

**Declaration by the Annual Coordination Meeting of Minister of Foreign Affairs  
of OIC Member States to condemn the sacrilegious acts of release of defamatory  
video “Innocence of Muslims” and publication of offensive caricatures of  
Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)**

**United Nations Headquarters, New York, 28 September 2012**

We, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation of the Member States of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation, participating at the Annual Coordination Meeting of the OIC Foreign Ministers, held in New York on 28 September 2012, declare the following:

We have noted with deep concern the continuing instances of intolerance, discrimination, profiling, negative stereotyping, stigmatization, religious hatred and violence against Muslims as well as denigration of their religion, Prophet (PBUH), Holy book and symbols occurring in many parts of the world, which contradict the international human rights norms as well as the principle of freedom of religions.

In this context, we deplore the recent despicable acts of the release of slanderous video “Innocence of Muslims” and publication of offensive caricatures of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), as well as other hate material under the pretext of freedom of expression. These Islamophobic acts stand in violation of the freedom of religion and belief, guaranteed by international Human Rights instruments, and have deeply offended more than a billion Muslims as well as all peoples of conscience around the world.

We welcome the statements by the Secretaries General of United Nations and OIC as well as by other world leaders denouncing those sacrilegious acts as bigotry, extreme intolerance and an affront to human dignity aimed at dividing peoples and societies.

We acknowledge the importance of freedom of expression, but at the same time stress the need to ensure that this freedom should be exercised by all with responsibility and in accordance with the relevant international human rights laws and instruments. We further condemn any advocacy of religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence, whether it involves the use of print, audio-visual or electronic media or any other means.

While recalling all relevant OIC resolutions on combating Islamophobia and Eliminating hatred and prejudice against Islam, defamation of religions and the landmark Human Rights Council resolution 16/18 on “Combating Intolerance, Negative Stereotyping and Stigmatization of, and Discrimination, Incitement to Violence and Violence Against, Persons Based on Religion or Belief”, we urge all Governments, in line with their obligations under international human rights law, to take all appropriate measures including necessary legislation against these acts that lead to incitement to hatred, discrimination and violence against persons based on their religion.

We also recognize that all civilizations share and possess basic human values and that cultural and religious diversity and the pursuit of socio-cultural development by all peoples and nations are a source of mutual enrichment for the socio-cultural life of humankind. We further acknowledge that the open public debate of ideas, as well as interfaith and intercultural dialogue at the local, national and international levels can be among the best protections against religious intolerance, and can play a positive role in combating religious hatred.

In this context we reiterate the importance of promoting dialogue, understanding and cooperation among religions, cultures and civilizations for peace and harmony in the world and welcome in this regard all international and regional initiatives and efforts.

We also welcome the efforts made by the media to promote interreligious and intercultural dialogue and encourages them further to disseminate to the grass roots the true image of religions and faiths focusing on their basic tenets of peace and tolerance as well as on the moderate and tolerant discourse of the mainstream;

We call for a global awareness about the dangerous implications of incitement to religious hatred, discrimination and violence on international peace and security and urge all Member States to exert renewed efforts towards developing an education system that includes basic human rights values such as tolerance for religious and cultural diversity that is fundamental to promoting tolerant, peaceful and harmonious multicultural societies;

We request the Secretary General to continue to monitor and take appropriate actions to prevent such acts of unfounded and willful incitement to hatred, discrimination and violence against persons based on their religions.