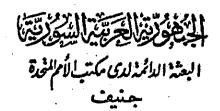
## MISSION PERMANENTE DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE ARABE SYRIENNE GENÈVE





## Date 18/09/2008

## Mr: president

Different resolutions passed, many regional and international meetings held and many multilateral initiatives undertaken while the undeclared campaign against certain religions continues unabated and heedless of all calls for tolerance and moderation .

The Council of Europe notes, lately, that Article 10 (of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR))does not protect hate speech and that Article 9 protects rights of individuals and cannot be construed as protecting a religion as such from verbal or visual attacks. Although almost all the responses, monitored in the high commissioner report, "underlined the importance of religion as an individual right and as a source of common values, inspiration and cohesiveness in society", some countries, individuals and institutions are still twisting the "freedom of expression clauses" to demonize and antagonize certain religious groups and individuals. It should be understood that every freedom has limitations. It is quite freedom of paradoxical that at the time when the right to freedom of expression is exclusively confined to defamation of Islam, there is a tight embargo on this right in other specific issues related to other religions or historical events of the past century.

Mr. President: It is astonishing also that the opinion of the heroes of the right of expression disappears when it comes to humanitarian issues like the siege of Gaza or the mass murder of civilians by the occupation powers in different parts of the world. We support the recommendations of the rapporteur especially no 62 calling for not exploiting discrimination for political and partisan objectives, and no 69 calling for finding solutions to the interreligiuos conflicts that feed on and from defamation of religion. We wish, finally, to get more clarification from the rapporteur about the practical benefits of changing the sociological concept of "defamation of religion" into some other titles?

I thank you Mr. President