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146TH IPU ASSEMBLY
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146th IPU Assembly

Manama (11–15 March 2023)

Assembly
Item 2

A/146/2-P.4
11 March 2023

Consideration of requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda

Request for the inclusion of an emergency item in the agenda of the 146th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union submitted by the delegation of Indonesia

On 11 March 2023, the IPU Secretary General received from the delegation of Indonesia a request and accompanying documents for the inclusion in the agenda of the 146th Assembly of an emergency item entitled:

“Combating Islamophobia, fighting intolerance, eliminating racial discrimination,
and promoting peaceful coexistence among peoples and religions”.

Delegates to the 146th Assembly will find attached the text of the communication submitting the request ([Annex I](#)), as well as an explanatory memorandum ([Annex II](#)) and a draft resolution ([Annex III](#)) in support thereof.

The 146th Assembly will be required to take a decision on the request of the delegation of Indonesia on Sunday, 12 March 2023.

Under the terms of Assembly Rule 11.1, any Member of the IPU may request the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda. Such a request must be accompanied by a brief explanatory memorandum and a draft resolution, which clearly define the scope of the subject covered by the request. The IPU Secretariat shall communicate the request and any such documents immediately to all Members.

Furthermore, Assembly Rule 11.2 stipulates that:

- (a) A request for the inclusion of an emergency item must relate to a recent major situation of international concern on which urgent action by the international community is required and on which it is appropriate for the IPU to express its opinion and mobilize a parliamentary response. Such a request must receive a two-thirds majority of the votes cast in order to be accepted.
- (b) The Assembly may place only one emergency item on its agenda. Should several requests obtain the requisite majority, the one having received the largest number of positive votes shall be accepted.
- (c) The authors of two or more requests for the inclusion of an emergency item may combine their proposals to present a joint one, provided that each of the original proposals relates to the same subject.
- (d) The subject of a proposal that has been withdrawn by its authors or rejected by the Assembly cannot be included in the draft resolution submitted on the emergency item, unless it is clearly referred to in the request and title of the subject adopted by the Assembly.

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#IPU146

**COMMUNICATION ADDRESSED TO THE IPU SECRETARY GENERAL BY
THE INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY ORGANIZATION DIVISION OF THE HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA**

11 March 2023

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

Please find attached the file on the Emergency Item for the 146th IPU Assembly proposed by the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia:

“Combating Islamophobia, fighting intolerance, eliminating racial discrimination,
and promoting peaceful coexistence among peoples and religions”.

Yours sincerely,

The International Parliamentary Organization
Division of the House of Representatives of
the Republic of Indonesia

**COMBATING ISLAMOPHOBIA, FIGHTING INTOLERANCE, ELIMINATING RACIAL
DISCRIMINATION, AND PROMOTING PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE
AMONG PEOPLES AND RELIGIONS**

Explanatory memorandum submitted by the delegation of Indonesia

Amid the ongoing global division triggered by the war in Ukraine, which has just entered its second year, along with the efforts exerted to recover stronger from the past two years of the pandemic, and in parallel with the continued search to find the best solutions for protracted global challenges including extreme poverty and climate change, the world was shocked by the recent burning of the Holy Qur'an. This incident was not the first time; unfortunately, it has become a recurrent event. Such phenomena arguably justify a recent report by the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, which concluded that suspicion, discrimination and outright hatred towards Muslims has risen to "epidemic proportions".

Taking into account this "epidemic", the UN General Assembly (UNGA) adopted by consensus on 15 March 2022 a resolution proclaiming 15 March as the International Day to Combat Islamophobia. The resolution emphasizes the right to freedom of religion and belief and recalls a 1981 resolution calling for "the elimination of all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief". The resolution also serves as a milestone in the prevention of any harmful measure intended against any beliefs and religions, not only Islam.

Islamophobia, however, remains pervasive, particularly in the countries where Muslims are a minority. According to the European Islamophobia Report 2021, Islamophobia was "as pressing a problem" across the continent in 2021 as it had been in previous years. The report further details systemic discrimination faced by Muslims in all areas of life, from employment to health care, education and the justice system. The most important finding from the report is its grave concern over the alleged institutionalization of Islamophobia in Europe. Furthermore, the report submitted on 21 July 2022 to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in review of the United States Government's compliance with the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) concludes that Islamophobia is pervasive in the United States. Meanwhile, a report provided to the Islamophobia Register Australia (IRA) in collaboration with Charles Sturt University's Centre for Islamic Studies and Civilization (CISAC) shows that Islamophobia is set to continue at disturbing levels in Australia. Moreover, many see the situations involving Muslims in India, the Rohingya and the Uyghur as manifestations of long-standing Islamophobia, intolerance and racial discrimination. Muslim minorities have been treated both unfairly and discriminately for being Muslim as well as for being Arab, as has been seen in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

It is vital for the global community to prevent this "epidemic" from turning into a pandemic. The world must be fully aware of the harmful effects of pervasive Islamophobia and its ramifications, particularly the possible widespread backlash from the global Muslim population of almost 2 billion, which would put global stability and security at stake. Also, as forms of racial discrimination, Islamophobia or anti-Muslim hatred obviously run counter to the *Charter of the United Nations*, the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, and the IPU's mission for peace, democracy, and human rights.

As a global parliamentary organization that aims to contribute to the defence and promotion of human rights, which are universal in scope and whose respect is an essential factor of parliamentary democracy and development, as enshrined in the IPU Statutes, the IPU must take a leading role in tackling rising Islamophobia in particular, as well as existing intolerance and racial discrimination in general. The IPU must act to ensure global peace and security by promoting the values of peaceful coexistence among peoples and religions. The House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia has therefore decided to submit a draft resolution entitled *Combating Islamophobia, fighting intolerance, eliminating racial discrimination, and promoting peaceful coexistence among peoples and religions* to be included as the IPU's emergency item for this Assembly.

**COMBATING ISLAMOPHOBIA, FIGHTING INTOLERANCE, ELIMINATING RACIAL
DISCRIMINATION, AND PROMOTING PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE
AMONG PEOPLES AND RELIGIONS**

Draft resolution submitted by the delegation of INDONESIA

The 146th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

- (1) *Warmly welcoming* the adoption of resolution 76/254 by the United Nations General Assembly on 15 March 2022, which proclaimed 15 March the International Day to Combat Islamophobia,
- (2) *Recalling* United Nations General Assembly resolutions 41/128, 66/3, 66/154, 66/161, 66/167 and 66/208, which stress the importance of strengthening universal respect for and observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without any distinction as to race, sex, language or religion, and the importance of cultural diversity, and address the necessity to combat intolerance, racism, xenophobia, negative stereotyping, stigmatization and discrimination,
- (3) *Recalling also* all relevant international legal instruments and commitments on the elimination of various forms of discrimination, especially as enshrined in the *Charter of the United Nations*, the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, the *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*, and the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*,
- (4) *Affirming* that these relevant international legal instruments and commitments state in particular that dignity and equality are inherent in all human beings, promote universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinguishing on the basis of race, sex, language or religion, and proclaim the principles of the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, which also include the freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest one's religion or belief through worship, observance, practice and teaching,
- (5) *Reaffirming* United Nations Human Rights Council resolution 16/18, *Combating intolerance, negative stereotyping and stigmatization of, and discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against, persons based on religion or belief*, which was adopted by a historic consensus that brought together divergent views on eliminating religious discrimination and intolerance,
- (6) *Bearing in mind* the report of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief to the Human Rights Council (A/HRC/46/30, 13 April 2021), which concluded that suspicion, discrimination and outright hatred towards Muslims has risen to "epidemic proportions", and also the European Islamophobia Report 2021 that considered Islamophobia "as pressing a problem" across the continent as it had been in previous years,
- (7) *Recalling* all relevant resolutions of the IPU, particularly the resolution adopted at the 110th Assembly (Mexico City, 2004) on *Furthering parliamentary democracy in order to protect human rights and encourage reconciliation among peoples and partnership among nations*, the resolution adopted at the 102nd Inter-Parliamentary Conference (Berlin, 1999) on *The contribution of parliaments to the peaceful coexistence of ethnic, cultural and religious minorities, including migrant populations, within one State, marked by tolerance and the full respect for their human rights*, and the resolution adopted at the 92nd Inter-Parliamentary Conference (Copenhagen, 1994) on *Strengthening national structures, institutions and organizations of society which play a role in promoting and safeguarding human rights*,
- (8) *Alarmed* that disregard for and infringement of human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, have brought, directly or indirectly, wars, conflicts and great suffering to humankind, which could exacerbate the current global situation marked by the continuing war in Ukraine and the efforts undertaken to recover from the pandemic,

- (9) *Noting with grave concern* that incidents of Islamophobia, xenophobia, racism, religious prejudice and ethnic hatred continue to increase around the world, manifested through, inter alia, repeated burnings of the Holy Qur'an and terrorist attacks against Muslim minorities,
- (10) *Expressing deep concern* regarding a recognizable pattern of hate crimes against and demonization of Muslims as well as the alleged institutionalization of Islamophobia in many countries,
- (11) *Bearing in mind* that Islamophobia is a specific form of racism that refers to acts of violence, discrimination and hate speech, leading to the exclusion and dehumanization of Muslims and all those perceived as such,
- (12) *Underlining* that the role of human rights, fundamental freedoms and democratic institutions is crucial in creating an environment conducive for inter-cultural and inter-religious understanding and dialogue aimed at crystalizing peaceful coexistence among peoples and religions,
1. *Commends* the proclamation by the United Nations General Assembly of 15 March as the International Day to Combat Islamophobia;
 2. *Recommends* that national parliaments all over the world mark every 15 March as a moment to reinforce their full commitment to universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinguishing between race, sex, language or religion;
 3. *Urges* States to strengthen their commitment to protecting and preserving human rights as enshrined in international legal instruments, particularly the *Charter of the United Nations*, the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, the *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*, and the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*;
 4. *Calls upon* States to act immediately to end Islamophobia, intolerance and racial discrimination in all forms, to ensure equality and dignity, and to implement the provisions of all relevant international legal instruments, especially the *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*;
 5. *Expresses deep concern* at instances of intolerance, discrimination and acts of violence against Islam and Muslims in many parts of the world, in addition to the negative portrayal and stereotyping of Islam and Muslims in the international media, which associates them with violence, terrorism and human rights violations;
 6. *Strongly denounces* rising Islamophobia, intolerance and discrimination against the Muslim community and minorities by, inter alia, enacting and oppressively applying restrictive laws and policies, religious profiling and other measures, under a variety of pretexts relating to security and illegal immigration;
 7. *Invites* IPU Member Parliaments to reject all forms of Islamophobic manifestation such as the burning of the Holy Qur'an and the denigration of the sanctity of the Holy Prophet of Islam, which are inconsistent with the spirit of articles 19 and 20 of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*;
 8. *Emphasizes* that there is a well-established international legal acquis that states that the right to freedom of expression must be used with responsibility and a measure of self-restraint;
 9. *Stresses* the necessity to proscribe the misuse of the freedoms of expression and the press to vilify Islam and other religions;

10. *Fully supports* effective cooperation and close consultation among States aimed at combatting Islamophobia, defamation of all divine religions, and incitement to hatred, hostility and discrimination against Muslims;
11. *Affirms* the urgent need to prevent the abuse of the freedoms of expression and the press to insult Islam and other divine religions, as the right to freedom of expression should be exercised by all, in particular the media, with responsibility and in accordance with the law;
12. *Calls upon* the international community to express solidarity with all victims of racism, discrimination, exclusion and hate crimes, and with those nations that have had to face the horror of terrorism;
13. *Warns* that the international community and national authorities must not underestimate the dangers of Islamophobia, which could pose a serious threat to global stability and security and undermine global recovery, as well as aggravating the war in Ukraine;
14. *Calls upon* the international community to redouble its efforts to promote effective intercultural and inter-religious dialogue to create peaceful coexistence among peoples and religions.