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Agenda item 68 (b)

Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance: comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 18 December 2019

[on the report of the Third Committee (A/74/397)]

74/137. A global call for concrete action for the 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

The General Assembly,

Recalling all its previous resolutions on the comprehensive follow-up to the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance and the effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference,¹ in particular its resolutions [66/144](#) of 19 December 2011 and [67/155](#) of 20 December 2012, and in this regard underlining the imperative need for their full and effective implementation,

Recalling also the suffering of the victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and the need to honour their memory,

Calling upon States to honour the memory of victims of the historical injustices of slavery, the slave trade, including the transatlantic slave trade, colonialism and apartheid,

Stressing that the outcome of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance has the same status as the outcomes of all the major United Nations conferences, summits and special sessions in the human rights and social fields, and that the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action remains a solid basis and the only instructive outcome of the World

¹ See [A/CONF.189/12](#) and [A/CONF.189/12/Corr.1](#), chap. I.



Conference, which prescribes comprehensive measures for combating all the scourges of racism and adequate remedies for victims, and noting with concern the lack of effective implementation thereof,

Alarmed at the global rise in hate speech, constituting incitement to racial discrimination, hostility and violence, stressing the importance of addressing it, and in this regard noting the launch of the United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech in June 2019,

Underlining the need to promote tolerance, inclusion and respect for diversity and the need to seek common ground among and within civilizations in order to address common challenges to humanity that threaten shared values, universal human rights and the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, through cooperation, partnership and inclusion,

Alarmed at the spread in many parts of the world of various racist extremist movements based on ideologies that seek to promote nationalist, right-wing agendas and racial superiority, and stressing that these practices fuel racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance,

Deploring the ongoing and resurgent scourges of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in many regions of the world, often targeting migrants and refugees, as well as people of African descent, expressing concern that some political leaders and parties have supported such an environment, and in this context expressing its support for migrants and refugees in the context of the severe discrimination that they may face,

Recalling the three Decades for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination previously declared by the General Assembly, and regretting that the Programmes of Action for those Decades were not fully implemented and that their objectives have yet to be attained,

Reiterating that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and have the potential to contribute constructively to the development and well-being of their societies, and that any doctrine of racial superiority is scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous and must be rejected, together with theories that attempt to determine the existence of separate human races,

Underlining the intensity, magnitude and organized nature of slavery and the slave trade, including the transatlantic slave trade, and the associated historical injustices, as well as the untold suffering caused by colonialism and apartheid, and that Africans and people of African descent, Asians and people of Asian descent and indigenous peoples continue to be victims, and acknowledging that the ongoing effects must be remedied,

Acknowledging the efforts and initiatives undertaken by States to prohibit racial discrimination and racial segregation and to engender the full enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, as well as civil and political rights,

Emphasizing that, despite efforts in this regard, millions of human beings continue to be victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, including their contemporary forms and manifestations, some of which manifest in violent forms,

Welcoming the efforts made by civil society in support of the follow-up mechanisms in the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action,

Recalling the appointment of the five independent eminent experts by the Secretary-General on 16 June 2003, pursuant to General Assembly resolution [56/266](#)

of 27 March 2002, with the mandate to follow up on the implementation of the provisions of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and to make appropriate recommendations thereon,

Underlining the primacy of the political will, international cooperation and adequate funding at the national, regional and international levels needed to address all forms and manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance for the successful implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action,

Recalling its resolution [2142 \(XXI\)](#) of 26 October 1966, in which it proclaimed 21 March as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination,

Recalling also its resolution [62/122](#) of 17 December 2007, in which it designated 25 March as the annual International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade,

Recalling further, in the above context, the erection of the permanent memorial for the victims of slavery and the slave trade, including the transatlantic slave trade, the *Ark of Return*, based on the theme “Acknowledge the tragedy, consider the legacy, lest we forget”,

Welcoming the call upon all the former colonial Powers for reparations, consistent with paragraphs 157 and 158 of the Durban Programme of Action, to redress the historical injustices of slavery and the slave trade, including the transatlantic slave trade,

Recognizing and affirming that the global fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and all their abhorrent and contemporary forms and manifestations is a matter of priority for the international community,

I

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

1. *Reaffirms* the paramount importance of universal adherence to and the full and effective implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,² adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution [2106 A \(XX\)](#) of 21 December 1965, in addressing the scourges of racism and racial discrimination;

2. *Calls upon* States that have not done so to accede to and/or ratify the Convention, and States parties to consider making the declaration under article 14 of the Convention, as well as to consider withdrawing reservations to article 4 of the Convention, as a matter of urgency, and to consider withdrawing reservations that are incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention;

3. *Underlines*, in the above context, that the provisions of the Convention do not respond effectively to contemporary manifestations of racial discrimination, in particular in relation to xenophobia and related intolerance, which is recognized as the rationale behind the convening of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in 2001;

4. *Takes note* of the acknowledgement by the Human Rights Council and its subsidiary structures of the existence of both procedural and substantive gaps in the Convention, which must be filled as a matter of urgency, necessity and priority;

² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 660, No. 9464.

5. *Expresses its concern* at the lack of progress in the elaboration of complementary standards to the Convention to fill existing gaps through the development of new normative standards aimed at combating all forms of contemporary and resurgent scourges of racism;

6. *Recalls* Human Rights Council resolution [34/36](#) of 24 March 2017,³ in which the Council requested the Chair-Rapporteur of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Elaboration of Complementary Standards to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination to ensure the commencement of the negotiations on the draft additional protocol to the Convention criminalizing acts of a racist and xenophobic nature during the tenth session of the Ad Hoc Committee;

7. *Requests* the Chair-Rapporteur of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Elaboration of Complementary Standards to present a progress report to the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session;

II

International Decade for People of African Descent

8. *Welcomes* the proclamation of the International Decade for People of African Descent, as contained in its resolution [68/237](#) of 23 December 2013, and the celebratory launch of the Decade on 10 December 2014;

9. *Also welcomes* the programme of activities for the International Decade for People of African Descent, in which it was recommended that a forum on people of African descent be established and that consideration be given to the elaboration of a draft United Nations declaration on the promotion and full respect of the human rights of people of African descent;

10. *Recalls* the draft programme of action for the International Decade for People of African Descent as an instructive framework in which all the initiatives aimed at improving the quality of life of people of African descent are anchored and which, if adopted, would complement the programme of activities for the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent;

11. *Takes note* of the reports of the Secretary-General on the programme of activities for the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent⁴ and on a global call for concrete action 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;⁵

12. *Also takes note* of the report of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent,⁶ invites the Human Rights Council, through the Chair of the Working Group, to continue to submit a report on the work of the Working Group to the General Assembly, and in this regard invites the Chair of the Working Group to engage in an interactive dialogue with the Assembly under the item entitled "Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance" at its seventy-fifth session;

13. *Welcomes* the decision to establish the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent, which will serve as a consultation mechanism for people of African descent and other interested stakeholders as a platform for improving the quality of

³ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-second Session, Supplement No. 53 (A/72/53)*, chap. IV, sect. A.

⁴ [A/74/308](#).

⁵ [A/74/312](#).

⁶ [A/74/274](#).

life and livelihoods of people of African descent and to contribute to elaborating a United Nations declaration on the promotion and full respect of human rights of people of African descent, and that the modalities, format and substantive and procedural aspects of the Permanent Forum will be concluded by Member States and observer States, with further consultations with people of African descent;

14. *Also welcomes* the convening of regional meetings by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to effectively implement the programme of activities of the International Decade for People of African Descent, encourages Member States and other stakeholders to adopt action-oriented recommendations at the meetings, and calls upon States, regional organizations and other stakeholders to facilitate the participation of civil society from their respective countries and regions at the meetings;

15. *Further welcomes* the constructive discussions held in Geneva on the modalities of the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent, and decides to define them at its seventy-fourth session;

16. *Requests* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Department of Global Communications of the Secretariat to continue awareness-raising efforts and public information campaigns in support of the International Decade for People of African Descent through the use of social networks and digital media, including the wide distribution of user-friendly, concise and accessible versions of material in this regard;

17. *Welcomes* the efforts undertaken by the Human Rights Council with regard to the preparatory process for the midterm review of the International Decade for People of African Descent;

III

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to provide the resources necessary for the effective fulfilment of the mandates of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, the Group of Independent Eminent Experts on the Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and the Ad Hoc Committee on the Elaboration of Complementary Standards, and in this regard to ensure the participation of experts in each session of those follow-up mechanisms in order to provide advice on the specific issues under discussion and assist the mechanisms in their deliberations and the adoption of action-oriented recommendations in relation to the implementation of the Declaration and Programme of Action;

IV

Group of Independent Eminent Experts on the Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

19. *Takes note* of the report of the Group of Independent Eminent Experts on the Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action on its sixth session,⁷ and in this regard notes that the session, which included private and public sessions, was held in Geneva from 6 to 10 May 2019;

⁷ See [A/74/173](#).

V

Trust fund for the Programme for the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination

20. *Recalls* the establishment by the Secretary-General, in 1973, of the trust fund for the Programme for the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination as a funding mechanism that has been utilized for the implementation of the activities of the three Decades for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination declared by the General Assembly, and in this regard appreciates the fact that the trust fund has also been utilized for the subsequent programmes and operational activities transcending the three Decades;

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General to include, in his report on the implementation of the present resolution to the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session, a section outlining the progress in the implementation of paragraph 18 of its resolution [68/151](#) of 18 December 2013 regarding the revitalization of the trust fund for the purpose of ensuring the successful implementation of the activities of the International Decade for People of African Descent and enhancing the effectiveness of the comprehensive follow-up to the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance and the effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action;¹

22. *Strongly appeals* to all Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and individuals, as well as other donors in a position to do so, to contribute generously to the trust fund, and to that end requests the Secretary-General to continue to undertake appropriate contacts and initiatives to encourage contributions;

VI

Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

23. *Takes note* of the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance,⁸ and encourages the Special Rapporteur, within her mandate, to continue to focus on the issues of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and incitement to hatred, which impede peaceful coexistence and harmony within societies, and to submit reports in this regard to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly;

24. *Reiterates its previous requests* to the Special Rapporteur to consider examining national models of mechanisms that measure racial equality and their value added in the eradication of racial discrimination and to report on such challenges, successes and best practices in her next report, and expresses concern at the lack of progress in this regard;

VII

Follow-up and implementation activities

25. *Requests* the Human Rights Council to consider, at its forty-third session, the question of developing a multi-year programme of activities to provide for the renewed and strengthened outreach activities needed to inform and mobilize the global public in support of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and to strengthen awareness of the contribution that they have made in the struggle against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, in consultation with

⁸ See [A/74/321](#).

Member States, national human rights institutions, relevant civil society organizations and United Nations agencies, funds and programmes;

26. *Welcomes* the efforts undertaken by the Human Rights Council, through its Advisory Committee, in preparing a study on appropriate ways and means of assessing the situation regarding racial equality, while identifying possible gaps and overlaps;

27. *Also welcomes* the commemorative plenary meeting of the General Assembly held on 25 March 2019 to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, on the mitigation and countering of rising nationalist populism and extreme supremacist ideologies;

28. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution;

29. *Requests* the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Human Rights Council to continue to convene annual commemorative meetings of the Assembly and the Council during the commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, with the appropriate focus and themes, and to hold a debate on the midterm review of the International Decade for People of African Descent with the participation of the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and in this context encourages the participation of eminent personalities active in the struggle against racial discrimination, Member States and civil society organizations in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Assembly and the Council, respectively;

30. *Decides* to remain seized of this priority matter at its seventy-fifth session under the item entitled “Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance”.

*50th plenary meeting
18 December 2019*