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[without reference to a Main Committee ([A/73/L.85](#) and [A/73/L.85/Add.1](#))]

73/296. International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,¹ in particular the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion,

Seriously concerned at continuing acts of intolerance and violence based on religion or belief against individuals, including against persons belonging to religious communities and religious minorities around the world, and at the increasing number and intensity of such incidents, which are often of a criminal nature and may have international characteristics,

Recalling that States have the primary responsibility to promote and protect human rights, including the human rights of persons belonging to religious minorities, including their right to exercise their religion or belief freely,

Recognizing that the open, constructive and respectful debate of ideas, as well as interreligious, interfaith and intercultural dialogue, at the local, national, regional and international levels, can play a positive role in combating religious hatred, incitement and violence,

Reaffirming the positive role that the exercise of the right to freedom of opinion and expression and full respect for the freedom to seek, receive and impart information can play in strengthening democracy and combating religious intolerance, and reaffirming further that the exercise of the right to freedom of expression carries with it special duties and responsibilities, in accordance with article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,²

¹ Resolution [217 A \(III\)](#).

² See resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.



Emphasizing that freedom of religion or belief, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to peaceful assembly and the right to freedom of association are interdependent, interrelated and mutually reinforcing, and stressing the role that these rights can play in the fight against all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief,

Emphasizing also that States, regional organizations, national human rights institutions, non-governmental organizations, religious bodies, the media and civil society as a whole have an important role to play in promoting tolerance and respect for religious and cultural diversity and in the universal promotion and protection of human rights, including freedom of religion or belief,

Acknowledging the positive contribution of individuals and of relevant civil society organizations to the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and the culture of peace,

Noting the cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations in the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, and noting also the work of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in promoting intercultural dialogue in this respect,

Strongly condemning continuing violence and acts of terrorism targeting individuals, including persons belonging to religious minorities, on the basis of or in the name of religion or belief, and underlining the importance of a comprehensive and inclusive community-based preventive approach, involving a wide set of actors, including civil society and religious communities,

Reaffirming its unequivocal condemnation of all acts, methods and practices of terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, wherever and by whomsoever committed, regardless of their motivation,

Reiterating that terrorism and violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group,

Strongly deplored all acts of violence against persons on the basis of their religion or belief, as well as any such acts directed against their homes, businesses, properties, schools, cultural centres or places of worship, as well as all attacks on and in religious places, sites and shrines that are in violation of international law,

Recognizing that working together to enhance the implementation of existing legal regimes that protect individuals against discrimination and hate crimes, increasing interreligious, interfaith and intercultural efforts and expanding human rights education are important first steps in combating incidents of intolerance, discrimination and violence against individuals on the basis of religion or belief,

Recognizing also the importance of providing victims of acts of violence based on religion or belief and members of their families with appropriate support and assistance in accordance with applicable law,

1. *Decides* to designate 22 August as the International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief;

2. *Invites* all Member States, relevant organizations of the United Nations system and other international and regional organizations, as well as civil society, including non-governmental organizations, individuals and the private sector, to observe the International Day in an appropriate manner;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to bring the present resolution to the attention of all Member States, the organizations of the United Nations system and civil society organizations for appropriate observance.

*85th plenary meeting
28 May 2019*