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**Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related
forms of intolerance, follow-up and implementation
of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action**

Written statement* submitted by the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[24 August 2014]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

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Extremist Terror Groups: Root Cause of Increase in Islamophobia and Xenophobia in the World

Extremist, terrorist groups have been igniting deadly conflicts especially in the Middle East for years now. The extremist Islamist Al Qaeda, has been attacking civilian and military targets both in Afghanistan and other countries. Al Qaeda members, the jihadists, believe that the killing of civilians is religiously sanctioned, and they ignore any aspect of religious scripture which forbids the murder of civilians and internecine fighting.¹ They exploit religion through selective reading and interpretation, to justify their own actions. "They transform Islam's norms and values—about good governance, social justice, and the requirement to defend Islam when under siege—into a call to arms, in order to legitimate the use of violence, warfare, and terrorism".² They have been operating in different countries including Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Somalia and the United States.

While Al Qaeda bombing and suicide bombing attacks has left many people dead and injured, including more than 300 Iraqi dead in 3 different attacks in 2006-2008, and September 11 attacks created one of the world tragedies, there are ironical news indicating that Al Qaeda members have been trained directly by the CIA, receiving support from Saudi Arabia and Pakistan in order to fight against the Soviet Union. It is also reported that 3 billion USD has been invested on Al Qaeda and the group has been armed, and supported by the West.³ After the 11th September attacks, the US started the war on terror to eliminate Al Qaeda, which led to the death of Bin Laden.

Bukuharam, another Al Qaeda affiliated group which has killed more than 5000 civilians between 2009 -2014 and made 650,000 people leave their homes, receives funding from organizations based in UK, Saudi Arabia and two other Al Qaeda affiliated organizations, covertly supported by Western Intelligence and NATO, during the war on Lybia.⁴ Bukuharam, like Al Qaeda exploits religion to justify its weird brutal actions, using selective, extremist interpretations of Islam.

In December, 2013, the US designated Bukuharam as a terrorist organization, which means that there could be asset freezing and travel bans for the known members of the group.

ISIS, a extremist militant group composed of members of Al Qaeda and other terrorist groups, has been mass killing Muslim and Christian civilians in Northern Iraq for over a year now. They strongly believe in the fact that anyone who disagrees with them is "infidel", and killing of all infidels is allowed, including the killing of civilians, women and children.

Hilary Clinton, the former US Secretary of State blames the rise of ISIS on Obama's foreign policies, however Michel Chossudovsky of the Centre for Research on Globalization believes that the rise of ISIS has been a deliberate US strategy to advance the country's aims in the region and not a miscalculation of the US foreign policy.⁵

ISIS has been operating in Iraq since 2004, escalating their attacks from 2010 to 2014, especially from 2013 up to the present time, killing American soldiers as well as civilians. The US, recently decided to react and American planes bombarded mortar ISIS installations in early August 2014.

The existing evidence shows that the western world and its allies are playing a dual role, on the one hand, supporting terrorist extremist groups who are involved in serious violations of human rights, and on the other hand, condemn the actions committed by these groups and try to fight against them.

Unfortunately, it seems as if regional extremist groups who ignite local tensions and sectarian violence in certain regions of the world especially in the Middle East and parts of Africa are supported by the western countries and their regional allies⁶ both directly and indirectly in many in many different ways. They receive money⁷ for all their activities, the existing evidences show that all terrorist groups including the ISIS receive a considerable amount of funding from other countries including the United States, its Arab allies Israel.

They also receive technical support and military training, which helps ISIS advance in Iraq and fight against Iraq's strong army, and Bukuharam in Nigeria to continue murder and kidnapping of civilians. Another form of support they receive from the western world is that their criminal activities are ignored or receive mild objections or oppositions. The ISIS has been involved in murdering and kidnapping of civilians in Iraq for more than a year now, and there are news of Bukuharam mass kidnappings of boys and girls every day. This is while they would have been eliminated up to now if there was a serious intention of their elimination.

The direct result of straightening such groups is a contribution to human right violations which is condemned by the western world. The terrorist groups are exploiting Islam to justify their violence. Consequently, all human right violations of the terrorist groups is done in the name of Islam, which leads to a growing feeling of xenophobia toward Muslims and in part can justify discrimination against them and violation of their rights.

Many Islamic countries, organizations and groups have unanimously condemned ISIS actions, and the actions committed by other terrorist groups clearly stating that the actions are neither Islamic nor humane, reiterating that no interpretation of Islam allows torture and murder of civilians, destruction of houses or sacred places, but ISIS is referred to as 'the Islamic State' in the media and their actions is associated with Islam. They offer wonderful media consumption for those who are aiming at spreading hate toward Islam and Muslims, picturizing the group as a small minority representing the whole Muslim majority.

The Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV) calls on all UN member States to condemn sectarian violence and regional conflicts, done in the name of religion and seriously avoid supporting these groups. ODVV also calls on all member States to cooperate to replace a culture of hatred and conflict which will negatively affect the whole world with a culture of negotiations. The Organization calls on the UN to use more effective measures to prevent sectarian violence and mass killings of civilians.

¹ Moghadam, Assaf (2008). The Globalization of Martyrdom: Al Qaeda, Salafi Jihad, and the Diffusion of Suicide Attacks. Johns Hopkins University. p. 48.

² Esposito, John. L. (2002). Struggle in Islam. Boston Review, <http://www.bostonreview.net/books-ideas/john-l-esposito-struggle-islam>

³ <http://www.theinsider.org/news/article.asp?id=0228>

⁴ <http://allafrica.com/stories/201202141514.html>; <http://www.globalresearch.ca/covert-ops-in-nigeria-fertile-ground-for-us-sponsored-balkanization/30259>

⁵ <http://globalresearch.podbean.com/>

⁶ [http://news.yahoo.com/american-allies-backed-iraq-terrorists-023053684--politics.html;_ylt=A0LEVxlrRO9T1nIA6zJXNyOA;_ylu=X3oDMTEzNzM0cGtvBHNIYwNzcgRwb3MDNARjb2xvA2JmMQR2dG1kA1ZJUDQ3MI8x;](http://news.yahoo.com/american-allies-backed-iraq-terrorists-023053684--politics.html;_ylt=A0LEVxlrRO9T1nIA6zJXNyOA;_ylu=X3oDMTEzNzM0cGtvBHNIYwNzcgRwb3MDNARjb2xvA2JmMQR2dG1kA1ZJUDQ3MI8x;http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/03/09/us-iraq-saudi-qatar-idUSBREA2806S20140309)

⁷ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/03/09/us-iraq-saudi-qatar-idUSBREA2806S20140309>
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