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**Statement on the "Racism" by Mr Altaf Hussain Wani, International Human Rights Association of American Minorities (IHRAAM)**

Than you Mr. President,

The 1969 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, as well as the 2001 World Conference against Racism have so far led us to believe that sooner, not later, the world would witness positive developments against racial discrimination. It has been the hope of millions of peoples; victims of various forms and manifestation of racism that these important milestones in the fight against racism would help mitigate their suffering.

Few people will remember these international initiatives; and for those who do, the spectre of divisions among anti-racist communities will cloud their memories. To date, most countries have yet to devise the National Action Plans required by the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

Mr. President,

The need for joint international action against racism has rarely been as urgent as today. Unfortunately, the progress so far is not encouraging. The conditions of those suffering from racism and racial discrimination, in its various forms and manifestations, have rather deteriorated over the past years. Combating racism, discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance requires conviction, consistency, perseverance and determination and above all, strong political will.

Across Europe, far right extremism is on the rise, specifically targeting Muslims and asylum seekers. Globally, issues of migration are prominent on the political agenda, and as they tend to be linked to security concerns, migrants often become targets of hostility and discrimination.

The bane of terrorist acts since end 2001 seem to have spawned a non-ending series of acts of racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia in various parts of the world. Ethnic and religious minorities, economic migrants and refugees, in particular from Africa, Asia and the Arab world, are visibly subjected to racial and religious profiling and acts of intolerance. The rise of nationalist political parties in many tolerant societies of the West is an overt manifestation of such behavioural change.

It is unfortunate that while manifestations of racism are rising in some parts of the world, several age-old practices and institutions of racism – like the caste system in India – remain to be addressed. Does a system of multiple apartheid, affecting millions of Dalits and other lower-caste Hindus, an internal matter of India? Is the upholding of human rights the internal matter of states? How then this Human Rights Council supposed to function?

We urge you to accord utmost importance to the agenda for the elimination of race-based discrimination and hatred, and implement policies and programmes that promote social, cultural and racial harmony.

Determination at national levels as well as resolute actions by the international community need to be taken in this respect.

**I thank you, Mr. President**