Statement of Egypt
before the General Debate of the Third Committee on
Agenda Item 67: “Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance”

4 November 2013

Mr. Chairman,

Racism and racial discrimination have blemished humanity for centuries. Slavery and apartheid are just two examples of these deplorable phenomena. In the twenty first century, it is simply unacceptable to tolerate racist or discriminatory policies or measures.

In today's world, discrimination has taken more subtle forms. It became based, not only on race, but on nationality, religion, social or cultural background. Unfortunately, discrimination is spread through messages of hatred, incitement, stereotyping and stigmatization. These messages are easily carried through national and international media and school books as well as internet websites. This creates a negative atmosphere that leads to violence and, eventually, undermines efforts to achieve international peace and security.

Real democracy and the rule of law are incompatible with all forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, religion or colour. The proliferation of radical, racist and extremist movements in many democratic societies represents an alarming trend, particularly when such movements build their political and social agenda on incitement, hatred and violence against certain communities. This agenda contradicts the principles of tolerance, understanding, mutual respect and peaceful coexistence, that are the basis of true democratic societies.

Mr. Chairman,

The international community should commit to the full implementation of the Durban Declaration and Program of Action of 2001, and the Durban review document of 2009 as well as the Conventions on the Elimination of Slavery, and of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. This framework embraces the principles of diversity of civilizations, cultures, and religions. It enriches peaceful coexistence, and reinforces the principles of democracy and dialogue in the international arena.

The international community also needs to promote a responsible role for the media, civil society, and the information society to combat racism, xenophobia, discrimination and incitement to hatred and violence, especially on the basis of religion. It should develop and strengthen the legal, administrative, and executive
frameworks within member states in order to prevent incitement to racism, racial discrimination, and hatred in all their forms.

Mr. Chairman,

Egypt stresses the importance of international cooperation to fight racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance. It reaffirms the need to strengthen the International Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and enhance the follow-up mechanism for the implementation of our joint commitments, especially with regard to ending discrimination against national, ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities. In this regard, we reiterate the importance of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/155 on Global efforts for the total elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

We support the recent report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. We welcome his call for the need to redress the historical imbalances created by racism and discrimination, including slavery, segregation, apartheid and other forms of exclusion. We join his call for the integration in the areas of education, health, housing, food and water supplies and in the workplace.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, we reiterate our support to work with all member states to eradicate all contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, as well as intolerance, negative stereotyping and stigmatization.

Thank you.