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**RACISM, RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, XENOPHOBIA AND ALL FORMS OF
DISCRIMINATION**

Written statement* submitted by the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV),
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.

[28 January 2003]

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

Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and All Forms of Discrimination

The horrific crimes of genocide committed in the Second World War made the significance of the protection of the human rights of vulnerable groups and the elimination of prejudice clear to everyone. Today, as all forms of violence are taking place, only but confirms that now, more than ever before vulnerable groups' rights must be protected. All nations are facing this problem with the alarming rise of racism, xenophobia and attacks on immigrant workers and minorities. These issues not only create great danger for the victims but societies as a whole are threatened.

Racial decimation is a serious threat to international peace and security. Segregation and restriction, preferential treatment of individuals because of racial prejudice have always caused enmity between people and the loss of lives. To eliminate discrimination, the presented guidelines of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights can be applied:

- Guaranteeing of the equality of individuals in front of the law, regardless of race, colour, and nationality.
- Condemnation of the spread of racial supremacy ideologies, and provoking racial discrimination, and racist activities.
- Ban of racial discrimination provoking and spreading organizations.
- Securing of protection and legal action against acts of racism.

In recent years, the immigration issue that is followed by the globalisation process has involved many countries directly. The Organization for Defending Victims of Violence expresses its concern over the living conditions of immigrant workers and their families by the economic exploitation, racism at work, low wages, unsuitable conditions and the lack of work security that they are faced with. These workers who are trying hard to become emotionally stable and adapt to the culture of the host country that they live in, are often faced with hostile treatment from the government, local prejudices and suffer from other forms of violations of human rights. These human issues are often more serious and terrible in the case of illegal immigrants, and the trafficking in immigrant workers caused for the intensification of these problems. The report prepared by Mr. Glele Ahanhanzo, the Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (E/CN.4/2000/16 and Add), (E/CN.4/2000/17) and (E/CN.4/2000/18) refers to these concerns.

Another issue that concerns the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence is Islamophobia and the conditions of the Muslim minority communities in Europe and North America. It seems that it is necessary for the special rapporteur to prepare a special report on this issue and especially since the 11 September 2001 incidents. In its reports of 26 September and 4 October 2001, Amnesty International said that a wave of racist attacks on various groups had commenced due to their physical appearance and religious beliefs, which indicates that the general atmosphere was inciting racism and xenophobia.

In Europe, North America and some parts of the world, Muslims, Arabs and even Sikhs were being physically assaulted even shot at. A number of mosques had been bombed and people were killed; shops had been looted, and there were even reports of

schools being shut down. These discriminations were even visible against Muslims in their place of work.

Some mass media groups have adopted Islamophobic methods in their broadcasting and publicity campaigns. These kinds of methods have even infiltrated the Internet too. There are even some reports pertaining that American and European universities are showing caution in accepting Muslim students, and this has resulted in some restrictions. We believe that cultures that lay claim to being the promoters of human rights and freedom must eliminate these behaviours instead of becoming an example for these behaviours.

In occupied Palestine, oppression, detention and torture of the Palestinians is continuing by the Israeli occupying regime. In Iraq, the people are still living in terrible conditions at the treatment of the Iraqi government. Prohibitions on religious schools for the Shi'ite minorities are strongly enforced. The Organization for Defending Victims of Violence insistently asks for the rights of these innocent people to be observed and calls for human rights organizations to take action for the elimination of discrimination and the realisation of their rightful rights.

The rise in the abuse of modern communications mediums such as the Internet for the purpose of broadcasting racist propaganda and inciting racial violence is a growing trend in racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia. This is one of many problems that immigrants and minorities face in Europe, North America and the rest of the world. In 1997 a seminar was held by the United Nations, which concentrated on the role of the Internet in the emergence new patterns of racism. According to the findings of the Special Rapporteur one of the most alarming developments concerning racial discrimination was the spread of racist and xenophobic activities on the Internet. There are over 100 extremist websites, especially those of the neo-Nazis who condone white supremacy and instigate race hatred. The Organization for Defending Victims of Violence expresses its deep concern and calls for laws to be devised to ban the activities of these extremist groups from the Internet.
