



General Assembly

Distr.: Limited
15 July 2021

Original: English

Seventy-fifth session

Agenda item 15

Culture of peace

Morocco: draft resolution

Promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue and tolerance in countering hate speech

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the commitment made by all Member States under the Charter of the United Nations to promote and encourage universal respect for and observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms without distinction as to, inter alia, religion or belief,

Recalling article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,¹ article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights² and other relevant human rights provisions,

Recalling also its resolution [36/55](#) of 25 November 1981, by which it proclaimed the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief,

Recognizing the importance of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace,³ which serve as the universal mandate for the international community, particularly the United Nations system, for the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence that benefits humanity, in particular future generations,

Reaffirming the obligation of Member States to prohibit discrimination and violence on the basis of religion or belief and to implement measures to guarantee the equal and effective protection of the law,

Welcoming, in this regard, all international, regional and national initiatives, as well as efforts by religious and other leaders to promote interreligious and intercultural dialogue,

Reaffirming the positive role that the exercise of the right to freedom of opinion and expression and full respect for the freedom to seek, receive and impart information can play in strengthening democracy and combating religious

¹ See resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.

² Resolution [217 A \(III\)](#).

³ Resolutions [53/243 A](#) and B.



intolerance, and reaffirming further that the exercise of the right to freedom of expression carries with it special duties and responsibilities, in accordance with article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,

Recalling article 20 (2) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which states that any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law,

Recognizing the commitment of all religions to peace and the contribution that interreligious and intercultural dialogue among religions, groups and individuals, in particular religious leaders, can make towards an improved awareness and understanding of the common values shared by all humankind,

Strongly deploring all acts of violence against persons on the basis of their religion or belief, as well as any such acts directed against their homes, businesses, properties, schools, cultural centres or places of worship, as well as all attacks on and in religious places, sites and shrines that are in violation of international law,

Expressing concern at the growing manifestations of intolerance based on religion or belief, which can generate hatred and violence among individuals from and within different nations and which may have serious implications at the national, regional and international levels, and in this regard emphasizing the importance of respect for religious and cultural diversity, as well as interreligious, interfaith and intercultural dialogue aimed at promoting a culture of tolerance and respect among individuals, societies and nations,

Noting with appreciation the efforts of the United Nations system in helping to counter the proliferation of hate speech, misinformation and disinformation, including during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, by sharing accurate, timely, relevant and multilingual information, as reflected in the COVID-19 communications response initiative of the Department of Global Communications of the Secretariat,

Bearing in mind the International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief, which contributes to the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue,

Expressing deep concern at all acts of hate speech that undermine the spirit of tolerance and respect for diversity and constitute a serious common concern for all Member States, and convinced that there is no justification for hate speech, whatever be the motivation,

Highlighting the global concerns about the exponential spread and proliferation of hate speech, disinformation and misinformation, thereby increasing the need for the dissemination of factual, timely, targeted, clear, accessible, multilingual and science-based information, and emphasizing the need for all Member States to stand together to address the challenge of disinformation and misinformation,

Taking note of the Cross-Regional Statement on “Infodemic” in the Context of COVID-19 that called upon Member States to fight the “infodemic” to build a healthier, more equitable, just and resilient world,

Emphasizing that Member States, regional organizations, national human rights institutions, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, religious bodies, the media, and civil society as a whole have an important role to play in promoting tolerance and respect for religious and cultural diversity and in the universal promotion and protection of human rights, including freedom of religion or belief,

Recognizing the role played by many religious leaders and faith-based organizations, through speaking out against hate speech, misinformation and disinformation, expressing solidarity with those targeted by such expressions, and amplifying messages that serve to reduce discrimination and stigma,

Recognizing also the leading role of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the work of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in promoting intercultural dialogue and their contribution to interreligious dialogue, as well as their activities related to the culture of peace and non-violence and their focus on concrete actions at the global, regional and subregional levels,

Noting the role of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, in the launch of the United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech, and as part of efforts to address and counter hate speech,

Noting also the Rabat Plan of Action on the prohibition of advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence,⁴

Noting further the Plan of Action for Religious Leaders and Actors to Prevent Incitement to Violence that Could Lead to Atrocity Crimes, also called the Fez Plan of Action, and the Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites,

Noting the Secretary General's special appeal to religious leaders to join forces, work for peace and focus on the world's common battle to defeat COVID-19, the United Nations Guidance Note on Addressing and Countering COVID-19-related Hate Speech and the "Call for mutual respect" by the High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations,

Recognizing that cultural diversity and the pursuit of cultural development by all peoples and nations are sources of mutual enrichment for the cultural life of humankind,

1. *Recognizes* the importance of interreligious and intercultural dialogue and its valuable contribution to promoting social cohesion, peace and development, and calls upon Member States to consider, as appropriate and where applicable, interreligious and intercultural dialogue as an important tool in efforts aimed at achieving peace and social stability and the full realization of internationally agreed development goals;

2. *Decides* to proclaim 18 June as the International Day for Countering Hate Speech, to be observed annually;

3. *Invites* all Member States, organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, other international and regional organizations and civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, the private sector, individuals and other relevant stakeholders to observe the International Day for Countering Hate Speech, as appropriate, with the cost covered exclusively by voluntary contributions;

4. *Invites* all Member States to further promote the culture of peace to help to ensure peace and sustainable development, including through the celebration of the international, regional and national days in this regard and by mobilizing the efforts of the international community to promote peace, tolerance, inclusion, understanding and solidarity;

⁴ A/HRC/22/17/Add.4, appendix.

5. *Condemns* any advocacy of hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence, whether it involves the use of print, audiovisual or electronic media, social media or any other means;

6. *Expresses its concern* that incidents of racial and religious intolerance, discrimination and related violence, as well as of negative racial and religious stereotyping, continue to rise around the world, and condemns, in this context, any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence, and urges States to take effective measures, consistent with their obligations under international human rights law, to address and combat such incidents;

7. *Emphasizes* that freedom of religion or belief, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to peaceful assembly and the right to freedom of association are interdependent, interrelated and mutually reinforcing, and stresses the role that these rights can play in the fight against all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief;

8. *Takes note* of the United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech, in which it is proposed that the United Nations system establish and strengthen partnerships with new and traditional media to promote the values of tolerance, non-discrimination, pluralism and freedom of opinion and expression, and to address hate speech narratives;

9. *Encourages* Member States to consider, as and where appropriate, initiatives that identify areas for practical action in all sectors and levels of society for the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, tolerance, understanding and cooperation;

10. *Calls upon* Member States to engage with all relevant stakeholders to promote the virtues of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, respect and acceptance of differences, tolerance, respect for diversity, peaceful coexistence and cohabitation, inclusion and respect for human rights, to reject the spread of hate speech, that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility and violence;

11. *Encourages* all Member States and international organizations to generate public awareness, to enlighten the public about the dangers of intolerance and sectarian violence and to react with renewed commitment and action in support of the promotion of tolerance and human rights, and invites them to continue to pay attention to the importance of mutual cooperation, understanding and dialogue in ensuring the promotion of moderation and tolerance, and respect for human rights;

12. *Requests* the President of the General Assembly to convene an informal high-level meeting, on 18 June 2022, to mark the commemoration of the first International Day for Countering Hate Speech to contribute to spearheading political support to develop strategies to identify, address and counter hate speech at the national and global levels, taking into account, as appropriate, the United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech;

13. *Encourages* Member States to focus on promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue, respect for diversity, and the elimination of discrimination based on religion or belief, while underlining the importance of education, culture, peace, tolerance, mutual understanding and human rights;

14. *Invites* Member States to support, in accordance with relevant international obligations, transparent and accessible systems to identify, track, collect data and analyse trends on hate speech, both in person and in digital contexts, at all national levels, as appropriate, to support effective responses;

15. *Also invites* Member States to further promote reconciliation to help ensure durable peace and sustainable development, and to encourage religious and community leaders to engage in intra- and interfaith dialogue to respond to incitement to violence, discrimination and hate speech;

16. *Calls upon* Member States, who have the primary responsibility to counter discrimination and hate speech, and all relevant actors, including political and religious leaders, to promote inclusion and unity in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to speak out and take strong action against racism, xenophobia, hate speech, violence, discrimination, including on the basis of age, and stigmatization;

17. *Welcomes* the proclamation of the first week of February of every year as the World Interfaith Harmony Week between all religions, faiths and beliefs;

18. *Takes note* of global efforts to support implementing the Secretary-General's Plan of Action for Religious Leaders and Actors to Prevent Incitement to Violence that Could Lead to Atrocity Crimes, also called the Fez Plan of Action, the Secretary-General's Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech and the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites;

19. *Invites* all Member States, the United Nations system, regional and non-governmental organizations and other relevant stakeholders to increase their understanding of the Plan of Action for Religious Leaders and Actors to Prevent Incitement to Violence that Could Lead to Atrocity Crimes, also called the Fez Plan of Action, and the Plan of Action on Hate Speech, and other initiatives promoting tolerance and mutual understanding.
