



**Statement on behalf of OIC, delivered Mr. Danyal Hasnain, Second Secretary, during
General Debate on Item 9
55th HRC Session
27 March 2024**

Mr. Vice President,

Since the onset of this century, online tools and social media platforms have progressively been transformed into conveyor belts for disseminating and amplifying hate speech.

The increasing proclivity to stoke communal, racial and religious divisions, for electoral gains, is reaching alarming magnitudes, across the globe.

Notably, with the advent of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI), the scale and intensity of hate speech is only expected to exacerbate further.

The increasing complexity of these shared challenges requires careful and deft handling.

We believe that selective and partial academic interpretations and unfounded rigidity of views will only complicate the already fraught situation.

Mr. Vice President,

Despite clear stipulations under the international law, the extant absence of preventive legal deterrence, inaction and shying away from speaking out has only encouraged further incitement to hatred and violence.

Nothing can absolve states from their existing obligations to prevent and prosecute acts of religious hatred pursuant to ICCPR and ICERD.

We unequivocally condemn the practice of insulting any religion, including desecrating sacred books and religious places.

The OIC reiterates that the existing international human rights norms and laws cover a range of mutually reinforcing principles that are germane to the question of hate speech.

The debate over Article 19 of ICCPR tends to be skewed over the absolute immutability of free speech while ignoring the imperative of exercising this right by individuals with responsibility.



No one should be allowed to abuse this right to the detriment of other individuals, especially when it can result in hatred and violence, on the basis of religion or race.

Mr. Vice President,

The public, premeditated and recurrent incidents of desecration of the Holy Quran is one such malaise that must be addressed.

These acts of desecration do not just constitute incitement to discrimination and violence against Muslims but are blatant attempts to sabotage inter-faith harmony and peace.

Even though unequivocal condemnation should have been the starting point of our response, however, despite the normative progress made, we remain dismayed at the lack of clear condemnation by various states.

Sadly, some continue to hide behind the self-serving interpretation of human rights.

Henceforth, **Mr. Vice President**, we invite all stakeholders for a dialogue and charting common avenues to address these shared challenges.

We reiterate our call on the international community to take meaningful legislative and administrative steps to prevent the growing plague of racism in all its contemporary forms and manifestations.

I thank you!