

Thank you so much Madam Chair.

This 5th session of the Forum on minority issues is an opportunity to stress a number of important steps taken by our country in the field of promotion of minority rights. Mauritania is a country whose constitution guarantees all individual and collective freedoms as well as cultural diversity and pluralism which are a source of national wealth and a permanent element in all our public policies.

One of the speakers made a number of allegations which require the following clarifications and response.

Firstly, institutionalised slavery no longer exists in Mauritania. We therefore surprised to learn that the sale of slaves takes place.

Secondly, public authorities under the agencies of his excellency, Mohamed Uld Abdelaziz President of the Republic have developed strategies for combating the residual consequences of slavery in the legislative, political programmatic fields which might still remain at a legislative level. In addition to her commitments, Mauritania which is a party to almost all international legal instruments in the field of human rights, and the primacy of the constitutional principles which ban slavery and all forms of discrimination.

We have the adoption 2008 of the law 2007/048 dated 3rd of September 2007 which criminalizes slavery, punishes slavery related practices, which is scrupulously not respected. Various trials of alleged cases of slavery are the best possible demonstration of this at political level.

Measures of positive discrimination have been undertaken to promote broader economic, social and political participation in the country. Additionally, we have a far reaching program to irradiate the consequences or legacy of slavery. PESE, with a budget of billion ouguiya allocated from the state budget and working for former slaves and their descendants was launched.

Public school is compulsory and free in Mauritania. And all strata from society benefit from this. The descendants of former slaves enjoy the special attention of public authorities in in this field.

Fourthly, the brief imprisonment of the speaker was the result of the burning of holy Muslim books.

It would be wrong to claim that the many challenges posed to mankind issues related on minority issues have been perfectly or finally resolved. Continuing and blustering these efforts is a necessity and my country is aware of this and works towards this in the most resolute possible way.

Thank you.