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THE INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT AGAINST ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM

**IMADR Oral Statement: 37th session of the Human Rights Council****Debate on promoting tolerance, inclusion, unity and respect for diversity in the context of combating racial discrimination**

19 March 2018

Speaker: Taisuke KOMATSU

Thank you Mr. President,

IMADR firmly believes that the full engagement of civil society is an essential step of combating racial discrimination, as well as the precondition of promoting tolerance, inclusion, unity and respect for diversity. To this end, we have been facilitating the work of civil society actors in their collaboration with the CERD, and have produced the guiding documents as supplementary, in an endeavor to bring about the full capacity of civil society.

While we appreciate the unremitting efforts of human rights defenders across the world to raise voices to counter the manifestations of racism and racial discrimination, we are concerned about their increasingly difficult situation.

We have noted in some countries that human rights defenders, who play a pivotal role in ensuring the rights of migrants, minorities, and indigenous peoples are themselves subjected to attacks such as threats, intimidation, harassment and reprisals, yet many States have not carried the full responsibility for providing human rights defenders with a safe and enabling environment; some have even attempted to impede and undermine human rights defenders' work. In this regard, we would like to point out the institutional weaknesses and the lack of political will to halt attacks targeting human rights defenders by States and non-State actors, echoing the concern expressed by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders.

Against this backdrop, we strongly encourage the Council to renew its commitment and call on States to refrain from any oppressive measure against human rights defenders especially those belonging to migrant, indigenous or minority groups, and to counter attacks against them by non-State actors.

Thank you Mr. President.