



Issue 1
December 2000

Durban 2001

United against Racism

NEWSLETTER OF THE WORLD CONFERENCE AGAINST RACISM SECRETARIAT

From the desk of the High Commissioner

The first issue of this newsletter is part of our build up to the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in Durban, South Africa from 31 August to 7 September next. There will be six issues over the period ahead under the editorship of Jyoti Singh, the Executive Coordinator of the World Conference.

The aim of the newsletter is to brief member States, NGOs, national institutions, UN bodies and civil society about the preparations for the World Conference. Events, themes, preparatory developments and organisational issues will be highlighted. Our objective is to increase awareness of the World Conference and to ensure that all concerned are kept in the picture.

This issue provides summary reports on the series of expert seminars that have taken place, as well as on the first of the regional conferences. Among the topics reported on are gender and racism and the role that national institutions can play in combating racism. It includes the first of what will be a regular update of NGO activities.

We would like to hear about national preparations for the World Conference and significant developments which would merit attention. We would also welcome news items on the issue of racism and intolerance which could be of interest. I hope that you will find the newsletter a useful source of information – and entertaining as well!

Mary Robinson

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
and Secretary General of the World Conference against
Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia
and Related Intolerance

Durban to host World Conference against Racism

The Government of South Africa announced on 24 October that the city of Durban will host the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance from 31 August to 7 September 2001.

Durban, which is located on the Indian Ocean on the east coast of South Africa, is a scenic and culturally diverse city.

It has played host to many international conferences including the Conference on the Non-Aligned Movement and the 13th International AIDS Conference.

Durban and the International Convention Centre are well-prepared to host NGOs, Governments, national institutions, UN officials, dignitaries and visitors from all over the world for eight days next year.



Aerial view of the city of Durban and the International Convention Centre (ICC Photo)

i n s i d e t h i s i s s u e

3 World Leaders sign Visionary Declaration



6 Expert Seminars around the World

10 National Preparations for the World Conference: South Africa and Brazil

NGOs get actively involved in the World Conference

The World Conference Against Racism (WCAR) will involve non-governmental organizations as key players. NGOs which have consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), indigenous peoples' organizations accredited under ECOSOC Resolution 1995/32, and NGOs which have been specifically accredited to participate in the World Conference and/or its regional meetings can be observers at the diplomatic conference. NGO representatives will have the right to speak in both the plenary and drafting committees of the WCAR, and in any of the sub-committees that these bodies establish. NGOs will also be able to lobby governmental delegations to ensure that the Declaration and Programme of Action which emerge from the WCAR have language that captures their concerns and priorities.

Civil society perspectives will be discussed at a series of NGO networking meetings taking place between now and the World Conference. These are also being discussed at the NGO Forums that parallel all of the regional governmental meetings. These perspectives will be crystallized during an NGO Forum in Durban which will meet just prior to, and overlap with, the WCAR from 28 August to 1 September 2001. The expectation is that the NGOs will adopt their own Declaration and Programme of Action during this forum, and that this NGO platform will influence the final outcome of the World Conference.

The High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson has stressed from the outset that she considers NGO involvement a key to the success of the World Conference. Addressing the first session of the Preparatory Committee in May 2000, she stated: "I have made it clear, and will repeat again, that I have in mind a Conference with the broadest possible involvement of civil society. I would like to see the maximum possible involvement of NGOs, community groups, religious groups and the private sector in preparations for the Conference." In line with this objective,

the World Conference Secretariat has a Senior NGO Liaison Officer for the World Conference, to encourage and assist NGO participation throughout the process, and funds have been raised so that NGOs can actively engage in the regional preparatory meetings and plan for the NGO Forum.

NGO steering committees were created at the regional level for the Americas, Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and East and Central Europe. They assist the World Conference Secretariat to organize these meetings, to establish criteria for providing financial assistance to NGOs, and to select those who will receive funding. The schedule of NGO meetings accompanies this article. (The contacts listed can provide information on how NGOs can apply for funding to attend these meetings, the venues and the programmes.)

To participate fully in the process leading up to the World Conference, as well as in the WCAR itself, NGOs which do not have consultative status must be accredited. This requires that NGOs contact the WCAR Secretariat and provide it with a copy of their constitution or by-laws, a recent annual report, a recent financial report, a list of members of the Board of Directors, and (if relevant) the names and locations of the NGO's organizational members. They must also show how their objectives and activities will further the aims of the World Conference.

Application forms can be downloaded from the website of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights <www.unhchr.ch> and should be sent to: Sandra Aragón, OHCHR, Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland, tel: (41-22) 917-9129, fax: (41-22) 917-9050 or e-mail: <saragon.hchr@unog.ch>

A great deal of additional information relevant to NGOs can be found on the following websites:

Website for the NGO Forum:

<www.sangoco.org.za>

Website of NGO material:

<www.hri.ca/racism>

NGOs and others can ask to be put on the ListServe of the NGO Liaison for the WCAR by writing to the NGO Liaison Officer at <lwiseberg.hchr@unog.ch>. Laurie Wiseberg can also be contacted by telephone at (41-22) 917-9393 or by facsimile at (41-22) 917-9050.

14-18 November 2000, Warsaw, Poland:
NGO Networking Meeting for Eastern and Central Europe.
Contact: Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, Poland
<jacquel@hfhropol.waw.pl>

3-4 December 2000, Santiago, Chile:
NGO Forum preceding the regional meeting for the Americas (5-7 December 2000).
Contact: IDEAS Foundation
<director@ideas.cl>

9-12 January 2001, Gaborone, Botswana: NGO Networking Meeting for Africa. Contact: Human Rights Centre, University of Pretoria
<ckissoon@hakuna.up.ac.za>

20-21 January 2001, Dakar, Senegal:
NGO Forum preceding the regional meeting for Africa (22-24 January 2001). Contact: Rencontre africaine pour la défense des droits de l'homme (RADDHO)
<raddho@telecomplus.sn>

Early February 2001, Amman, Jordan:
NGO Networking Meeting for Asian Middle Eastern NGOs.
Contact: Arab Organization for Human Rights (AOHR), Jordan
<achrs@joinet.com.jo> or <aohr@yahoo.com>

13-16 March 2001, Quito, Ecuador:
NGO Networking Meeting for the Americas. Contact: Agencia Latinoamericana de Información (ALAI) <ddhh@alainet.org> or Human Rights Internet (HRI) <hechtma@hri.ca>

17-18 February 2000, Tehran, Iran:
NGO Forum preceding the regional meeting for Asia (19-21 February 2001) Contact: International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR)
<imadr@slt.lk>

March 2001, Kathmandu, Nepal:
NGO Networking Meeting for NGOs from Asia and the Pacific. For the present, contact: IMADR
<imadr@slt.lk>

28 August - 1 September 2001 (tentative), Durban, South Africa:
NGO Forum Against Racism. Contact: South African NGO Coalition (SANGOCO)
<moshe@sangoco.org.za>

World leaders sign Visionary Declaration



High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson looks on as South African President Thabo Mbeki signs the Visionary Declaration. (Secretariat Photo)

To date, more than sixty world leaders have signed the Visionary Declaration "Tolerance and Diversity: A Vision for the 21st Century". The Declaration was initiated by the High Commissioner for Human Rights and Secretary General of the World Conference against Racism, Mary Robinson. It was launched in New York on 5 September 2000 during the Millennium Assembly by President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa.

Former South African President Nelson Mandela is the Patron of the Visionary Declaration. The signing of the Declaration by so many leaders has generated an increased public awareness about combating racism and about the World Conference which will take place next year.

Tolerance and Diversity: A Vision for the 21st Century

As a new century begins, we believe each society needs to ask itself certain questions. Is it sufficiently inclusive? Is it non-discriminatory? Are its norms of behaviour based on the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?

Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and all kinds of related intolerance have not gone away. We recognize that they persist in the new century and that their persistence is rooted in fear: fear of what is different, fear of the other, fear of the loss of personal security. And while we recognize that human fear is in itself ineradicable, we maintain that its consequences are not ineradicable.

We all constitute one human family. This truth has now become self-evident because of the first mapping of the human genome, an extraordinary achievement which not only reaffirms our common humanity but promises transformations in scientific thought and practice, as well as in the visions which our species can entertain for itself. It encourages us toward

the full exercise of our human spirit, the reawakening of all its inventive, creative and moral capacities, enhanced by the equal participation of men and women. And it could make the twenty-first century an era of genuine fulfillment and peace.

We must strive to remind ourselves of this great possibility. Instead of allowing diversity of race and culture to become a limiting factor in human exchange and development, we must refocus our understanding, discern in such diversity the potential for mutual enrichment, and realize that it is the interchange between great traditions of human spirituality that offers the best prospect for the persistence of the human spirit itself. For too long such diversity has been treated as threat rather than gift. And too often that threat has been expressed in racial contempt and conflict, in exclusion, discrimination and intolerance.

Preparations for the United Nations World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, to be held in

South Africa in September 2001, offer an opportunity to consider how far the aspirations of the three UN Decades Against Racism have been realized. The horrors of racism – from slavery to holocaust to apartheid to ethnic cleansing – have deeply wounded the victim and debased the perpetrator. These horrors are still with us in various forms. It is now time to confront them and to take comprehensive measures against them.

The World Conference should adopt a declaration and plan of action which would provide the standards, the structures, the remedies – in essence, the culture – to ensure full recognition of the dignity and equality of all, and full respect for their human rights.

Over the coming year we pledge ourselves to seek that conversion of mind and heart. What we envisage for every man, woman and child is a life where the exercise of individual gifts and personal rights is affirmed by the dynamic solidarity of our membership of the one human family.

Mary Robinson Nelson Mandela Head of State



European Conference calls for increased action against racism

The European Conference against Racism, held in Strasbourg, France, from 11-13 October 2000, concluded with a reaffirmation of Europe's cultural diversity and a call for increased action to combat racism and related discrimination at national and sub-national levels on the continent.

In its Political Declaration, the Conference expressed alarm at the continuing occurrence of racism, including racially-motivated violence, contemporary forms of slavery, ethnic cleansing and the support for political parties and organisations disseminating racist and xenophobic ideology in Europe.

The European Conference welcomed "ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic diversity in Europe as a source of social vitality which should be embraced, valued and enjoyed by all Europeans." The Conference found that diversity "enriches our lives, our ideas, our creativity and our politics. It is also essential for Europe's economic prosperity as well as social success, through drawing on all available talents."

The Conclusions also suggested that States adopt general and comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation, including through the designation of national, independent specialized bodies. It also called upon participating States to strengthen co-operation with NGOs, and to harness their experience and expertise in developing governmental legislation, policies and other initiatives.

In her address to the Conference, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and Secretary-General of the World Conference, Mary Robinson said that Western Europe must be vigilant against "the Fortress Europe" mentality and urged national governments to effect change. She reminded the gathering that an impediment to tackling the problem of racism in Europe was the broad denial that

racism and xenophobia existed at all. She called on Europeans to face up to this reality and make use of the wide range of legislative instruments that were available. She also called for more strategic prioritising and funding of institutions that combat racism.

The High Commissioner noted the contributions made by the Council of Europe, particularly through the country reports issued by the European Commission against Racism and Intol-

erance that monitor racism and intolerance in member states.

The European Conference against Racism was the first of four regional meetings that will be held around the world in preparation for the World Conference against Racism. Three other regional meetings will be held: in Santiago de Chile (for the Americas), in Dakar (for Africa) and in Tehran (for the Asian region) within the next three months. *Please see our events calendar on page 6 for details.*

Funding the World Conference against Racism

Funds made available to OHCHR for the World Conference amount to US\$ 5,648,820 as of 15 November 2000 and include contributions from Governments and foundations as well as the reallocation of the balance from the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights. The budget for 2001 included in the High Commissioner's Annual Appeal is US\$ 5,999,898.

Government donors have so far provided most of the funds. However, foundations have also made important contributions. The United Nations Foundation/United Nations Fund for International Partnerships contributed US\$ 1,260,000 to the regional expert seminars and to the participation of NGOs in preparatory activities. The Ford Foundation has contributed US\$ 500,000 for public information activities.

For funding inquiries please contact Mari Sandstrom at tel: +41 22 917 92 25 fax: + 41 22 917 9004 or e-mail: msandstrom.hchr@unog.ch

The European Commission is likely to become a major donor to the World Conference. Decisions taken in October to contribute to the regional meetings in Dakar and Santiago represent only part of the total costs for these meetings. Funding requests for the regional meeting in Teheran and for the World Conference itself have been submitted to the European Commission and decisions are expected before the end of the year.

More funds are urgently required to continue the implementation of planned activities. OHCHR prefers that contributions are made to the "World Conference against Racism" rather than earmarked to specific activities. A presentation of activities and requirements is included in OHCHR's Annual Appeal 2001, issued in November 2000.

Gender dimensions of racial discrimination

"Many women face additional barriers to the enjoyment of their human rights because of such factors as their race, language, ethnicity, culture, religion, disability or socio-economic class or because they are indigenous people, migrants, displaced women or refugees. They may also be disadvantaged and marginalized by a general lack of awareness and recognition of their human rights as well as by obstacles they meet in gaining access to information and recourse mechanisms in cases of violation of their rights." The gender dimensions of racial discrimination were recognized in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action resulting from the Fourth World Conference on Women.

The General Assembly has also recently "stressed the importance of systematically taking a gender perspective into account throughout the preparations for and in the outcome of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance."

Women of a racial or ethnic group often experience discrimination based on their gender – and – discrimination based on their race or ethnicity which is a sort of "double discrimination." But, "double" suggests two types or dimensions of gender and racism. The reality is far more complex than this. There is not one dimension or aspect of gender and racial discrimination, but many.

A gender analysis of racial discrimination recognizes that racial discrimination does not affect men and women equally, or in the same way. There are circumstances in which women suffer racial discrimination of a different kind or to a different degree

than men, or in which discrimination primarily affects women. To promote and protect the rights of all persons to be free from racial discrimination, it is necessary to ensure the rights of women **when they are similarly situated with men and when they are not.**

There is a complex interplay between

There are also distinct forms of discrimination which occur when race and gender factors intersect or compound one another. In other words, discrimination or violation against an individual can occur because she is a woman – and – a member of a particular ethnic or racial group.

There is also the case of girls and young women who may face discrimination not only on the basis of gender and race, but because of another vulnerability – their age.

The gender dimensions of racial discrimination are complex, and many. They require the attention of member States, national institutions, civil society and the United Nations in order to ensure the equal enjoyment of rights to women and men, free from discrimination, xenophobia or related intolerance.

The OHCHR is looking at how gender and racial discrimination intersect. Very recently, at a seminar of experts for the Asia-Pacific region (Bangkok, 5-7- September 2000), a group of experts discussed the issues of racism and racial discrimination in the context of migration and trafficking with particular reference to women and children. The full conclusions and recommendations are available on the OHCHR website at www.unhcr.ch.

In addition, OHCHR, along with the Government of the Republic of Croatia, UN Division for the Advancement of Women and United Nations Development Fund for Women

helped plan an expert group meeting on Gender and Racial Discrimination, in Zagreb, Croatia, which was held from 21-24 November 2000. The reports of both of these meetings will be brought before the second session of the Preparatory Committee next May.



South African woman (UN Photo)

gender and race or ethnicity and the discrimination or violations therefrom. It is necessary to consider the forms these violations take, the context in which they occur; and, the consequences of a violation and the availability and accessibility of remedies to victims.

Expert Seminars held around the

OHCHR has convened five regional expert seminars around the world as part of the preparatory process of the World Conference against Racism. The objectives of each seminar were to:

- discuss issues of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance which were of priority concern, but not limited to, that region;
- move forward the complex dialogue on racism and to recommend practical solutions;
- encourage people to start thinking regionally about these issues and their solutions;
- raise awareness and tolerance, and share information in the region on the issues of racism and intolerance;
- share "best practices" against racism and related intolerance;
- get Governments, regional organizations, national institutions and NGOs as well as civil society involved in World Conference preparations;
- submit reports to the second session of the Preparatory Committee of the World Conference to be held from 21 May to 1 June 2001, and to any other relevant national or regional meetings.

At each seminar, a panel of experts from the region and some international experts presented papers, followed by a discussion. Accredited observers and the experts themselves also discussed other matters which they considered relevant and important to the specific items on the agenda. The seminars have been attended by observers representing member States, national institutions, relevant UN bodies and programmes, intergovernmental organizations, and NGO communities. The Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, Bertrand Ramcharan represented the High Commissioner for Human Rights at each expert seminar.

Geneva 16-18 February 2000

Expert Seminar on Remedies Available to the Victims of Acts of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance and on Good National Practices in the Field

The first seminar for the Western Europe and other States (WEOS) Group was held at the United Nations Office in Geneva. The Seminar discussed recourse procedures for non-citizens, migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, indigenous peoples, children, young people and women and it considered some good national practices.

The recommendations of the Seminar touched upon the procedural and substantive aspects of remedies and recourse procedures, and they related to monetary and non-monetary, as well as judicial and non-judicial remedies. The Seminar also recommended that national institutions and ombudsmen be reinforced because they were vital to protecting not only victims of racial discrimination but also other victims of human rights violations.

There was also vigorous debate about the Internet and how it can be used to fight racism and hate groups, and what policies, practices and regulations might be used to combat racism and racial incitement over the Internet. The Seminar underscored that education, including via the Internet, was fundamental to combating racism.

The report of the Geneva seminar (A/CONF.189/PC.1/8) was submitted to the first session of the Preparatory Committee last May, and it is available on the website.

Warsaw 5-7 July 2000

Regional Seminar of Experts on the Protection of Minorities and Other Vulnerable Groups and Strengthening Human Rights Capacity at the National Level

The Warsaw Seminar paid special attention to racial discrimination in Central and Eastern Europe that often affects national minorities. Racial discrimination in the region has often taken the form of anti-Semitism, discrimination against minorities such as the Roma, and discrimination against Muslims. The seminar also noted that although many constitutions prohibit discrimination in general and guarantee equality, Governments in Central and Eastern Europe have yet to follow through on many of these constitutional promises by enacting implementing legislation. It encouraged Governments to enact comprehensive legislation specifically prohibiting forms of discrimination and to provide civil and criminal remedies in all sectors including public life, education, employment, health care and social services.

The active participation of observers made for a lively debate and contributed much to the creative thinking process. The NGOs in attendance provided many valuable insights concerning the problems that members of minorities face daily at the grassroots level and possible strategies to address these problems.

At the end of the three days, the experts had assembled a detailed set of practical recommendations that identifies and addresses the problems of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance that have intensified in Central and Eastern European countries since the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War.

The report of the Warsaw expert seminar (A/CONF.189/PC.2/2) is available on the website.

P r e - C o n f e r e n c e w h a t w h e n

Regional Meeting for the Americas	5-7 December 2000
Informal Consultations	15-16 January 2001
Regional Meeting for Africa	22-24 January 2001
Regional Meeting for Asia	19-21 February 2001
Open-ended Inter-sessional Working Group	6-9 March 2001
Second Session of the Preparatory Committee	21 May - 1 June 2001

World to Prepare for WCAR

Bangkok
5-7 September 2000

The Asia-Pacific Seminar of Experts in preparation for the World Conference against Racism: Migrants and Trafficking of Persons with Particular Reference to Women and Children

The presentations and discussions at the Bangkok Seminar focused on the particular issues and vulnerabilities of women and children. The preventive and rehabilitative role of NGOs and civil society was also emphasized.

The seminar noted that there was a critical and close relationship between the movement of people and discrimination, including such forms as racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. It also concluded, among other things, "that racist and sexist ideology, structures and institutions could contribute to the 'commodification' of women's sexuality. Some women of certain racial or ethnic groups were subjected to abuse in larger measure than others on account of racial attitudes and perceptions."

The Bangkok Seminar recommended that States adopt plans of action, develop guidelines, and cooperate with each other to eradicate discrimination against migrants and trafficking. Some positive regional arrangements were recognized but the Seminar was reminded that these arrangements were non-binding and that they relied on the goodwill and cooperation of States to implement them.

The "unedited versions" of the conclusions and recommendations of the Bangkok, Addis and Santiago seminars as well as the respective seminar programmes are available on the Office website. The full reports of these seminars are being prepared and will be released by the United Nations in all official languages shortly.

Addis Ababa
4-6 October 2000

Regional Seminar of Experts on the Prevention of Ethnic and Racial Conflicts in Africa

The conclusions reached by the Addis seminar recognize that historical factors such as the slave trade, colonialism, the arbitrary delimitation of boundaries, as well as exploitative economic policies which continue to have negative effects on the economic and social development of Africa and which can create breeding grounds for ethnic and racial conflicts.

The Seminar noted that ethnic and racial conflicts in Africa originate, among others causes, from systematic and widespread violations of human rights, the absence of democracy, the politicization of race and ethnicity, discrimination against certain members of society, and interference by foreign interests.

The Seminar agreed that stability and sustainable social and economic development in Africa in the new millennium can be enhanced and strengthened, among other things, by democracy, adherence to the rule of law, a culture of peace and respect for human rights, and the prevention, management and peaceful resolution of ethno-cultural and political conflicts.

In her opening statement, the High Commissioner for Human Rights recalled that no other continent has had to bear the brunt of racism as much as Africa and has had such a widespread and prolonged struggle to fight racism in the form of apartheid. She also said that Africa has a wide range of experience in the operation of preventive arrangements for dealing with threats of conflicts, ethnic or otherwise and that the Seminar was an opportunity to draw upon African experience.

Each report will be ready for the respective preparatory meeting that will be held in the region, and will be submitted to the second session of the Preparatory Committee next May. (Our next issue of the newsletter will contain updates of the regional preparatory meetings).

Santiago de Chile
25-27 October 2000

Economic, Social and Legal Measures to Overcome Racial Discrimination, with Particular Reference to Vulnerable Groups

The final regional expert seminar took place in Santiago a little over a month ago. The seminar urged States in the region to ensure fuller participation for Afro-Latino Americans, indigenous peoples and other vulnerable groups in political, administrative, economic and cultural institutions.

Noting the tendency in some States to negate or minimize the existence of racial discrimination, it urged States in the region to recognize the phenomenon of racial discrimination more clearly so that action could be taken to improve the economic and social condition of victims of racism and xenophobia. Along the same lines, the seminar also recommended that States' census and other statistical surveys include information about issues such as, the economic and social conditions of racial or ethnic groups in order to have a better understanding of the disadvantages suffered and, in order to be used as tools to generate better targeted government programmes.

The seminar was opened by former Chilean President and Regional Advisor to the High Commissioner, Patricio Aylwin, who said that large inequalities of wealth in the region existed and that vulnerable groups subject to racial discrimination, such as indigenous peoples and Afro-Latino Americans, were disproportionately poor. He said that in order to effectively combat racial discrimination, States would have to increase their efforts to reduce poverty.

OHCHR is grateful to the Governments of Switzerland and Poland and to the regional economic commissions ESCAP, ECA and ECLAC for their cooperation, to all those who participated in the Seminars, and to the experts for their valuable contributions.

C a l e n d a r w h e r e c o n t a c t

Santiago (Chile)	Sandra Aragón-Parriaux • saragon.hchr@unog.ch Tel: (+4122) 917 9129 • Fax: (+4122) 917 9050
Palais des Nations (Geneva)	Robert Husbands • rhusbands.hchr@unog.ch Tel: (+4122) 917 9290 • Fax: (+4122) 917 9050
Dakar (Senegal)	Abdou Aziz Ndiaye • andiaye.hchr@unog.ch Tel: (+4122) 917 9826 • Fax: (+4122) 917 9050
Tehran (Islamic Republic of Iran)	Lyal Sunga • lsunga.hchr@unog.ch Tel: (+4122) 917 9168 • Fax: (+4122) 917 9050
Palais des Nations (Geneva)	Helga Klein • hklein.hchr@unog.ch Tel: (+4122) 917 9310 • Fax: (+4122) 917 9050
Palais des Nations (Geneva)	Robert Husbands • rhusbands.hchr@unog.ch Tel: (+4122) 917 9290 • Fax: (+4122) 917 9050

Pedagogy for a more tolerant world

Our relationship to other human beings and to the world depends on our perception and subjectivity. Reality as we know it is based on mental schemes that are internalized through education and that are influenced by the society in which we live. In this context, sociocultural models that are transmitted to adults – but even more so to children – are extremely important. When these models organize individuals into a hierarchy according to skin color or racial or ethnic group, they are very likely to cause discriminatory behaviour. This tendency can be reversed and prevented by teaching individuals positive values that are likely to modify their way of thinking and of being. Among these values, the respect for human rights is central.

In this regard, the 1993 Vienna World Conference on Human Rights reaffirmed the responsibility of States to “ensure that education is aimed at strengthening the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms” and emphasized that “education should promote understanding, tolerance, peace and friendly relations between the nations and all racial or religious groups.”

Furthermore, paragraph 33 of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action noted that, “Education on human rights and the dissemination of proper information, both theoretical and practical, play an important role in the promotion and respect of human rights with regard to all individuals without distinction of any kind such as race, sex, language or religion.”

On 23 December 1994, the General Assembly proclaimed the Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004) through its resolution 49/184, and adopted an action plan to that effect. One of the objectives of this programme was a worldwide diffusion of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in various languages and adapted to different instruction levels. This has been achieved, and the Declaration is

now available in over 300 languages, including braille. Posters, picture books, videotapes, cassettes, and books for children in different languages have also been produced in order to reach the maximum accessibility level.

The Convention against Discrimination in Education, adopted in 1960 under the auspices of UNESCO, paved the way for large-scale action aimed at eliminating and preventing all forms of discrimination through primary, secondary and university education.

These texts demonstrate that United Nations’ action aimed at shaping a human is respectful of the human rights of others embraces four different kinds of pedagogy: a pedagogy of human unity, a pedagogy of human diversity, a pedagogy of human equality, and a pedagogy of the universality of human rights.

“All human rights for all” should be the leitmotif for any action aimed at promoting human rights

A pedagogy of human unity

As stated in the Declaration “Tolerance and Diversity: A Vision for the 21st Century”, we are all members of a single human family. The fact that peoples of the world are different does not in any way preclude the unity of the human race.

A pedagogy of human diversity

If human beings allowed subjectivity and cultural schemes that depreciate others to lead their actions, our world could soon become a battlefield. Therefore, we must be vigilant that differences do not lead to conflicts and we must ensure that they are perceived on both sides as a source of exchange and

richness. Every human being should internalize Voltaire's maxim which states that if you are different from me, far from harming me you enrich me.

Acknowledging cultural diversity means ensuring cultural pluralism through respect for languages and teaching of the latter, as well as respect for traditions in accordance with human rights.

A pedagogy of equality

The principle of equality is a fundamental component to the United Nations mechanism of promotion and protection of human rights. Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that, “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.” Instilling this principle at an early age is the best way to fight the proliferation of racist attitudes and practices.

Teaching every human being that differences do not result in any hierarchy among individuals contributes to the dissemination of notions of equality and non-discrimination among human beings.

A pedagogy of the universality of human rights

We must be reminded that no contradiction exists between, on the one hand, human diversity, and on the other hand, the universality of human rights. The thought of promoting and protecting human rights to different degrees in different neighborhoods, countries or regions is inconceivable. For the same reason, “cultural and religious particularities” must not be accepted as a justification to undermine an individual's fundamental rights and freedoms.

“All human rights for all” should be the leitmotif for any action aimed at promoting human rights.

Daniel Atchebro
World Conference against Racism
Secretariat tel: +41 22 917 9271
fax: +41 22 917 9050
e-mail: datchebro.hchr@unog.ch

A plan of action for Indigenous Peoples

The World Conference against Racism provides an opportunity for indigenous peoples to draw public attention to their concerns and win commitments for new policies to end longstanding injustices. But what exactly can indigenous representatives do? And what are the best ways of influencing the outcomes of the World Conference? What follows is a checklist of actions that need to be taken in the lead-up to the Conference.

Register

Accredited indigenous NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC or approved under the special process established for participation in the working group on the draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples (ECOSOC resolution 1995/32), may send a request letter to the Secretariat to participate in the World Conference. At present, only a handful of the many thousands of indigenous governments, communities and organizations are accredited in this way. Many indigenous groups have a story to tell and a contribution to make but, unless they are able to register; their voices will go largely unheard. Indigenous peoples wanting to take part in the Conference should write to the secretariat giving information about their organization.

For more information, please visit the World Conference website at www.unhchr.ch or contact the NGO Liaison Officer, Laurie Wiseberg at tel: +41 22 917 93 93 fax: +41 22 917 9050, or e-mail at lwiseberg.hchr@unog.ch

Participate in the preparatory meetings

Three different types of preparatory meetings are being held to provide input to the World Conference: regional meetings of governments, meetings of experts, and satellite meetings. Indigenous peoples should be present at as many of these meetings as possible. Indigenous peoples may wish to consider taking the initiative to convene their own workshop or meeting and request that it be recognized as one of the satellite meetings of the Conference. This would mean that its report

would be brought before the second and final Preparatory Committee meeting in May 2001. The participants to this meeting that will be negotiating the draft declaration and programme of action to be tabled at the World Conference.

Identify key concerns and proposals for the Draft Declaration and Programme of Action

Indigenous consultations and meetings that lead to the formulation of practical and realizable policy actions by Governments and the international community are likely to have a greater impact than an exhaustive wish list.



Peruvian mother and child (UN Photo)

However, to date there have been few occasions for indigenous peoples to exchange views, offer their own analysis, and make recommendations.

At the July session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations some ideas emerged but they have yet to be consolidated.

As far as the principles that may be endorsed by the Conference are concerned, the former Chairperson of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, Erica-Irene Daes, has recommended that the World Conference recognize that indigenous peoples are peoples. Indigenous peoples should seize the chance to make their own suggestions and impact the contents of the programme of action that comes out of the World Conference.

Find the funding

Some funding has been raised for NGOs wishing to participate in the preparatory meetings and the World Conference itself. They are not administered by the World Conference Secretariat, but are disbursed through a partner NGO in each region. In some regions, a percentage of the budget is set aside for indigenous representatives. The NGO Liaison officer can be contacted for further information about the funds available. In addition, the Advisory Group of the Voluntary Fund for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples will be setting aside funding to help indigenous peoples so that they can be represented at Durban.

Reach out to civil society

Without wide support for the Programme of Action of the Durban Conference from the public, the best of ideas will be unfulfilled. Civil society is the part of us that pay the taxes and deliver the votes. Unfortunately, the concerns of indigenous peoples and the discrimination they face is still largely unknown to the public so efforts need to be made to reach out to civil society in the months leading up to the Conference. The UN Workshop on indigenous media, being held in New York from 11 to 14 December, offers another opportunity to discuss ways of encouraging the mainstream press to support the indigenous cause. Indigenous peoples, through the Internet and new media, have only a short time to get their message out to the public and rally international support for some of their key proposals.

The High Commissioner for Human Rights and Secretary General of the World Conference, Mary Robinson, in describing her vision of the World Conference, has said: "I do not want a talking shop with fine words and no substance. I will insist on an action-oriented programme with specific follow-up and review provisions..." Indigenous peoples can help to formulate such a programme in the months to come.

Contact: The Indigenous Project Team at tel: +41 22 917 9272 fax: +41 22 917 9010 or e-mail: jburger.hchr@unog.ch

South Africa's national conference sets stage for world gathering

South Africa's first national meeting in preparation for the World Conference held from 30 August to 2 September in Sandton, near Johannesburg, brought together over 1000 delegates from across the country's diverse society under the slogan, "Combating Racism: A Nation in Dialogue".

President Thabo Mbeki opened the conference, organized by the South African Human Rights Commission, by expressing confidence that South Africans had the wisdom, ingenuity and sensitivity to the human condition to overcome racism. The meeting has recommended the acceleration of programmes aimed at the transformation of relevant components of the administration of justice, such as the police, the prosecutorial service and the judiciary. In a Millennium Statement and Programme of Action adopted on the last day of the meeting, delegates also recommended, among other measures, that the Government:

- ratify the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Convention of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families;

- adopt a cohesive and integrated immigration policy;
- declare the decade beginning 2001-2010 as a Decade of the Movement against Racism, and;
- prepare and participate adequately in the preparatory process leading up to the 2001 World Conference.

Conference background, objectives

The main objectives of the national conference were to promote understanding of the nature, meaning and manifestations of racism in South African society, devise a common programme for the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination and start preparations for the World Conference. The following three themes were adopted and discussed by the conference: The History, Nature and Sources of Racism; The Consequences, Impact and Contemporary forms of Racism; and Strategies to Combat Racism: The Way Forward. Each theme was elaborated into sub-themes which were discussed and debated in working groups. On the final day, the

Conference adopted the Millennium Statement and Programme of Action.

To give effect to the measures recommended in the Programme of Action, the South African Human Rights Commission was asked to develop and adopt a comprehensive action plan and strategy to combat racism. It was further recommended that the Millennium Declaration be submitted to the regional meeting in Dakar, Senegal.

The General Assembly has encouraged States to undertake national initiatives aimed at creating greater awareness for the World Conference and to involve national institutions and civil society in all levels of the preparatory process to ensure a practical and action-oriented Declaration and Programme of Action. The South African meeting was attended by delegates representing diverse groups from civil society, racial linguistic and cultural groups, all levels of Government, independent national institutions, statutory bodies and public enterprises. Regional and international representatives were also invited as observers.

National institutions get in on the action

South Africa's national conference provides a good example of how national human rights institutions can contribute to making the World Conference a success. The High Commissioner, in her address to the Fifth International Meeting of National Human Rights Institutions in Rabat last April 2000, noted:

"If this World Conference is to be effective, it is essential that a substantial body of practical information is gathered and placed before it. Indeed, I would hope that from your very disparate experiences we can distil a collection of material on effective strategies to both combat and prevent racism."

National institutions from around the world have responded positively to the High Commissioner's call for action. Members of the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions, during their Fifth Annual Meeting held in New Zealand in August, expressed the view that overcoming racism remained one of the most significant human rights challenges confronting society. The Members agreed that the Forum Secretariat would collect reports from Members concerning

their planned activities in relation to the World Conference.

The Second Regional Meeting of National Institutions of the Americas and the Caribbean held in Mexico City in November reviewed preparations for the World Conference and discussed indigenous peoples' rights in light of the Regional Preparatory Meeting held in Santiago de Chile. At the meeting of the Federation of Ibero-American Ombudsmen, also held in Mexico City in November, participants actively discussed substantive issues surrounding migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons in preparation for the World Conference. The Commission-Human Rights Commission's Special Rapporteur on migrants contributed to that discussion.

National institutions have also made calls to address the wide range of issues related to racism. Participants in the Rabat conference, for example, requested all States to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. They declared: "Given the re-emergence and extension, noted in

numerous countries, of various forms of racial discrimination, especially against immigrant workers and their families, the activities of national institutions in the countries concerned are of prime importance to fight against this discrimination." Speaking at the April meeting of the International Co-ordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions held in Geneva, the High Commissioner welcomed the call to ratify the Convention and encouraged national institutions "alongside (their) other human rights partners, to organise national activities which will help create the momentum for the Conference."

National institutions are invited to provide further information to OHCHR through the questionnaire disseminated at the Rabat Meeting on their institution's work relating to racism and preparations for the World Conference. Copies of the questionnaire can be obtained by contacting Orest Nowosad at tel: +41 22 917 9223; e-mail: onowosad.hchr@unog.ch

A real dialogue is taking place in Brazil

Brazilians involved in the preparation for the World Conference against Racism have been busy in the last months. From September to November, six preparatory pre-conferences organized by the Palmares Cultural Foundation were held in different locations across the country. These pre-conferences constitute a dialogue on racism among different groups in Brazil.

The themes of the preparatory meetings were as diverse as they were relevant. In Sao Paulo, the pre-conference dealt with issues of culture, education and affirmative action policies. In Rio de Janeiro, the discussions were launched under the theme of "Racism, Gender and Education". In Fortaleza, participants discussed the impact of

the communication and entertainment industries on identity and social representation. Future meetings will focus on development, religion and culture, as well as potential actions aimed at combating racism.

Representatives from diverse sectors of Brazilian society, including non-governmental organizations, members of civil society and academics attended these meetings.

One of the results of these pre-conferences was the recognition of the need for a long-term national campaign against racism and discrimination in general.

The World Conference against Racism Regional Conference for the Americas

will take place in Santiago de Chile from 5-7 December 2000. In preparation for this meeting, Brazil's Ministry of Justice organized three seminars focusing on the situation of individuals who are suffering from discrimination as well as on strategies for the promotion of equality.

"This is a moment of critical reflection on our own process of national formation and also for drafting our perspectives for the future that allow us to improve our heritages, correct our mistakes, and define our perspectives of justice and equality for all Brazilians."

*Francisco Correa Weffort
Brazilian Minister of Culture*

Art against Racism: Tomi Ungerer holds one of the pieces of the puzzle

Tomi Ungerer is a French artist and author whose books and drawings for children have become a remarkable success throughout the world. Born in Alsace in 1931, his childhood was deeply affected by his experiences during the Second World War. From this period, he retains a profound abhorrence of war, fascism and racism.

Mr. Ungerer is convinced that the best way to combat racism is to educate children at an early stage. His commitment to fighting racism is the cornerstone of his latest book for children, "The Blue Cloud", which is aimed at endowing children with a sense of understanding and tolerance in order to combat racial discrimination. The artist recently travelled to Paris to meet with the French Ministry of Education to discuss ways of fighting racism through education in French elementary schools.

This drawing by Tomi Ungerer will be used as a children's poster for the World Conference against Racism. The artist took some time with Katarina Mansson to answer a few questions:

Question: What is the title of your drawing for the World Conference against Racism?

Answer: Well, I haven't thought of any specific title, but I could think of using the slogan of the Council of Europe's campaign against racism – "All equal, all different."

Q: What is the source of inspiration behind your illustration?

A: The basic characteristic of human beings is that we are all equal and all different at the same time. By being equal and yet different, all pieces of the puzzle will fit together. The pieces are equal, but the colour of each piece is different from the other. Our job is to bring all the different pieces of the human puzzle together.

Q: In what way do you believe art can contribute to combating racism?

A: Art is culture, and culture is everywhere, it knows no boundaries. Culture is the best expression because the meeting of minds and culture is something we can easily share. Art, like literature and music, represents our different identities.



Q: What are your hopes and expectations for the World Conference against Racism?

A: I don't believe in hope, I believe in action. My slogan in life is "Don't hope; cope." Just start doing something, let's get it done.

On the occasion of the World Conference against Racism, Mr. Ungerer is, in his capacity as Ambassador to the Council of Europe for Childhood and Education, planning to invite a hundred South African children of all races and backgrounds to come to Europe to visit the Council of Europe and other places. For Tomi Ungerer this exchange represents a practical initiative to combat racism.

Denis Jones kayaks solo from Geneva to Durban



For Denis Jones, convictions lead to adventure. (Groupe Themis Photo)

Since the end of June, Denis Jones has been kayaking along the coasts of Europe and Africa in order to dock in Durban, South Africa in time for the World Conference against Racism. More than a personal challenge, this risky expedition's main goal is to fight intolerance and to raise awareness about the World Conference.

Denis' objective is to deliver 10 million signed statements to the World Conference. He intends that this simple act will "make the world a safer, more tolerant place". Indeed, this statement about respect for the dignity of every human being echoes Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood".

Organized and supported by Groupe Themis, a Geneva-based NGO, Denis' 14-month kayak odyssey started on the pier near Palais Wilson – which houses the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights – on a sunny afternoon on 30 June 2000. He received a warm send-off by a group of kayaking

well-wishers, including the High Commissioner for Human Rights and Secretary-General of the World Conference, Mary Robinson.

Travelling 40 to 100 km per day, he has kayaked through Switzerland, France and Spain. On 8 October, Denis' kayak was destroyed in a bad storm en route from Spain to Morocco off the coast of Tangiers. After 3 hours spent fighting the waves, he was rescued by the friendly captain and crew of a fishing boat who told him that they were happy to support such a good cause.

Denis spent some time recuperating and re-equipping a new boat in Tangiers, and he has continued his journey. At press time, Denis was paddling in the Atlantic ocean on his way to Rabat, Morocco.

If you want to sign the statement, send an e-mail to him at: denisjones@net-up.com, or fax a signed copy to 33 (0) 4 77 51 55 82, or mail a copy to Denis Jones, Martinol, F-42220 COLOMBIER. If you want to follow Denis' journey, you can visit the project's web site at www.kayak-africa.net.

We will report on Denis' progress from time to time. Watch this space!

Denis Jones' Declaration of Principles

I believe that every person has value to all

I believe that every person is entitled to dignity, respect and trust

I understand that every thought and every act of intolerance and mistrust is harmful;

If it is my thought or act, it is harmful to me

Therefore, from today forward,

I eliminate intolerance and mistrust from my thoughts and actions.

I discourage intolerance and mistrust at every opportunity

I treat all people with dignity, respect and trust

The world is a better place due to my thoughts and actions

Durban 2001
United against Racism

Editor-in-chief

Jyoti Shankar Singh

Editors

Ronan Murphy

Gloria Nwabugu

José Díaz

Teferra Shiwaw-Kidanekal

Véronique Taveau

Editorial Assistants

Emmanuelle Lamoureux

Katarina Mansson

News? Comments? Contact:

Gloria Nwabugu

Tel: +41 22 917 9394

Fax: +41 22 917 9050

gnwabugu.hchr@unog.ch

or José Díaz

Tel: +41 22 917 9242

jdiaz.hchr@unog.ch

Design

Anne Iten graphiste, Geneva

Printer

SADAG Imprimerie, Bellegarde

Editorial Offices

OHCHR - Palais des Nations

8-14 Av. de la Paix

CH-1211 Geneva 10 - Switzerland

The views expressed in the opinion pieces are not necessarily those of the OHCHR.

Ce bulletin est également disponible en français.