High-Level Event to mark the 2\textsuperscript{nd} International Day on Countering Hate Speech

IT BEGINS WITH WORDS AND EACH OF US:
EFFECTIVE ACTION TO COUNTER HATE SPEECH
Showcasing champions and good practices on tackling hate speech from across the world

Monday 19 June 2023
11AM – 1PM
Trusteeship Chamber
UNHQ

BACKGROUND:
On July 21st, 2021, the General Assembly adopted resolution A/RES/75/309 on “Promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue and tolerance in countering hate speech.” This resolution, that was presented to Member States by the Kingdom of Morocco, and which builds on the first-ever resolution on hate speech A/RES/73/328, marks an important milestone in advancing global efforts to address and counter hate speech in all its forms and manifestations, including in the digital context.

The resolution proclaims 18 June as the “International Day for Countering Hate Speech” to be observed annually. The first such International Day was marked in 2022, including through an Informal High-level Meeting of the General Assembly and a High-Level side event co-organized by the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Morocco and the UN Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect on the “Role of education to address the root causes of hate speech and advance inclusion, non-discrimination and peace”.

Resolution A/RES/75/309 recognizes the damaging impact that hate speech can have on human rights and the furtherance of peace and inclusion. It calls on all key actors and stakeholders, particularly Member States, to increase their efforts to address this phenomenon, in line with international human rights commitments and standards. It further encourages Member States to promote interreligious and intercultural dialogue, respect for diversity, and the elimination of discrimination based on religion or belief, underlining the importance of education, culture, peace, tolerance, mutual understanding and human rights in these endeavors.
To respond to the alarming rise and spread of hate speech, on 18 June 2019, the Secretary-General, António Guterres, launched the United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech. The Strategy seeks to enhance the UN’s response to the global phenomenon of hate speech. The Strategy makes a firm commitment to step up coordinated action to tackle hate speech, both at global and national levels. The importance of tackling hate speech is re-emphasized in Our Common Agenda. In his message for the first International Day for Countering Hate Speech, the Secretary-General reemphasized that “Hate speech incites violence, undermines diversity and social cohesion, and threatens the common values and principles that bind us together. It promotes racism, xenophobia and misogyny; it dehumanizes individuals and communities; and it has a serious impact on our efforts to promote peace and security, human rights, and sustainable development...Hate speech is a danger to everyone and fighting it is a job for everyone. This first International Day to Counter Hate Speech is a call to action. Let us recommit to doing everything in our power to prevent and end hate speech by promoting respect for diversity and inclusivity.

Additionally, this strategy and plan of Action indicates that while there is no international legal definition of hate speech, “the term hate speech is understood as any kind of communication in speech, writing or behaviour, that attacks or uses pejorative or discriminatory language with reference to a person or a group on the basis of who they are, in other words, based on their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, colour, descent, gender or other identity factor. This is often rooted in, and generates intolerance and hatred and, in certain contexts, can be demeaning and divisive”.

The UN Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect (OSAPG) is the UN system wide focal point for hate speech, including coordinating implementation of the UN Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech. The OSAPG provides support within the UN system, to Member States, regional organization and civil society in their efforts to combat hate speech, in line with the UN Strategy. For example, a key part of the implementation of the Strategy is through the development by UN Country Teams, Peacekeeping and Special Political Missions of context specific action plans to implement the global Strategy, in partnership with national stakeholders. To date over 20 UN field presences have developed and are implemented such action plan.

To mark the second International Day for Countering Hate Speech the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Morocco to the UN and the UN OSAPG are co-organizing a high-level side event on: It begins with words and each of us: Effective Action to Counter Hate Speech - SHOWCASING CHAMPIONS AND GOOD PRACTICES ON TACKLING HATE SPEECH FROM ACROSS THE WORLD.

The objective of the high-level event is to showcase good practices that exist from within the UN system, from Member States, regional organizations, civil society and other relevant stakeholders to tackle hate speech. The good practices will emphasize efforts that deal not only with the impact and spread of hate but also its root causes and drivers. It is further aimed to take stock of some of the challenges and lesson learnt from these initiatives in order to enhance knowledge sharing and to strengthen our collective efforts to address the scourge of hate speech globally.

The high-level event will also feature the launch of a publication developed by OSAPG showcasing some of the good practices from within the UN system, in particular from UN field entities on countering and addressing hate speech.
OBJECTIVE

This high-level event is co-organized by the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Morocco to the United Nations and the United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect, that is also the United Nations Focal Point on Hate Speech.

Its objectives include:

- Commemorate the 2nd Anniversary of the International Day on Countering Hate Speech, and bringing attention to the importance of tackling hate speech in all its forms and manifestations.
- Showcasing good practices and examples of efforts to combat hate speech from UN, Member States, regional organizations, civil society and other actors with the aim to support knowledge sharing and exchange on share lessons learnt. It is also aimed to take stock of and highlight recommendations for additional efforts that can enable holistically addressing and countering hate speech, both online and offline.

AGENDA

Opening

- H.E. Csaba Kőrösi, President of the General Assembly
- H.E. António Guterres Secretary-General (TBC)
- H.E. Nasser Bourita, Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation, and Moroccan Expatriates of the Kingdom of Morocco
- Ms. Alice Wairimu Nderitu, United Nations Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide

Good Practices

- Speakers from UN system
- Speakers from Member States, regional organization
- Speakers from civil society

Statements from the floor

- Member States interventions

Closing