaboration on the complementary standards to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of

Racial Discrimination, in addition to continuing the preparation for the upcoming Durban Review Conference in 2009, all the way through to rebuilding confidence between North and South in dealing with this important issue, particularly after the major breach in confidence caused by recent developments.

Likewise, it is imperative to formulate and implement international strategies and programmes that enable the international community to monitor and confront the growth of the new racist tendencies. We need to deal with them through enhancing dialogue, mutual understanding and enlightened education, within a framework of partnership and cooperation with nongovernmental organisations, the private sector and the wide spectrum of civil society. Moreover, we are required to deal in parallel with the issue of migration in a comprehensive manner, *inter alia* by way of promoting the respect of migrants' rights in the receiving societies, on an equal footing with other citizens, afar from discrimination and racism. Our attempt to encourage the freedom of the media should also be matched by reiterating religious freedoms and cultural particularities of others, as diverse as they may be. Clear-cut boundaries between the freedom of expression as ensured by international instruments and national legislations, and the infringement on the rights of others or challenging their beliefs on the other hand, in order to avoid inflaming the sentiments of racism and hatred.

It is time for vigorous international action to confront the proliferation of racism and discrimination as to race, religion, or language, particularly in the developed countries. It is also time for the international community to intensify its efforts to eliminate this illnesses in a comprehensive and mature way, one that takes into consideration the required balance between the rights and duties of individuals, no matter the societies they came from, or the societies they live in.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.