

## THE INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT AGAINST ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM

### **IMADR Oral Statement: 35th session of the Human Rights Council**

#### **Item 9: Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance**

19 June 2017

Speaker: Taisuke KOMATSU

Thank you Mr. President,

We appreciate the Special Rapporteur's thematic report on "challenges to combating racism and xenophobia in the context of countering terrorism", in addition to the previous thematic reports. Given the growing manifestation of racism around the world, these seven reports are significantly relevant to this Council today.

While appreciating that the Special Rapporteur took up the challenging task to address racial discrimination in the context of counter-terrorism, we would like to encourage the Special Rapporteur to look into the issue of negative portrayal of civil society organisations for his upcoming report to the General Assembly on this topic. Civil society organisations working for human rights of vulnerable populations, such as indigenous peoples, migrants, minorities, asylum seekers and refugees, are often described as "anti-government" or "terrorist sympathizers" by extremists, even sometimes by government officials. Such negative labelling creates oppressive conditions for human rights defenders to carry out activities to tackle racial discrimination. As the Special Rapporteur plans to consult with experts and other stakeholders for his next GA report<sup>1</sup>, we encourage the Special Rapporteur to consult with a broad range of civil society organisations and the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) in this regard.

Lastly, we express our great appreciation to the Special Rapporteur's six years of tireless work in addressing contemporary forms of racial discrimination including intersecting discrimination such as on gender, sexual orientation and gender identity. We regret that his repeated requests to visit India, Japan, South Africa and Thailand have not met with positive responses so far. We hope that his successor will be able to undertake visits to those countries as well as other nine countries he sent requests<sup>2</sup>.

We wish the Special Rapporteur all the best for his future endeavour.

We thank you.

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<sup>1</sup> A/HRC/35/41, paragraph 96

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, paragraph 3, Algeria, Botswana, Nepal, Poland, Slovakia, the Sudan, Tunisia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America