

**Statement by the Delegation of Malaysia
Following the Presentation of the Reports on Incitement to
Racial and Religious Hatred and the Promotion of Tolerance
Second Session of the Human Rights Council
22 September 2006**

Mr. President,

My delegation associates itself with the statement on this item made by Pakistan on behalf of the OIC.

Mr. President,

2. No one can choose to remain neutral in the fight against racial and religious intolerance or any form of incitement, including defamation of religions that endanger peaceful and harmonious co-existence among societies and civilizations. All efforts should be made to achieve credible and concrete progress in purging any form of intolerance and defamation. Indeed, all should work to ensure that tolerance permeate every aspect of our communication and interaction with one another.

3. We are deeply concerned over the increasing trend of defamation of religions and other forms of expressions of racial hatred and discrimination against people of different faiths and ethnicities.

4. So much have been said in this Council and outside about clash of civilizations, as well as about genuine measures to prevent and overcome it through promotion of dialogue, mutual understanding, mutual respect and tolerance. If we really are honest in our efforts to ensure success of those measures, we should at all times avoid any kind of provocative statements and expressions that impinge on other faiths, especially when such statements and expressions are either based on ignorance or lack of truth and understanding of a particular faith or religion.

5. There should be an appropriate balance between the right to freedom of expression and the need to preserve harmonious relations among various faiths and societies. Of paramount importance at all times is public order both in the national context and in the context of inter-relation among the wider human family. Given the human nature, provocation regrettably often leads to violent reaction. And tendency to such reaction is not unique to any particular society or faith. We have recently seen how a whole country almost destroyed due to the disproportionate response to what was considered to be a provocative action.

6. Therefore, all parties should take steps to promote understanding and respect for other religions and cultures and their sensitivities to avoid recurrence of such defamation and intolerance on the one side and violent reactions on the other.

Thank you.