

Submission to the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief
[Call for Input: Advocacy of Hatred Based on Religion or Belief - Transformative Responses](#)
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Q1: Advocacy of hatred based on religion or belief is not universally defined in legal and policy frameworks. However, some countries have enacted laws that specifically prohibit this type of speech. For example, the United Kingdom's Equality Act 2010 prohibits incitement to hatred on the basis of religion, and the United States' Hate Crimes Act of 1994 includes religion as a protected category.

Advocacy of hatred based on religion or belief is closely related to intolerance, discrimination, and violence based on religion or belief. When people are taught to hate and fear members of other religions, it is more likely that they will discriminate against and even attack them.

Q2: There is a strong correlation between prejudice against religious minorities and the advocacy of hatred based on religion or belief. Studies have shown that people who hold negative attitudes towards religious minorities are more likely to support policies and practices that discriminate against them.

There is a number of possible explanations for this correlation. One possibility is that people who are prejudiced against religious minorities are more likely to be exposed to and influenced by messages that advocate hatred against them. Another possibility is that people who are prejudiced against religious minorities are more likely to be motivated by hatred and fear. Prejudices against religious and belief minorities can emanate from a variety of sources, including the media, religious leaders, and politicians.

Q3: Monitoring and addressing prejudicial attitudes among State actors, including law enforcement and justice operators, are essential for fostering a just and inclusive society. Some effective examples of this include diversity training for law enforcement, the establishment of independent oversight bodies, and clear anti-discrimination policies. However, the effectiveness of these policies and practices can vary greatly, with outcomes influenced by factors such as political will, public pressure, and the strength of civil society.

Q4-A: Advocacy of hatred can lead to fear, anxiety, and isolation. It can also make it difficult for people to practice their religion or belief freely. In some cases, it can lead to violence.

Q4-B: Advocacy of hatred can sow division and mistrust within religious and belief communities. It can also make it difficult for communities to build bridges and promote understanding and tolerance.

Q4-C: Advocacy of hatred can lead to a range of day-to-day violations, such as discrimination in employment, housing, and education. It can also be a driver of street violence against religious or belief minorities.

Q4-D: Advocacy of hatred can contribute to systemic and structural disadvantage against religious or belief minorities. For example, it may lead to the exclusion of religious minorities from certain jobs or professions, or to the denial of access to essential services.

Q5: Hatred based on religion or belief often intersects with other forms of discrimination, such as racism, sexism, or homophobia. This intersectionality complicates the challenge of addressing these issues, as responses must consider the multifaceted nature of discrimination. Moreover, it necessitates a more comprehensive approach to combating all forms of discrimination simultaneously.

Q6: Hatred based on religion or belief can manifest in various ways and be associated with specific actors, times, forms, and objects. These manifestations often occur during religious festivals, election cycles, times of heightened public anxiety (e.g., terrorist attacks or economic recession), and are perpetuated by political, religious, and social influencers. Online and offline platforms, films, theater, school curricula, and symbols are frequently used to propagate hatred.

Q7: Countering hatred based on religion or belief is a multi-faceted effort that involves State actors, civil society, and international organizations. While countering hatred is crucial, it must be balanced with the protection of free expression and international human rights obligations. Successful approaches involve awareness campaigns, dialogue initiatives, and the enforcement of hate speech laws that respect freedom of expression boundaries.

Q8: Religious and belief actors play a vital role in countering advocacy of hatred based on religion or belief. They can promote interfaith dialogue, tolerance, and understanding, and offer positive religious teachings that emphasize love and respect for all. For instance, religious leaders have engaged in joint initiatives to counter hatred and promote peace.

Q9: Monitoring of hatred, intolerance, and discrimination based on religion or belief is essential for evidence-based policy design and implementation. Data collected through surveys, incident reports, and social media analysis can help identify trends and hotspots, enabling more targeted policy responses. This data can serve as the foundation for tailored policies aimed at countering these issues.

Q10: Legislative initiatives and public policies aimed at countering hatred, intolerance, and discrimination should include education, media, mediation, and interfaith dialogue. These initiatives promote social inclusion and respect for the rights of all. For example, inclusive education curricula can help dispel misconceptions and foster tolerance. Media campaigns can counter stereotypes, and interfaith dialogue can build bridges between different communities.

Q11: Efforts to understand the structural and systematic basis of hatred are crucial for long-term transformation. Academics, researchers, and organizations dedicated to human rights often conduct in-depth studies to uncover the root causes of hatred. Engaging with affected groups and communities in these efforts is vital to ensure the initiatives are effective and relevant.

Q12: Institutions, mechanisms, and actors must be mandated to respond to the advocacy of hatred and support its targets. These entities should have dedicated budgets and performance indicators to ensure that they can effectively address the needs of those affected. Support may include legal aid, counseling, and community-building initiatives.

Q13: The effectiveness of existing UN tools to counter hatred varies among stakeholders with a mandate to uphold human rights. Some countries and organizations actively employ these tools, while others may underutilize them due to political considerations or lack of awareness. Promoting awareness and the adoption of these tools is crucial for a coordinated international response.

Q14: All laws, policies, initiatives, and efforts in this arena should be rooted in an inclusive understanding of freedom of religion or belief for all. These measures should not have a chilling effect on the full enjoyment of this right. It is essential to balance the protection of religious freedom with the prevention of discrimination and hatred. Civil society-led initiatives can help promote this inclusive understanding and hold governments accountable for their actions.

Q15: Civil society-led initiatives are essential in the global effort to counter the advocacy of hatred based on religion or belief. These initiatives encompass a wide range of activities, including interfaith dialogue, education programs, anti-hate campaigns, and support for victims of hate crimes. They play a vital role in promoting tolerance, understanding, and human rights, while actively countering the propagation of hatred and discrimination. These efforts, often in collaboration with governments and international organizations, contribute to building inclusive and harmonious societies by addressing the root causes of religious and belief-based animosity and working towards a more peaceful and just world.