

## **INTERVENTION BY BRAZIL**

### **Report of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, Asma Jahangir**

Mr. President,

Brazil welcomed the report of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, Asma Jahangir, when we had the opportunity to engage in the interactive dialogue with Madam Jahangir. The report reflects the 21 years of mandate practice regarding the issue of intolerance and discrimination based on religious belief. The mandate has been broadly recognized as a balanced monitoring mechanism.

In Brazil, a number of religions and beliefs coexist for more than five centuries, in an atmosphere of harmony and mutual respect. Our multicultural, multi-ethnic society embraces Christian faiths, beliefs based of African origin, and creeds emanating from indigenous culture, among many others, within an environment of syncretism, which is a distinctive feature of Brazilian society.

We welcome the fact that the mandate has been, throughout these years, enhancing a comprehensive and non-selective understanding of the right of freedom of religious belief.

Mr. President,

Brazil believes that the monitoring of the question of mutual respect among religions and the right of each individual to freely manifest his beliefs are essential for the construction of a successful UN human rights system, and must be reinforced.

One of the recommendations present in the report of the Special Rapporteur shows the very importance of the maintenance and strengthening of the mandate: "rather than waiting until acts of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief have been perpetrated, it would be advisable for States to devise proactive strategies in order to prevent such violations".

Brazil favors a constructive dialogue with a view to the extension of the mandate of Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief. We are convinced that the continuation and the possible improvement of the mandate continue to bring light to the understanding of such key issue as the freedom of religion or belief.

I thank you Mr. President.