

25 September 2007

## **HRC6: Joint Statement on Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance**

Joint statement with 27 other NGOs

Thank you, Mr. President,

The NGOs on whose behalf this statement is made have a long record of involvement in combating racism and racial discrimination. (They participated actively in the UN decades against racism and racial discrimination, and participated in the preparations for and in the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance held in Durban, South Africa, in 2001. We are glad that the General Assembly finally decided to convene a conference to review the implementation of the Declaration and Plan of Action the 2001 World Conference adopted.)

We welcome the spirit of co-operation that guided the work of the Organizational Session of the Preparatory Committee and which will lead to holding of the Durban Review Conference as a well prepared international event. The Durban agreements contained a profound analyses of the roots of racism and constituted an important step forward for many specific groups of victims of racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. By adopting them, Governments committed to take concrete steps to curb and eliminate the scourge of racism and related intolerance.

However, in the past few years we have seen new and extremely violent manifestations of racial discrimination and related intolerance. This rise in violence must surely be addressed in the review process and genuine efforts have to be made to uproot the causes of racism and institutionalized racism. We regret that the many groups and organizations that were accredited to the Durban conference were denied participation in the first preparatory meeting.

We welcome the decision that they will be invited to participate from here onward, and urge that they will be automatically accredited. We want to emphasize the need to have the victims of racism and racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance fully engaged in the preparations for the Conference and to have their participation in the review conference ensured. This calls for special material support.

There is a need to mobilize public opinion to engage fully in realizing the objectives set out in the Durban documents. We urge the United Nations to carry out a vigorous information and education campaign that will engage schools and the general media. We all have a responsibility - the UN, governments and NGOs together - to counter the smear campaigns against Durban that is being carried on in some quarters.

We urge that the review conference meet at least for five days to take stock of the present situation and design concrete steps toward achieving the objectives set out in the Durban documents.

Furthermore, we urge that the Conference be held in a country that will allow victims of racism and all those combating racism to enter so that they can make their needed contributions to the debates.

Finally, we strongly urge that the Durban Review Conference and its preparations be adequately funded from the regular UN budget and call on governments to contribute generously to make this review conference a turning point in the struggle against racism.

1. Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) 2. Mouvement contre le racismisme et pour l'amitié entre les peuples (MRAP) 3. International Youth and Student Movement for the United Nations (ISMUN) 4. North South XXI 5. Indian Council of South America (CISA) 6. Interfaith International 7. The English International Association of Lund (Sweden) 8. International Educational Development 9. Pan Pacific and South East Asia Women's Association (PPSEAWA) 10. Worldwide Organization for Women 11. Asian Legal Resource Centre 12. Reporters Without Borders 13. Comité international pour le respect et l'application de la Charte africaine des droits de l'homme et des peuples (CIRAC) 14. Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS) 15. International League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples (LIDLIP) 16. Association of World Citizens 17. International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR) 18. International Federation of University Women 19. World Young Women's Christian Association (World YWCA) 20. Mbororo Social and Cultural Development Association of Cameroon (MBOSCUDA) 21. Union of Arab Jurists 22. The International Organization for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination (EAFORD) 23. BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights 24. International Alliance of Women (IAW) 25. Colombian Commission of Jurists 26. International Union of Socialist Youth 27. International Federation for the Protection of the Rights of Ethnic, Religious, Linguistic and other Minorities (IFPRFRLM)

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