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**10<sup>th</sup> UNAOC Global Forum, Cascais, 25-27 November 2024**

**Thematic Panel 1:  
Upending hate: Turning the tide against the global surge in all forms of  
religious intolerance, including antisemitism, anti-Muslim hatred and anti-  
Christian bigotry**

26 November 2024 15:00 - 17:00, Estoril Convention Centre

*Draft*

All human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated. Under the Charter of the United Nations, all states made a commitment to promote and encourage universal respect for and observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms without distinction religion or belief. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights provides that everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion or belief, which shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of one's choice and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, and to manifest one's religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching. The denial of any of these fundamental rights is considered a violation of human rights and international law.

Freedom of religion or belief is under increasing pressure worldwide. Four out of five people are unable to freely practice their religion or belief, often in combination with restrictions on other human rights such as freedom of expression and assembly. Women are particularly affected and face additional discrimination in many contexts. These acts that advocate religious hatred undermine the spirit of tolerance and respect for diversity.

It is also disturbing to see the growing manifestations of intolerance, derogatory stereotyping, negative profiling and stigmatization as well as discrimination and in many cases violence against persons based on religion or belief as well as any such acts directed against their homes, businesses, properties, schools, cultural centers or places of worship, generate hatred and spark violence which may lead to posing a threat to peace and stability within the societies.

It is therefore important to underpin the imperative need to advance respect for religious and cultural diversity, as well as interreligious, interfaith and intercultural dialogue aimed at promoting a culture of tolerance and respect among individuals, societies and nations. It is the obligation of States to prohibit discrimination and violence on the basis of religion or belief and to implement measures to guarantee the equal and effective protection of the law.

At the same time, it is to be noted the valuable contributions of religious leaders and faith actors to raising awareness about diverse cultures and religions or beliefs and the importance of education in the promotion of respect and tolerance which involves the acceptance by the public of and its respect for religious and cultural diversity.

In this context, it is important to build on and strengthen the implementation of existing frameworks including international, regional and national initiatives aimed at promoting interreligious, intercultural and addressing all forms of religious hatred and discrimination including the Istanbul Process and the promotion of effective implementation of Human Rights Council resolution 16/18,<sup>1</sup> to counter global violence, religious discrimination and intolerance, and the Rabat Plan of Action on the prohibition of advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence, adopted in Rabat on 5 October 2012.<sup>2</sup>

This thematic panel will provide an opportunity to have a substantive exchange of views on good practices on efficiently addressing all forms of religious hatred and bigotry including antisemitism, anti-Muslim hatred, Christianophobia.

The speakers will address the following guiding questions:

- What is the nexus between human rights and upholding the freedom of religion and belief
- In what ways do violations of freedom of religion or belief undermine conditions conducive to peace and security?
- Drawing the line between the derogatory expressions against persons on the basis of their religion or belief and freedom of expression.

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council, A/HRC/RES/16/18, 2011. Available at: <https://documents.un.org/doc/resolution/gen/g11/127/27/pdf/g1112727.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> OHCHR, Rabat Plan of Action on the Prohibition of Advocacy of National, Racial or Religious Hatred, 2013. Available at: [https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Rabat\\_draft\\_outcome.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Rabat_draft_outcome.pdf)