



مصلحة الحوار والتعاون بين القادات  
والمؤسسات الدينية المتنوعة  
في العالم العربي



مامت للسلام والتنمية وحقوق الإنسان  
Maat For Peace, Development, and Human Rights

## **EVALUATION OF UN RESOLUTIONS SERIES**

# **Promoting Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue and Tolerance in Countering Hate Speech**

**When will the objectives of Resolution (30975/) of the United Nations General Assembly be achieved?**

**EDITED BY  
SHERIF ABDUL-HAMID**

**PREPARED BY  
ALI UHAMED**

## Preamble

On July 21, 2021, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 309/75 (referred to as Resolution) by consensus. The decision urged for "the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue and tolerance in countering hate speech<sup>1</sup>." With the adoption of this resolution, the United Nations General Assembly invited Member States, regional and international organizations, as well as civil society organizations, including non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and various individuals, to celebrate June 18, 2022 as the International Day for Countering Hate Speech. It requested the President of the United Nations General Assembly to convene a high-level meeting to support the development of strategies to identify, address and counter hate speech at the national and global levels.

The resolution also stressed the critical role of Member States, regional organizations, national human rights institutions, non-governmental organizations, religious bodies, the media, and civil society in encouraging tolerance and respect for religious and cultural diversity and in promoting and protecting human rights, including the right to freedom of religion and belief. The resolution also drew attention to the role played by religious leaders and religious organizations in combating hate speech if they express it openly, curb extremism, and show solidarity with those targeted and victims whose rights were violated based on these speeches.

This resolution raises a key question, **which is what is the states' responsibility to achieve the goals' resolutions?** Before the adoption of June 2022 as the International Day for Countering Hate Speech, and before holding the high-level meeting of the President of the United Nations General Assembly on the same day

---

<sup>1</sup> Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 21 July 2021, United Nation, <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/75/309>

## What do the member states of the United Nations do to achieve the resolution provisions?

The 193 member states of the United Nations can all agree to the draft resolution ((A/75/L.115)) submitted by the Kingdom of Morocco, which won the support of 75 countries representing different regional and ethnic groups. By the adoption of the previous resolution by the United Nations, the draft resolution turned into a resolution approved by the General Assembly in the framework of the document ((309/75)). Before adopting the International Day for Countering Hate Speech on June 18, 2022, and promote interfaith dialogue, these countries should take executive, legislative and policy measures. They should commit to international treaties, charters, and United Nations declarations related to combating hate speech and discrimination racial and respect for cultural and ethnic diversity. **Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights believes that countries should take a set of initial steps towards achieving the goals of the resolution, including:**

### 1. Support the implementation of the UN Action Plan to Prevent Incitement to Violence

Supporting the implementation of the “United Nations Action Plan for Religious Leaders and Actors” aimed at preventing incitement to violence that could lead to crimes of genocide. On 14 June 2017, and in cooperation with King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, globally known by its abbreviation, KAICIID, the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers, and the World Council of Churches, the United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention launched an action plan for religious leaders to prevent incitement to violence that could lead to genocide, this coincided with five separate action plans launched by religious leaders and actors from around the world.

The action plan can serve as a reference for many countries in their different regions to develop strategies and adopt measures and initiatives that urge religious leaders to counter hate speech and renounce violence<sup>2</sup>. These leaders have a dual

---

<sup>2</sup> إطلاق خطة عمل للقادة الدينيين تهدف إلى منع التحريض على العنف الذي يمكن أن يؤدي إلى ارتكاب جرائم الإبادة، أخبار الأمم المتحدة، 14 يوليو 2017، على الرابط [التالي: https://bit.ly/3m9mluy](https://bit.ly/3m9mluy)

effect. If they use religion to incite violence, they can cause abuses against other religious minorities in society and opposition political groups. Even if it is not genocide, this incitement causes human rights violations, especially against human rights defenders and opposition groups.

Iraq is an example of this; after religious leaders in Iraq incited against human rights defenders, opinion activists, and journalists, many of them were assassinated and kidnapped. More than 20 human rights defenders were killed and injured in 2021 due to their demands to limit the use of weapons to the Iraqi state and their accusations of corruption by interest groups whose interests intersect with some ministers in the Iraqi government and some political parties. For example, activist Ihab Al-Wazni, a member of the demonstrations coordination, was assassinated on May 9, 2021, after continuous incitement against him by religious militias loyal to Iran. The assassination of these defenders came in light of complete impunity and lack of accountability and in a prevailing culture that undermines the rule of law<sup>3</sup>. In Lebanon, activist Luqman Selim was shot dead in his car in February 2021 in the Nabatiyeh region in southern Lebanon. His wife claimed that Hezbollah, a religious group stationed in south Lebanon with close ties to Iran, was responsible for his assassination, especially in light of the late activist's criticism of this group and the threat of Hezbollah members to him<sup>4</sup>.

## 2. Incorporating the Document on “Human Fraternity” into public policies

Some countries have recently begun, with the increasing reliance on social media platforms, to enact more laws in order to counter hate speech, without violating freedom of opinion and expression. Perhaps the most prominent contribution in this context, which expresses international and religious solidarity to reject hate speech, is the “Human Fraternity” document. This document was issued in February 2019 to reflect the outcomes of the Human Fraternity Conference, which brought together religious leaders, including Sheikh Al-Azhar Ahmed el-Tayeb and His Holiness Pope Francis, Pope of the Catholic Church. This

---

<sup>3</sup> إيهاب الوزني: حملة إلكترونية لمقاطعة الانتخابات العراقية عقب مقتل الناشط البارز، بي بي سي عربي، 9 مايو 2021، على الرابط التالي: <https://bbc.in/3ILlyLv>

<sup>4</sup> من هو لقمان سليم الناشط اللبناني الذي عُثر عليه مقتولاً في جنوب البلاد؟، فرانس 24، 2 فبراير 2021، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/3yBxkDy>

conference was hosted by the United Arab Emirates and was organized by the Muslim Council of Elders in Abu Dhabi.<sup>5</sup>

The Human Fraternity Document emerged from this conference, which emphasized that religions do not incite feelings of hatred, hostility, violence, or intolerance, but rather are the result of a deviation from correct religious teachings<sup>6</sup>. The preamble to the document called for the need to stop using religions to fuel hatred, violence, and violent extremism<sup>7</sup>. On February 4, 2021, the International Day of Human Fraternity was celebrated after a resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2020, as part of an initiative submitted by Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and the State of Bahrain<sup>8</sup>.

Integrating the principles and provisions of the document on Human Fraternity in the general policies of the Member States of the United Nations, translating the texts of these provisions into legislation and executive decisions, and raising awareness about them and their importance is an urgent necessity towards curbing hate speech and combating violent extremism. Some countries have already started thinking about teaching the document's provisions in pre-university education stages and integrating them into educational curricula, Egypt is an example in this context. According to Deputy Minister of Education Reda Hegazy, Egypt's education strategy for 2030 included a set of principles and provisions of the Human Fraternity for Peace Document global and coexistence<sup>9</sup>.

### 3. Continuous exchange of visits between religious leaders in the world

The visit of Pope Francis of the Vatican to Iraq in March 2021 represented a very important event in the framework of promoting interfaith dialogue<sup>10</sup>. The Pope's meeting with religious leaders, including the Shiite authority in Iraq Ali al-

---

<sup>5</sup> تعزيز الأخوة الإنسانية والسلم العالمي، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/3oMuabA>

<sup>6</sup> وثيقة الأخوة الإنسانية، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/3m7IVFs>

<sup>7</sup> البيان تنشر النص الكامل لوثيقة "الأخوة الإنسانية من أجل السلام العالمي والعيش المشترك"، البيان، 4 فبراير 2021، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/3oN4llf>

<sup>8</sup> قرار اتخذته الجمعية العامة للأمم المتحدة في 21 ديسمبر 2020، اليوم العالمي للأخوة الإنسانية، ص 2، على الرابط التالي: <https://undocs.org/ar/A/RES/75/200>

<sup>9</sup> نائب وزير التعليم: بدأنا في تضمين «الأخوة الإنسانية» بالمناهج، الدستور، 3 فبراير 2021، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/3EXDJeE>

<sup>10</sup> ما الذي يجعل زيارة البابا فرنسيس إلى العراق تاريخية؟، بي بي سي عربية، 2 مارس 2021، على الرابط التالي: <https://bbc.in/33kGqc3>

Sistani<sup>11</sup>, in addition to visiting religious sites represented a message that called for peace among all sects and groups in Iraq and respect for cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity in Iraq, which has been torn apart by rivalries between the different religious components for political goals<sup>12</sup>. In line with the United Nations Declaration on Cultural Diversity, which also lists the close link between respect for this diversity and the achievement of development goals at all levels<sup>13</sup>. The meeting of Sheikh Ahmed el-Tayeb, the Grand Sheikh of Al-Azhar, with the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, at his residence in the Vatican, on the sidelines of the “Religions Summit for Climate Change” set an example for dialogue between representatives of different religions. He also emphasized the role of interfaith harmony, not only in promoting building peace and tackling hate speech and discrimination but also in addressing contemporary challenges facing societies without exception such as climate change<sup>14</sup>; The continuation of these visits between religious leaders from different religious components and the holding of conferences between the leaders of these religions and spiritual leaders would contribute to achieving the goals of the resolution as much as possible and would encourage confidence among members of the different religious components in the same society.

#### 4. Supporting civil society efforts to counter hate speech

The participation of civil society organizations in curbing hate speech is a pivotal pillar in any efforts to curb such speech, it can be achieved by strengthening governments’ cooperation with civil society organizations and establishing partnerships in support of Sustainable Development Goal 17 and establishing mechanisms for consultation with non-governmental organizations and other various organizations of civil society in order to benefit from their experiences in combating these speeches and consult with them in formulating policies and legislation aimed at renouncing violence and violent extremism, and states should provide financial support, as necessary, to these organizations, including to NGOs,

---

<sup>11</sup> بابا الفاتيكان يلتقي المرجع الشيعي علي السيستاني في العراق، سبوتنك عربي، 6 مارس 2021، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/31X1Coh>

<sup>12</sup> الأمم المتحدة في العراق: زيارة البابا تحمل رسالة أمل وسلام إلى مجتمع حاضن للتنوع، أخبار الأمم المتحدة، 5 مارس 2021، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/327dmmj>

<sup>13</sup> الإعلان العالمي بشأن التنوع الثقافي، الأمم المتحدة، مكتب المفوض السامي، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/3dTbME3>

<sup>14</sup> لژهر وكاتبري لتعزيز جهود بناء السلام والحد من الصراعات، الشرق الأوسط، 8 أكتوبر 2021، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/3dVSjao>

particularly organizations whose main fields of work are themes, such as supporting equality, eliminating discrimination, combating hate speech, providing opportunities for these organizations to play the role entrusted to them to monitor these phenomena that incite hatred, and providing an enabling environment for these organizations to work on the ground freely and without dictates<sup>15</sup>. In addition to facilitating the reporting of victims of these speeches and providing them with immediate support, which makes these organizations trust in the ability of governments to be held accountable and not go unpunished for these acts, which in general enhances confidence in governments and their various agencies.

## 5. Dissemination of good practices related to combating hate speech and preventing extremism

It is possible if countries adopt good practices in the context of combating hate speech to follow these practices, and perhaps the opening of the International Center for Interfaith Mediation for Peace and Harmony in Nigeria is a very positive sign. On August 19, 2021, a group of Christians and Muslims initiated the efforts of the organizations of the Nigerian Christian Council and The victory of Islam in Nigeria with the opening of the center in Kaduna, and choosing the city to be the center's headquarters is extremely important symbolism, as about 20,000 were killed in violent conflicts in the past decades due to the rivalry between religious components, the opening of the center received the support of religious leaders who expressed its importance in forming a relationship on peace and harmony between religions<sup>16</sup>, if the religions differ in ideological aspects, but they undoubtedly share values and principles related to respect for the human being, his dignity, and his life, meaning that they oppose violence and war. Therefore, the dialogue must start on the basis of these common values in a way that enhances the right to freedom of religion and belief enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

---

<sup>15</sup> المؤتمر العالمي لمكافحة العنصرية والتمييز العنصري وكره الأجانب وما يتصل بذلك من تعصب، الإعلان وبرنامج العمل، ص 97، على الرابط التالي:

<https://bit.ly/3ITDyU0>

<sup>16</sup> مسيحيو نيجيريا ومسلمها يفتتحون مركزا تاريخيا للسلام، مجلس الكنائس العالمي، على الرابط التالي: <https://bit.ly/33y3iVK>

## 6. Using education as a tool to combat hate speech

The critical role played by education in promoting tolerance among individuals within a single state and in maximizing the values of equality and brotherhood between religious and ethnic components and between racial groups and considering education as an effective tool in curbing hate speech, whether in formal or informal education at the heart of the United Nations strategy and action plan regarding combating hate speech and is consistent with achieving the fourth goal of the Sustainable Development Goals<sup>17</sup>. The establishment of educational systems that include addressing hate speech and all forms of racial discrimination and respect for ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity will be reflected in achieving the goals of the decision, which is the subject of the current report, with the need to recall the good practices provided by individuals belonging to racial, ethnic or religious minorities. The use of education as a tool to combat hate speech is consistent with paragraph 13 of the resolution, which emphasized the importance of education in promoting interfaith and intercultural dialogue<sup>18</sup>.

### Recommendations

- Initiating the adoption of legal legislation against hate speech and prosecuting those responsible, especially in cyberspace, in line with the United Nations strategy to combat hate speech;
- The necessity of urging Internet service providers to develop codes of conduct to combat the dissemination of racist ideas or any ideas that incite hatred, discrimination, or xenophobia, taking into account the participation of civil society organizations when developing these codes;
- The need for a participatory approach involving all stakeholders including government, civil society, academia, media, technology, social media companies, the private sector, and religious actors, as well as victims and communities affected by hate speech;

---

<sup>17</sup> UNITED NATIONS STRATEGY AND PLAN OF ACTION ON HATE SPEECH, page 4, <https://bit.ly/3J2KbDA>

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, para13, page, <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/75/309>



- The need to put in place mechanisms to monitor and analyze hate speech and collect all relevant data in line with the United Nations strategy and plan of action on hate speech;
- The need for governments to allow civil society organizations to monitor, document, and analyze hate speech and provide assistance to them whenever possible;
- Training teachers in pre-collective education stages on the importance of diversity and acceptance of the other and those differences between groups do not mean fighting and hatred between them, but the rule of respect and the promotion of peace.
- The need for any measures taken by the state to confront stereotypes, and to include groups that suffer from marginalization and discrimination in social solidarity programs, and the ethnic and racial diversity in multi-ethnic states should be reflected in the state's educational system;
- Ensure that individuals targeted by hate speech have access to justice and their right to a fair and equitable due process;