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End-of-session statement on behalf of the OIC Group by Mr. Muneeb Ahmed, Counsellor

63rd Session of the UN Human Rights Council

(Geneva, 7 October 2026)

Mr. President,

The OIC affirms that human rights stem from the inherent human dignity. Every person is entitled to all human rights without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. This is the basis of States' obligations under international human rights law, and what this Council is mandated to uphold.

Mr. President,

This Council cannot create obligations that States have not assumed. Initiatives presented to the Council must uphold the principles of universality, impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity, instead of departing from them.

Assertions about incompatibility with international human rights law must be grounded in agreed intergovernmental instruments. Domestic priorities cannot be read into the Universal Declaration of Human Rights or other instruments. The views of treaty bodies or experts, without prejudice to how well considered they may or may not be, are not law and do not bind States.

The sponsors of initiatives presented before this Council should reflect on what approach to take. Creating hierarchies of rights-holders runs counter to the Council's universal mandate. States should not overstep these bounds while paying only lip service to the plight of peoples under foreign occupation; poverty, disenfranchisement and deprivation at home; and entrenched systemic and structural racism, discrimination and religious hatred including the rise of Islamophobia.

Mr. President,

The OIC reaffirms the sovereign right of States to develop their legal and criminal justice systems consistent with their respective human rights obligations. Sovereign equality is not a technicality. It underpins the entire edifice of international law and represents the foundation on which international human rights cooperation rests.

We also reaffirm the importance of respecting social, cultural and religious value systems in the consideration of human rights issues.

The imposition of legal models regardless of national circumstances and without intergovernmental agreement runs counter to the principles of democracy and the rule of law that lie at the heart of this Council's work to promote universal respect for human rights and their enjoyment by all.

The OIC calls upon the Council to uphold its mandate and refrain from initiatives that result in division and polarisation.

Thank you.

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