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Opening Statement by Ambassador Masood Khan,
Permanent Representative of Pakistan on behalf of the OIC
during the Sixth session of the Human Rights Council, 10 Sept 07

Mr. President,

1 I have the honor to make this statement on behalf of the OIC.

3 We ~~condemn~~ the two recent terrorist incidents in Algeria in which more than fifty people have been killed, depriving innocent people of their right to life is the most egregious violation of human rights.

2 At the start of the first formal session of the new Council year, we would like to make a few comments on the process and conduct of the Council's work. We welcome your regular consultations with member states and regional groups. We appreciate the approach of transparency and inclusiveness you have pursued.

4 The United Nations General Assembly's Resolution 60/251 clearly states that the work of the Council should be guided by the principles of universality, impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity, constructive international dialogue and cooperation with a view to promote and protect all human rights. The OIC attaches great importance to these fundamental principles and would like to see them fully adhered to in our working methods.

5 Reflection and repetition of the agreed agenda items in the programme of work is a good practice. It will ensure stability, predictability and uniformity in our work. (It will be prudent to follow it as a guiding norm in all future sessions. Its generic nature fully protects the right of delegations to take up specific issues and table proposals under the relevant items.)

6 We know that the situation still remains fluid. The programme of work of this session was posted on the extranet on Friday 7th September. A number of reports are also not available. You would agree that this kind of uncertainty affects delegations' ability to prepare their briefs in consultation with their capitals. Granted that we are still passing through a transitional phase of the Council, we must work together to minimize such uncertainties so that delegations can prepare well and consult their capitals in time.

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Mr. President,

The report on the defamation of religions has been listed for consideration under agenda item 3. The issue of "defamation of religions" has always been considered under the agenda item dealing with racism and racial discrimination. The OIC introduces resolutions on "combating defamation of religions" under the agenda item racism and racial discrimination. We therefore request you to list and schedule discussion and consideration of "defamation of religions" under agenda item 9. In this regard the OIC has already sent you a communication.

The OIC welcomes the indication that Gender perspective will be discussed by the Council on September 20. We would, however, appreciate if you could give us information on the subject for a useful and substantive interactive session.

The OIC strongly condemns the publication of an offensive and blasphemous sketch of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) in a Swedish newspaper. Such blasphemy

We look forward to finishing the pending issues of institution building in this session. It should, however, be done with the right pace without undue haste. We will use the Chinese proverb: "Make haste slowly". We appreciate the work done by all facilitators and look forward to a productive discussion with them in the next few days. We would be grateful if you could enlighten us on the format/structure of the discussion during the informal meetings planned for the subject.

So far we have received only one non-paper on the UPR. In order, however, to contribute substantively, we would appreciate receiving the remaining two non-papers on other subjects. In response to Ambassador Loulichki's non paper, the OIC has already submitted a paper reflecting its position. We would welcome dialogue with the delegations and groups on the contents of the OIC paper.

We believe that for an effective conduct of the UPR, its first, inaugural session should be held after the Council's March session. Such a schedule will help provide States with sufficient time to consult all stakeholders, which is important for a comprehensive report, a successful start of the process, and a meaningful follow-up.

We are encouraged by the willingness to engage OIC Ambassadors in Stockholm on this issue.

We reiterate support your efforts to expedite the early establishment of a Voluntary Trust Fund. Its establishment, on priority, as well as allocation of the requisite resources, will enable participation from the LDCs in the first UPR cycle.

We welcome the inclusion of Review of Mandates in this session. It will help facilitate early completion of the streamlining process. The rationale for selection of the ones put into this session is not self-evident. ~~During our last organizational meeting, we heard a great deal of controversy on the subject. The OIC hopes that a transparent and uniform formula will be used to select members for review. Similarly, the assessment of the mandates should have no link with the presentation of the reports by the mandate holders. We propose that~~ *we should call the exercise for the review of mandates*
We reiterate our proposal made in the organizational meeting of 24 August that initiatives and proposals on different agenda items be brought up in one designated session and the other two sessions could be used for follow up. We shall welcome views of our partners in the matter.

The OIC welcomes the presentation ~~of reports~~ *the discussions of* on the Durban PrepCom and WG on follow up to the Durban. It should help strengthen the preparatory process for the Durban Review Conference.

Mr. President,

In the end, I would like to reiterate the importance of streamlining Council's relationships with UNGA, ~~with the UN Secretary General and, most importantly, with the OHCHR.~~ *and* We urge you to set a side some time for discussion on this subject.

I thank you Mr. President.

*we should
as a matter of priority
examine how we
can take measures
to streamline and
strengthen relations
between the Human
Council and the Office
of the High Commissioner
for Human Rights.*

*an
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is
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and
pursued*

*[Separate
Sentence]*