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## **Statement of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Adama Dieng, and the Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect, Jennifer Welsh, in response to the recent escalation of Islamophobia and manifestations of intolerance.**

[New York, 14 December 2015] The Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Adama Dieng, and the Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect, Jennifer Welsh, expressed grave concern at the outpouring of intolerance and hate speech in public discourse and in the media in recent weeks, which has focused particularly on Muslims.

“We are sickened by blatant manifestations of hatred and intolerance, including by public figures in response to terrorist attacks by violent extremists,” the Special Advisers said, “particularly the deliberate and dangerous spread of misinformation and the manipulation of people’s fears and concerns for political gain.”

The Special Advisers strongly and unreservedly condemn all criminal attacks by violent extremists, wherever they may take place. They underline, however, the damaging effects of linking such attacks to a specific population, based on its identity, as doing so has resulted in discrimination and targeting of Muslim populations.

The Special Advisers recalled that any “advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence” is prohibited under international human rights law and by the national laws or constitutions of many countries.

In recent weeks, there have been numerous acts of intimidation and violence against Muslims and Muslim sites, including vandalism of mosques as well as discriminatory, xenophobic and racist statements. Some of these statements have referred to all Muslims - and all refugees and asylum seekers originating from Syria and Iraq - as “terrorists.”

Special Advisers Dieng and Welsh also referred to calls by politicians for Muslims to be prevented from entering the United States, to be registered in a national database, or to be forced to carry identification that would highlight their religion. They noted other calls for governments to refrain from accepting refugees from Syria and Iraq. “This is unacceptable. Refugees from Syria and Iraq are fleeing precisely the kind of violence that we in the West also fear. To turn them away when they are seeking refuge is an affront to our common humanity.”

“At this time when the world is facing complex challenges, including confronting extremist violent groups and individuals, Governments and other leading actors in society should publicly counter lies, prejudice and fear” the Special Advisers stated. They urgently call on those in

positions of authority and political leadership to act responsibly and with respect for both international and national laws.

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For media queries please contact:

Simona Cruciani

Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect

<http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/adviser/>

Phone: +1 917-367-5430 Email: [cruciani@un.org](mailto:cruciani@un.org)