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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 World Muslim Congress, a non-governmental organization in general 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 May 2020]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.

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Saffronization intriguing the Rise of Islamophobia in India

Saffronization of India had brought nothing but religious disharmony, anti-secularist approaches, racism, gender discrimination, extremism and unequal distribution of rights among the people of India. Historically, Saffronization or Hindutva was a harmless theology of Hindus, meant to be their way of life. But later it became the main basis of segregation of Hindus from all other minorities in India. Hindutva is now claimed to be the ideology of the most supreme nation “Hindus” in India, as this state is a Hindu majority. Since the last century, Hindutva believers have enhanced their pessimist, violent and extremist influence on the national political, economic, social and cultural spheres. “They want a theocratic state,” said B.N. Srikrishna, a former judge on India’s Supreme Court. “This is pushing the country to the brink, to the brink of chaos.” “This is how waves of communal violence start in the country,” he added.

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) alliance with Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) is utterly determined with the escalation of the ideology of Saffronization, which is Hindutva, a polarized phenomenon of nationalism. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, often launches his campaign in the name of extremism. To exterminate other minorities particularly Muslims from India, is the only agenda of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). They believe in the extremist approaches but on the front line, they have accumulated liberal, powerful and moderate people to surge racist and fascist Saffronization ideology in Hindus, as a national strategy, in a so called secular democratic state. Muslim artists, activists, academicians, journalists, political and social leaders and human rights defenders are at the verge of execution due to these discriminatory policies. They are falsely accused of spreading anti-national sentiments among Muslims of India, thus arrested under Public safety act, a recognized draconian law by Amnesty International India. Sceptically, if the future of India continues to be in the hands of extremist governments, then there would be no time left in the destruction of democratic status of India.

The democratic and secular India is about to loosen its righteous status under the rise of Hindutva. The idea of Saffronization is now habitually consuming the constitutional and multicultural values of India. The hegemonic pundits and saffrons having extremist tendencies, under the ideology of Hindutva, are exploiting the minorities in India in the name of nationalism. In this respect, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat stated on October 8, 2019: “Bharat is Hindu Rashtra and all Bharatiyas are Hindus.”

Due to the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), the National Register of Citizens (NRC), and the communalized National Population Register, Indian Muslims are facing intense chaos because of the intended demographic change in the regions of India. After the application of CAA and the NRC amendments, there were daily mass protests occurring across India, causing hundreds of casualties and injuries of Muslims, since December 15, 2019. The new wave of Hindutva had restated the scenario of independence 1947, an event which had caused the most hazardous migration in the subcontinent. Now, in the times of the year 2020, Hindu fundamentalist outfits such as BJP, RSS VHP, Bajrang Dal and Shiv Sena, including other similar parties, have been promoting religious and ethnic chauvinism in India — also by propagating Hindutva Ideology. They are instigating hatred for Muslims among Hindus in India. They have propelled the Muslims to leave their country by burning their properties, including their vehicles and mosques.

The north eastern states, such as Assam, along the Bangladesh border, had to produce their documentary proof that they or their ancestors lived in India since 1971. They are in dreadful condition because around 33 million people of Assam, a mix of Muslim, Hindus and Christian, failed to prove their citizenship test and now fearing statelessness. The way many Indian Muslims of other regions also fear about being asked to produce old birth certificates or property deeds necessary to prove citizenship.

Freedom of speech and right to protest are one of the basic fundamental rights, declared by United Nations, and also provided by the state constitution, but still after the CAA amendment, when Muslim students, journalists and intellectuals rose their voice for their rights, they were thrashed to their last breath by the police and other law enforcing agencies. These security forces brutally handled those innocent students by beating them with wooden

poles, dragging them away and sending scores to the hospital. This Indian police had been seen launching live ammunitions and tear gas canisters to disperse the crowd of their own citizens. The vacuous saffrons are continuously detaining innocent Muslim youth by labelling them as terrorists. The list includes Masrat Zahra-a photojournalist, Umer Khalid-a student leader, student activists-Safoora Zargar and Meeran Haider, the journalists Gowhar Geelani and Peerzada Ashiq and many more. The only crime of these people was to raise their voice against this injustice.

Moreover, Indian government has not even been transparent to their own citizens. In February, 2020, India's Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, blocked a few television news stations for 48 hours because they aired the news of the mob attack on Muslims in New Delhi, which also magnified the broader unrest in the country. The freedom of press has been deliberately breached in a so-called Democratic Secular India. This crucial step of Indian government ignited the pessimist analytical approach of the media, according to which, Modi is practicing limited democracy in India. Since 2014, when Modi came into power, he has tried to restrict and control the media. He cultivated the media to portray his personality as a religiously-tolerant national saviour and hide his anti-racist and extremist aura on the front page. In addition to this, government of India had pressured the media owners to fire journalists who had skeptically criticized his policies. Nonetheless, the continuous strangling of the press by Indian government led to the discretization and harassment of these independent journalists. Formerly, these media personnel's got rewarded due to their critical approach, but during Modi tenure, these all are the main scapegoats. They are frightened of being labelled as anti-national by the government. Government of India also imposed high restrictions on foreign journalists for travelling to the Indian Administered Kashmir, so they could not reveal Indian government's heinous acts on Kashmiri Muslims.

Despite the calls from United Nations Secretary General and United Nations high commissioner for human rights to repeal the CAA and NRC, Which they described as discriminatory and against international law and core values of Indian constitution the government of India Continues with the implementation of these amendments, which has polarised the secular fabric of India and put Indian minorities, especially Muslims at risk of extermination.
