

From Norms to Action: Addressing Islamophobia and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief – The Nexus to Human Rights

📅 16 March 2026, 14:30 to 18:00

📍 ECOSOC Chamber, United Nations, New York

PROGRAMME

🕒 2:30 PM - 2:50 PM 🎤 Opening Segment: Setting the Scene

The Changing Dynamics of Islamophobia Today and its Implications on Peaceful, Cohesive and Just Societies



H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos
Under-Secretary-General, High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and the United Nations Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia



H.E. Mr. Ahmet Yıldız
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Türkiye to the United Nations



H.E. Mr. Asim Iftikhar Ahmad
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations



H.E. Mr. Mehmet Paçacı
Ambassador, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation on Combating Islamophobia

🕒 2:50 PM - 3:30 PM 🎤 Thematic Session I

Striking the Balance: Freedom of Expression and the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred



H.E. Mr. Omar Hilale
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco to the United Nations



Mr. Ignacio García Lumbreras
Minister Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Spain to the United Nations



Mr. Maher Nasser
Director, Outreach Division, United Nations Department of Global Communications



Ms. Simona Cruciani
Political Affairs Officer, Head of Programmes, United Nations Office on the Prevention of Genocide



Moderator:
Ms. Hanaa Bouchikhi
Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Morocco to the United Nations



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🕒 3:30 PM - 5:00 PM 🗣️ Thematic Panel II

From Policy to Practice: Deep Dive into Existing Institutional Frameworks and National Strategies Addressing Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, Including Islamophobia and anti-Muslim Hatred



Ms. Ilze Brands Kehris
Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights and Head of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in New York



Ms. Marion Lalisse
European Commission Coordinator on Combating anti-Muslim Hatred



Ms. Irene Kitsou-Milonas
Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe on antisemitism, anti-Muslim hatred and all forms of religious intolerance



H.E. Mr. Christian Kamill
Ambassador, Special Envoy for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Sweden



H.E. Ms. Evren Dağdelen Akgün
Ambassador, Personal Representative of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims



Mr. Aftab Malik
Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia, Australia



Moderator:
Ms. Nihal Saad
Director, United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)

🕒 5:00 PM – 5:50 PM 🗣️ Interventions from the Floor

Interventions from the floor by Member States and Observers

🕒 5:50 PM – 6:00 PM 🗣️ Closing Session

The Way Forward: Forging a System-Wide Response



H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos
Under-Secretary-General, High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and the United Nations Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia



H.E. Mr. Hameed Ajibaiye Opeloyeru
Ambassador, Permanent Observer of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to the United Nations