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Delegation of Morocco

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF MOROCCO AT THE MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL

7 April 2011

Review of current issues: the ceremonial burning of a copy of the Koran in Florida in March

My delegation would like to inform you under this agenda item that a delegation that included the ambassadors and permanent representatives of Tajikistan, which is currently chairing the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, Morocco, which is chairing the Working Group on Human Rights and Humanitarian Issues, and Pakistan, Egypt and Palestine yesterday approached the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, calling on him to denounce the ceremonial burning of the Koran.

While welcoming the reaction by the President of the United States, Barack Obama, who referred to the unfortunate initiative of the extremist American pastor, Terry Jones, to burn a copy of the holy book as an act of “extreme intolerance and sectarianism”, the group of ambassadors asked the Secretary-General to publicly condemn this odious act and reaffirm his denunciation of manifestations of hatred and intolerance vis-à-vis all religions.

In response, the Secretary-General of the United Nations denounced this act of ignorance and disparagement of religions while assuring the ambassadors of his commitment to the initiatives of the Alliance of Civilizations and to intercultural and interreligious harmony among peoples and religions.

While condemning all forms of extremism, my delegation appeals to the OSCE to strongly denounce this vile act, given that its mandate with respect to the denunciation of racist crimes and discrimination is one of the most advanced in the international arena.

My delegation reiterates here the various appeals already made to strengthen the role of the OSCE in combating Islamophobia and once again expresses its wish to see the Organization take all the measures available to prevent an odious and unforgivable act of the kind committed by a person who professes to act in the name of faith and who, in our view, has expressed contempt for all those who aspire to true spirituality and coexistence among human beings.