

THE INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT AGAINST ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM

IMADR Oral Statement: 34th session of the Human Rights Council Debate on racial profiling and incitement to hatred, including in the context of migration

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Speaker: Ayumi AKIYAMA

Thank you Mr. President,

IMADR welcomes this timely discussion to address today's challenges in combatting racial discrimination.

In this dialogue, we would like to point out the lack of measures against racist hate speech in the political discourse. Across the world, we have been witnessing the rise of populism which political leaders scapegoat migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees. Hateful comments by politicians and public officials are used to justify discriminatory treatment against certain individuals and groups based on their perceived race, colour, descent, religion, or national or ethnic origin. Moreover, we must not forget intersecting discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation and gender identity when we discuss racial profiling and incitement to hatred. Individuals who are subject to such multiple forms of discrimination often suffer exclusion and isolation within their own minority community, therefore they are particularly vulnerable to racial discrimination.

We believe that the full implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination (ICERD) is a key to prevent and counter racial profiling and incitement to hatred. Especially the implementation of Article 4 of the Convention in accordance with the General Recommendation No. 35 on "Combating racist hate speech" is essential. However, 18 States parties are putting reservation under Article 4, many of which are hosting countries in migration and facing challenges to counter populism, namely Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, France, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Malta, Monaco, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Switzerland, Tonga, the UK and USA. We encourage those States to withdraw reservation under Article 4, and adopt appropriate measures to combat incitement to hatred and discrimination. We also call on States, which have not done so, to ratify the ICERD.

We have been witnessing the lack of political will to address mass-migration and counter racial discrimination in many parts of the world. Against this backdrop, we would like to ask a question to the distinguished panel.

1. How can the international community encourage governments to recognise the positive role of civil society in the implementation of the ICERD including combatting racial profiling and incitement to hatred?

Thank you Mr. President