

Joint NGO Statement on Danger of U.N. “Defamation of Religions” Campaign

We, the undersigned non-governmental organizations,

Deeply concerned by the pervasive and mounting campaign by the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) to produce U.N. resolutions, declarations, and world conferences that propagate the concept of “defamation of religions,” a concept having no basis in domestic or international law, and which would alter the very meaning of human rights, which protect individuals from harm, but not beliefs from critical inquiry;

Deeply concerned by the attempt to misuse the U.N. to legitimize blasphemy laws, thereby restricting freedom of religion, freedom of expression, and freedom of the press;

Deeply concerned that “defamation of religions” resolutions may be used in certain countries to silence and intimidate human rights activists, religious dissenters, and other independent voices;

Alarmed by the resolution on “defamation of religions” recently tabled at the current 10th session of the UN Human Rights Council;

Alarmed by the draft resolution on freedom of expression circulated by Egypt, whose amendments seek to restrict, not promote, protections for free speech;

Alarmed by the recently-announced initiative of the U.N. “Ad Hoc Committee on Complementary Standards” to amend the International Convention for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) by adding a protocol on “defamation of religions”;

Alarmed by provisions in the latest draft outcome document of the Durban Review Conference that, through coded language and veiled references, endorse and encourage these anti-democratic initiatives;

1. Call upon all governments to oppose the “defamation of religions” resolution currently tabled at the UN Human Rights Council, and the objectionable provisions of the freedom of expression resolution;
2. Call upon all governments to resist the efforts of the “Ad Hoc Committee on Complementary Standards” to alter the ICERD;
3. Call upon all governments not to accept or legitimize a Durban Review Conference outcome that directly or indirectly supports the “defamation of religions” campaign at the expense of basic freedoms and individual human rights.

- UN Watch
- International Humanist and Ethical Union
- Freedom House
- The Becket Fund for Religious Liberty
- Centre for Political Studies (CEPOS)
- Muslim Council of Canada
- International Association of Prosecutors
- World Evangelical Alliance Religious Liberty Commission
- Nonviolent Radical Party, Transnational and Transparty (Italy)
- The International Quranic Center (IQC)

- International Press Institute (IPI)
- Human Rights Without Frontiers International
- Ligue Internationale Contre le Racisme et l'Antisémitisme (LICRA)
- Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW)
- American Islamic Congress
- World Union of Progressive Judaism
- United Nations Association of Mauritius
- World Jewish Congress
- Cartoonists Rights Network International (CRNI)
- Association for World Education
- Association of World Citizens
- International Publishers Association
- The Institute for African Alternatives
- International Jurist Organization
- Frontiers Association (Lebanon)
- International Association for the Defense of Religious Liberty
- Rationalist Association
- Greek Helsinki Monitor
- British Humanist Association
- Sidmennt Ethical Humanist Association
- National Secular Society
- B'nai B'rith International
- International Foundation for Population and Development
- North London Humanist Group
- Endeavour Forum Inc.
- Association Suisse des Libres Penseurs
- Humanist Academy of Scotland
- Media Institute of Southern Africa (Regional Secretariat and its chapters in 11 SADC countries)
- American Humanist Association
- Darfur Peace And Development Centre
- American Atheists
- Media Institute (Kenya)
- Union of Freethinkers
- Maharat Foundation (Lebanon)
- Open Doors USA
- Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism (Abraji)
- One Law for All Campaign
- Organisation against Women's Discrimination (Iran)
- The DiaHumanism Institute
- Women's international Zionist Organization (WIZO)
- Canadian Humanist Publications
- Institute for Reporters' Freedom and Safety (IRFS-Azerbaijan)
- Indian Humanist Union
- The Tandem Project
- Ahmadiyya Muslim Community
- International Committee to Protect Freethinkers

- Center for Security Policy
- World Citizens Foundation
- South Sudan Movement in Disapora
- International PEN Writers in Prison Committee
- Atheist Foundation of Australia
- Minority Rights Group (Greece)
- Nigerian Humanist Movement
- National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ)
- Social Development Foundation (India)
- Swedish Humanist Association
- Rationalist Forum of Hyderabad (India)
- Manava Vikasa Vedika (India)
- European Union of Jewish Students
- Centre for Study of Society and Secularism (India)
- The Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention
- North East Humanists
- Associação Brasileira de Jornalismo Investigativo (ABRAJI)
- Center for Human Rights and Democratic Studies (CEHURDES-Nepal)
- New Zealand Association of Rationalists and Humanists
- Centro para la Apertura y el Desarrollo de América Latina (CADAL)
- International Council of Jewish Women
- Humanist Canada
- NGO Forum (Mauritius)
- European Humanist Federation
- Association of Independent Electronic Media (ANEM-Serbia)
- Federation of Indian Rationalist Associations
- Burgerbewegung Pax Europa
- Media Watch (Bangladesh)
- Finnish Humanist Union
- Humanist and Ethical Union of Kenya
- Arabic Network for Human Rights Information (ANHRI-Egypt)
- American Jewish Congress
- Atheist Centre Andhra Pradesh (India)
- Spurthi Dalit Humanist organisation (India)
- German Forum for Human Rights
- Jihad Watch
- Rationalist Association of NSW
- Adhra Pradesh Rationalist Association (India)
- Satya Shodhak Sabha, Gujerat (India)
- Arab Archives Institute (AAI-Jordan)
- Open Doors International
- Council of Australian Humanist Societies
- Jubilee Campaign USA
- Simon Wiesenthal Centre
- Humanist Society of Queensland
- Algerian Centre for the Defence and Promotion of Press Freedom (CALP)

- Atheist Alliance International
- CWA, Switzerland
- Rationalist Society of Australia
- Media Rights Agenda (MRA-Nigeria)
- Humanist Society of New Zealand
- Consultative Council of Jewish Organisations
- Center for Inquiry, Low Countries
- Military Association of Atheists and Freethinkers
- World Union of Jewish Students
- Humanist Association of Northern Ireland
- Instituto Prensa y Sociedad (IPYS-Venezuela)
- Center for Religious Freedom of the Hudson Institute
- Humanist Association of Ottawa
- Center for Media Studies and Peace Building (CEMESP-Liberia)
- Liberté de Conscience
- Syria Reform Party
- The Free Press Society (Denmark)
- International Free Press Society
- Muslims Against Sharia
- Centre for the Study of Social Change (India)
- Danish Atheist Society
- Mouvement Pour la Paix et Contre le Terrorisme
- Minnesota Atheists
- Free Media Movement (FMM-Sri Lanka)
- Cultural Bridges
- American Ethical Union
- Hotline Human Rights (Bangladesh)
- Trinidad and Tobago Humanist Association
- Women's Missionary Society AME Church
- Unie Vrijzinniger Verenigingen (Belgium)
- Humanistisch Verbond
- Humanistischer Verband Deutschlands
- Montagnard Foundation, Inc.
- Humanist Association of Ireland
- United American Committee
- Humanistische Vrijzinnige Vereniging (Belgium)
- Quadlibet Strategic Ventures NFP
- Netradana Protsahaka Sangam (India)
- Human Rights Service (Norway)
- Pink Triangle Trust
- Gujerat Mumbai Rationalist Association
- Southern California Ecumenical Council
- Viveka Vidyalayam (India)
- International Christian Concern
- The International Religious Liberty Association (IRLA)
- International Multiracial Shared Cultural Organization

- Disha Dalit Humanist organization (India)
- European Union of Public Relations
- Socio-political Analysis and Research Organization (India)
- Canadian Journalists for Free Expression (CJFE)
- Jana Vignana Vedika (India)
- Society of Catholic Social Scientists
- Society for Humanism and Social Change (India)
- Evangelical Alliance UK
- Indian Radical Humanist Association
- Fondation Genereuse Developpement (FGD-Cameroon)
- Gay and Lesbian Humanist Association
- Center for Inquiry International
- Swedish Youth Humanist Association
- Religious Freedom Coalition
- Act for America
- Belfast Humanist Group
- Council of ex-Muslims of Britain
- Unione degli Atei e degli Agnostici Razionalisti (Italy)
- Secular Student Alliance
- Summit Ministries
- Doha Centre for Media Freedom (Qatar)
- Fire Rescue Development Program
- Sydney Atheists
- Adil Soz, International Foundation for Protection of Freedom of Speech (Kazakhstan)
- European Network Church on the Move
- Traditional Values Coalition
- Bahrain Center for Human Rights (BCHR)
- Humanist Society of Queensland
- Jewish Human Rights Coalition (UK)
- Redeem the Vote
- Pray in Jesus Name Project
- Humanist Society of Victoria
- Index on Censorship
- Unity Coalition for Israel
- Sociedad Humanista-etica, Deodoro Roca (Argentina)
- Secular Party of Australia
- India Committee of the Netherlands
- Humanistische Alliatie (Netherlands)
- Norwegian PEN