



Ref. No: 41311078

29 October 2023

The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations Office and Other International Organizations at Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, and would like to refer to the letter received regarding the call for inputs on advocacy of hatred based on religion or belief. In that regard, the Permanente Mission has the honor to attach herewith contribution of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the afore-mentioned request.

The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, the assurance of its highest consideration.



Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights(OHCHR)
The Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief
Email: hrc-sr-freedomofreligion@un.org



Key Achievements and Developments in combating hatred based on Religion or Belief

This paper has been prepared in response to the request of the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief to contribute to the preparation of the forthcoming thematic report on "Exploring Dimensions of Hatred Based on Religion or Belief and its Relationship with Bigotry, Discrimination, and Violence," which is intended to be submitted to the United Nations Human Rights Council during its 55th session in 2024. The following is an overview of the Kingdom's key efforts in combating hatred based on religion or belief, as addressed in the questionnaire prepared by the Special Rapporteur in this regard:

1. How, if at all, is advocacy of hatred defined in the legal and policy frameworks, and how does it relate to intolerance, discrimination, and violence based on religion or belief?

The Kingdom's legal laws converge in prohibiting any form of discrimination, exception, restriction, or preference based on race, color, descent, national origin, or ethnicity that leads to the hindrance or denial of the recognition of human rights and fundamental freedoms, their enjoyment, or exercise, on an equal footing, in various spheres of public life. This is in accordance with the principle of equality as outlined in Article (8) of the Basic Law of Governance.

2. How does hatred based on religion or belief intersect with other causes of discrimination? How are the challenges and necessary responses framed?

- Hatred based on religion intertwines with all forms of discrimination, such as discrimination based on race, color, or gender.

Hatred based on religion or belief can intersect with other forms of discrimination in complex ways, creating a layered and harmful experience for individuals. Here are some ways in which it can intersect:

1. Socioeconomic Discrimination: Discrimination against religious or belief-based groups can also intersect with socioeconomic factors. Certain groups may face economic disadvantages, making them more vulnerable to discrimination.
2. Disability Discrimination: Religious or belief-based discrimination can intersect with discrimination against people with disabilities, potentially limiting their access to places of worship or religious services.



3. Age Discrimination: Discrimination based on religion or belief can also intersect with age discrimination, particularly when younger or older individuals within a faith community face exclusion or prejudice.

These intersections illustrate how religious or belief-based discrimination can exacerbate and be exacerbated by other forms of discrimination, creating a more significant and harmful impact on individuals or communities. Addressing these issues often requires a comprehensive and intersectional approach to promote tolerance, diversity, and inclusion.

- The challenges and necessary responses are formulated to raise awareness among the community, this is why States should prescribe, organize and provide training for the law enforcement officials to sensitize them about the importance of taking the necessary measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination, including those who are from religious minorities. The responses to religious or belief-based prejudice are often presented in a way that encourages understanding, tolerance, and respect for diverse viewpoints. They seek to address and combat discriminatory attitudes, prejudices, and biases associated with religion or belief systems, as well as to promote discourse, education, and awareness. In a multicultural society, these comments frequently emphasize the importance of human rights, equality, and social cohesiveness.

3. How is religious or belief-based hatred confronted at various levels, either by government entities alone or in partnership with other actors, and what is the impact? Have these measures led to the restriction of expression, and if so, please provide details on how these measures align with international human rights obligations? To what extent do you condemn forms of hatred based on religion or belief through harmful attitudes in the wider society? What is the basis of evidence for this, and where do these biases stem from?

- Hatred is condemned by establishing laws that criminalize all forms of racism and hate speech. Among the prominent measures taken by the Kingdom in this regard are:

- Basic Law of Governance: Encompassed in Articles (8) and (47), the governance law in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is based on justice, consultation, and equality, in accordance with Islamic Sharia. It guarantees equal access to justice for both citizens and residents in the Kingdom. It's worth noting that all provisions of the Basic Law of Governance, especially those related to rights and duties, are based on the principle of



equality. Article (41) of the Basic Law of Governance stipulates that "residents in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are required to abide by its laws and to respect the values of the Saudi society, its traditions, and its feelings".

- Publishing and Printing Law: Enacted by Royal Decree, this law safeguards the freedom of opinion and expression in accordance with Islamic Sharia and relevant international standards. It ensures the protection of the rights of others and prohibits the incitement of hatred and division among citizens, as stated in Article (9).

- Audiovisual Media Law: Included in Article (5), this law prohibits actions that may incite hatred, division, or violence among citizens, threatens social peace, or disrespect human dignity.

- Associations and Civil Institutions Law: This law prohibits the establishment of any association that includes provisions conflicting with Islamic Sharia, the public order, public morals, or that undermines national unity.

- Civil Service Law: Issued by Royal Decree in Article (1), this law emphasizes merit as the basis for selecting employees.

- Labor Law: Covered in Article (3), this law declares that citizens are equal in their right to work. It defines fair legal channels for dispute resolution regardless of the worker's nationality, religion, ethnicity, gender, or color. Employers are required to treat their employees with respect and refrain from actions that violate their dignity and religion. The Labor Law and its executive regulations include provisions to regulate the relationship between workers and employers, protecting the rights of workers and ensuring they receive fair wages, adhere to international labor standards, and guarantee the rights of non-Saudi workers to move, travel, and switch jobs without violating the rights of workers and employers.

- Harm Protection Law: This law encompasses providing protection against various forms of harm and offering assistance and treatment.



- Child Protection Law: Enshrined in Article (3), this law stipulates that discrimination against a child for any reason, whether racial, social, or economic, is punishable according to the law. Paragraph (17) of the executive regulations of this law states, "Entities related to child protection are committed to safeguarding children from any form of discrimination based on place of birth, parentage, gender, race, disability, or any other status, and to ensure actual equality among children in enjoying all their rights".

- International and Regional Declarations and Agreements: The Kingdom adheres to regional and international declarations, including the prohibition of racial discrimination, most notably the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, and the Durban Declaration in 2001. It also commits to regional and international human rights conventions in which it is a party, such as the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Arab Charter on Human Rights, and the Convention on Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value (No. 100) of 1951, and the Convention Concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation (No. 111) of 1958.

4. Is there a role for religious and belief-based entities in combating the incitement to hatred based on religion or belief? Can you provide some concrete examples?

- Relevant entities, including judicial authorities, the public prosecution, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Dawah, and Guidance, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development, the Human Rights Commission, the King Abdulaziz Center for National Dialogue, and related civil society organizations, are responsible for countering religious hatred and discrimination based on religion and belief. They achieve this by reviewing curricula, monitoring the performance of teachers, preachers, and Imams, as well as promoting the values of moderation prescribed by Islamic Sharia. These efforts are carried out through religious, educational (formal and informal), media, and cultural activities.

5. What ongoing efforts are being made to support the goals of countering hatred, bigotry, and discrimination based on religion or belief? Please, wherever possible,



provide details about the institutions, mechanisms, and stakeholders responsible for addressing incitement to hatred, along with budget allocations and performance indicators. What ongoing or necessary efforts, in your view, are being taken to ensure that all laws, policies, initiatives, and efforts in this field are rooted in a comprehensive understanding of freedom of religion or belief for all and do not have a chilling effect on the full enjoyment of this right?

National legislation and measures should converge towards rejecting all forms of racial discrimination, including discrimination based on religion or belief. In this context, the Kingdom has taken several measures as referred to in response to question number (3).

6. Please provide information on the extent to which current United Nations tools to combat hatred are used by various stakeholders tasked with supporting human rights.

- The Kingdom adheres to regional and international declarations, including the prohibition of racial discrimination, most notably the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and the Durban Declaration in 2001. It also commits to regional and international human rights conventions in which it is a party, such as the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Arab Charter on Human Rights, and the Convention on Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value (No. 100) of 1951, and the Convention Concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation (No. 111) of 1958.

- Furthermore, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination has become part of the Kingdom's national laws by virtue of its accession. The provisions to which the Kingdom has committed under this convention have the same legal validity as the Kingdom's regulations. Article (70) of the Basic Law of Governance states that "regulations, treaties, international agreements, and privileges shall be issued by royal decrees." The procedures for



ratifying international agreements, as issued by a Cabinet decision dated (26/7/2010), stipulate that relevant authorities, upon the agreement's entry into force, shall take necessary measures to implement it, ensuring compliance with all of the Kingdom's obligations arising from it.