COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION

OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

103rd session

19-30 April 2021

**Statement 1 (2021)**

**Statement on the rise of racial discrimination against Asians and people of Asian descent, in particular racist hate crimes and hate speech**

*The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination,* meeting in Geneva at its 103rd session from 19 to 30 April 2021,

*Acting* under its Early Warning and Urgent Action Procedure,

*Concerned* about reports on the increase of acts of racial discrimination, in particular hate speech and hate crimes against Asians and people of Asian descent occurring in many parts of the world,

*Alarmed* in particular that in the context of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Asians and people of Asian descent have been victims of stigmatization, labeling, scapegoatingand blaming for the spread of the COVID-19 virus*,* and recently have been subject to a wave of racist violence, threats to violence, physical harassment and bullying of children in schools,

*Alarmed also* by the appearance on social media and other media platforms of racist hate speech, including by political and public figures, inciting people to violence, racism and xenophobia against Asians and people of Asian descent,

*Deeply concerned* that Asian women and girls, and women and girls of Asian descent have been specifically subject to violence and other acts of racial discrimination including in the workplace, in connection with the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic,

*Reaffirming* that States are not only obliged to desist from, but also to condemn and combat, any action that could reinforce racist stereotypes, associating the virus with specific regions, nationals or groups, in particular with regard to any action that might incite acts of racial discrimination including when expressed by political and public figures;

*Reaffirming* *also* that, beyond their obligation to refrain from any discriminatory acts or practices themselves, States have the obligation to protect members of vulnerable groups against discrimination stemming from private actors, in particular against racist insults and hate speech, harassment, acts of violence, and exclusion or denial of goods and services contrary to the prohibition of racial discrimination

*Recalling* its General recommendation No. 35 (2013) on combatting racist hate speech,

*Recalling also* its Statement of 7 August 2020 on the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and its implications under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,

1. **Calls on** States parties to unequivocally, unconditionally and publicly reject and condemn racially motivated violence of all forms against Asians and persons of Asian descent as it occurs in the context of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic; take necessary measures to investigate any act of such violence; punish those responsible with appropriate penalties; and, provide effective and adequate reparation to victims;
2. **Calls on** Statesparties to condemn all expressions of racist hate speech and discriminatory language, in particular by State officials and other public figures, and take necessary legislative and administrative measures to protect Asians and people of Asian descent from racist hate speech, incitement to hatred and other acts of racial discrimination and stigmatisation related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic;
3. **Calls on** States parties to ensure that Asians and people of Asian descent including women and girls, are not discriminated in any areas of life such as in the workplace, healthcare, or education in the context of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic prevailing now as well as in the post-pandemic context;
4. **Urges** States parties to adopt measures to prevent racial discrimination against Asians or people of Asian descent by promoting tolerance and mutual understanding among different groups living in their territories, in particular through education programmes and awareness-raising campaigns.

*2819thMeeting*

27 April 2021