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THE INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT AGAINST ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM**Oral Statement: 43rd session of the Human Rights Council
Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on minority issues**

11 March 2020

Madam President,

We thank the Special Rapporteur for his presentation of the annual report. We would also like to congratulate the Special Rapporteur for the success of the first regional forums in 2019.

As one of the co-sponsors of the last Asia-Pacific Regional Forum held in Thailand, we are convinced that regional forums play a crucial role in increasing the mandate's accessibility and ensuring contextualised discussions reflecting the situation unique to each region.

Nevertheless, we regret that the last Asia-Pacific Regional Forum saw acts of intimidation and reprisal against minority rights defenders by some of the eight participating States. Minority rights defenders from those countries were prevented from meaningfully engaging with the discussion, which ran counter to the regional forums' purpose. It is imperative that civil society representatives can freely and safely participate in constructive interactions with the Special Rapporteur and other stakeholders.

We call on States to support regional forums on minority issues and urge them to prevent and refrain from all acts of intimidation and reprisal against civil society representatives, especially minorities, who attend regional forums. We encourage the Special Rapporteur to send a clear message to States before, during, and after regional forums to clearly reject any act of intimidation or reprisal against civil society participants.

Lastly, we express our strong support to the renewal of the Special Rapporteur's mandate.

Thank you Madam President.