

THE INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT AGAINST ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM

IMADR Oral Statement: 29th 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

30 June 2015

Thank you Mr. President,

We welcome the Special Rapporteur's report on combating glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices. Across the world, we have been witnessing the rise of racist groups in both political and social spheres. Those groups publicly carry out hate speech targeting ethnic, national, religious and other minorities, refugees, migrants as well as LGBT people. Such incitement to hatred often leads to violence against vulnerable populations, which constitutes hate crimes. Regrettably, few countries have sufficient measures to prevent and punish hate speech and hate crimes.

As of today, 177 countries have ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD). However, many State parties have not taken effective measures in line with article 4 of the Convention to tackle hateful propaganda of racial superiority and discrimination promoted by individuals and groups. Article 4 requires a State party to punish incitement to hatred and racial discrimination, prohibit racist organisations and condemn hateful messages by public authorities. Furthermore, in 2013, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) issued the General Recommendation 35 titled "*Combating racist hate speech*". This recommendation provides detailed guidance and criteria for State parties to tackle racist hate speech, including duties and responsibilities attached to freedom of expression for protection of the rights of others.

In order to counter the current rise of racist groups, we call upon all State parties to adopt further concrete measures to combat hate speech in accordance with the ICERD and its General Recommendation 35. State parties putting reservations to the Convention, especially on article 4, must withdraw them and harmonise own domestic law. We also urge States, which have not ratified the Convention, to do so without any reservation.

Lastly, we welcome the Special Rapporteur's renewal of requests to Japan and India to accept his country visits. Since both States have extended a standing invitation to thematic special procedures, his country visits must take place without further delay.

Thank you Mr. President.