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**STATEMENT BY THE  
DELEGATION OF MOROCCO AT THE OSCE CONFERENCE ON  
COMBATING DISCRIMINATION AND PROMOTING MUTUAL  
RESPECT AND UNDERSTANDING**

Bucharest, 7 and 8 June 2007

Mr. Chairman,  
Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me first to pay homage to the Republic of Romania for its willingness to host this important conference, which is taking place at a time when intolerance and intercultural tensions are on the upsurge. This is indicative of the importance which the OSCE attributes to the struggle against manifestations of discrimination and xenophobia, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia as well as other forms of intolerance.

To illustrate this upsurge I shall be referring to the 2006 activities report of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) which has placed emphasis on “the increasing climate of hostility” towards Muslims and on anti-Semitism which is “more and more frequent in many European countries”. While insisting on the necessity of knowing the specific characteristics of each type of racism, the Commission cautions us about the danger of “fragmentation” of the struggle against racism and advocates a common approach and a strategy which is “global, collective and interdependent”.

In actual fact this report has published statistics and information which are very disquieting and call for a mobilization and concentration of efforts designed to face up to this destabilizing phenomenon which involves risks of conflict and confrontation.

Racism and intolerance, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, inequality and discrimination against minorities: these are just so many challenges still confronting the OSCE area, challenges which bear in themselves the seed of conflict.

In this context I should like to express the growing concern of the Kingdom of Morocco concerning the withdrawal of communities into themselves and the growth of Islamophobia throughout the world, particularly in areas with Muslim communities. In this context, even while stressing the need to reject and combat the extremist ideologies which are severely threatening peace and understanding among nations and peoples, it is equally imperative forcibly to condemn all the generalizations linking a particular religion with “terrorism”, a type of generalization found in the media and sometimes even in political

speeches. This misuse of terminology is absurd and regrettable, when in fact all religions share a message of fraternity and understanding.

The spirit of tolerance and dialogue which has always motivated Morocco and its leaders, its policy of open-mindedness, fair compromise and tolerance, its belief in international legality, respect for neighbours and the rights of minorities and the peaceful settlement of differences of opinion — all these things have predisposed the Kingdom of Morocco to adopt a pioneering role in matters of dialogue between cultures and religions.

I should like to recall in this connection the fact that Judaism has taken firm root in Morocco, a country where we find peaceful coexistence of various cultures and religious confessions in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Morocco has always encouraged initiatives designed to lay a solid groundwork for establishing true dialogue among cultures and religions. This is in the same spirit as the United Nations “Alliance of Civilizations” initiative launched in 2005 with the support of the governments of Turkey and Spain, the formulation of which responds in particular to this need for action on the part of the international community to promote mutual understanding and tolerance.

In this context Morocco can reiterate its satisfaction concerning the work accomplished by the three Personal Representatives of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office for combating all forms of intolerance towards Muslims, Jews and Christians and reaffirms its willingness to co-operate with the three Personal Representatives in their area of endeavour.

The recommendations formulated by the conferences in Vienna (2003), Berlin (2004) and Cordoba (2005) are pertinent and advocate a global, balanced approach without any selectivity in the treatment of intolerance, xenophobia and racism. Morocco hopes that the Bucharest Conference will make it possible to strengthen the steps taken by countries to ensure effective implementation of these recommendations and the creation of genuine partnership among States, civil society and the media with a view to promoting the values of tolerance, dialogue and mutual respect (a public-private partnership for combating all forms of intolerance and discrimination). It is also an urgent matter to ensure that cultural diversity serves as an effective support for school programmes, because that will put an end to preconceived ideas and reciprocal fears. Only in this way can we overcome our differences and create a better future for all.

It would also be a good idea to stress the crucial importance of arranging a just and final settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict which is continuing to stir up feelings of injustice and frustration, thereby accentuating the forms of intolerance found throughout the world.

My delegation would also like to see all the recommendations and suggestions put forward in the recent Mediterranean Seminars of the OSCE implemented as rapidly as possible as part of the collaboration between participating States and the Partners for Co-operation. I should like to recall the importance attributed in this context to the matter of migration, which requires a multidimensional and global approach including questions of integration and tolerance. In this connection, I should also like to refer in particular to the conclusions of the Rabat Seminar in 2005.

I should also like to take this opportunity to thank the Spanish Chairmanship of the OSCE for their plan to organize, at the end of 2007, an important conference on the struggle against Islamophobia — and here I must stress the importance of reaching consensus very soon on the organization of this conference under the aegis of the OSCE.