



**The UN Secretary-General António Guterres has called for increased political, cultural and economic investments in cohesion , “so that diversity is rightly seen as a richness, not a threat. “**

The Secretary-General made this appeal today in a **video message that kicked-off a High-Level Forum on Combating Anti-Muslim Discrimination and Hatred** organized at UN head-quarters in New York.

Mr. Guterres noted that Anti-Muslim hate crimes, as well as xenophobia, racism anti-semitism and other forms of bigotry are on the rise.

“In times of insecurity, communities that look different become convenient scapegoats. We must resist cynical efforts to divide communities and portray neighbours as “the other”.

The Secretary-General pointed out that the values of inclusion, tolerance and mutual understanding are at the heart of all major faiths and the United Nations Charter.

“As the Holy Quran states: nations and tribes were created to know one another. People everywhere need to feel that their cultural identities are valued – and at the same time to have a strong sense of belonging to the community as a whole. As societies become ever more multi-ethnic and multi-religious, we need political, cultural and economic investments in cohesion, so that diversity is rightly seen as a richness, not a threat,” Mr. Guterres told the High-Level Forum.

The Missions of Canada, the United States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the

Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations jointly host a full-day High-Level Forum on Combating anti-Muslim Discrimination and Hatred to highlight the growing challenges of anti-Muslim discrimination and hatred in various contexts, and focus on substantive tools for addressing them.

Mr. Guterres said that the United Nations had launched the [“Together” campaign](#) last autumn to promote respect, safety and dignity for all.

“Together, let us stand up against bigotry and for human rights. Together, let us build bridges. Together, let us transform fear into hope. For our Muslim brothers and sisters – and for all

humanity.”

*Photo: A Muslim woman stands in front of An-Nur Mosque, Timor-Leste's largest, in Dili. UN Photo/Martine Perret.*