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Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance, follow-up and implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

Written statement* submitted by the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[10 February 2016]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).



Islamophobia and Violation of Muslim's Rights

In only one year, 19000 people are brutally killed in Iraq and over 3.2 million people have lost their homes. 3,500 women and children, mainly from Yezidi community are enslaved, mass graves are being discovered one after the other, disappointing the hopes of the families who would look forward to the return of their loved ones. The majority of Iraq war casualties are Muslims.

In Syria about 300,000 people are killed and about 6.5 millions are become homeless. The ones who have lost their homes have fled to other counties and some have lost their lives. The huge number of the displaced has made the world face one of the most serious challenges of our time: dealing with refugee crises. The majority of Syria war casualties are Muslims.

In the ongoing conflicts, the invaluable heritage of the oldest civilizations of the world is being demolished in Iraq and Syria. Thousands of year old monasteries, temples and monuments are razed to ground. Historic sites such as Temple of Bel, Temple of Baalahamin, Mar Behnam Monastery, St Elijah's Monastery, Mosul Museum, Palmyra, Mar Elian Monastery, Apamea, Nimrud, Hatra, Nineveh, Dura-Europos, Mari and Khorsabad are totally or partially destroyed. Iraq lies in ruins from the ongoing carnage by ISIS and the continued fight between IS and other groups.

Suicide bombers known as ISIS members have attacked or threatened to attack different countries round the world including France, Germany, Brussels, Lebanon and Turkey.

ISIS steals the news headlines: the "Islamic State" is reported to be involved in the most brutal methods of killing and violence. Round the world, all atrocities committed by ISIS is associated with "Islam" and Muslims. A heinous image of Islam and Muslims is given to world, thanks to all brutalities committed by ISIS and affiliated groups. So Muslims will most probably be the ones who seriously suffer the cruel backlashes of the crimes. The news consumers feel desperate witnessing the pain and sufferings of the victims. In their view points an "Islamic State" is committing the crimes which makes many members of the news audience develop a hatred or phobia toward Islam or Muslims. Consequently, some of the ones who associate Islam with violence try to retaliate on Muslims by attacks, harassments or discrimination against them.

Muslims are demonized in the media and in some cases there is hatred expressed towards them. As an example, we can recall the remarks made by political figures such as Donald Trump, reflecting the negative perception of some people on Muslims which in turn can make Muslims prone to violence.

As violence is inherently incompatible with human rights, Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV) is seriously concerned about instances of Islamophobia expressed in terms of physical attacks to Muslims, their buildings or the verbal attacks they face in the Media.

ODVV believes that it is vital to counter new and contemporary forms of Islamophobia, xenophobia and related intolerance by formulating a strong international normative and legal framework. In the absence of such a framework, measures taken by states would lack universality, objectivity, coherence and adherence to international human rights norms and standards.

ODVV would also urge the Human Rights Council to support programs of formal and non-formal education in deconstruction of prejudices and fostering of a culture of tolerance round the world, especially in USA, Europe and the Middle East.