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Durban 2001

United against Racism

NEWSLETTER OF THE WORLD CONFERENCE AGAINST RACISM SECRETARIAT

It was an exhausting, exhilarating and difficult nine days and nights in Durban that ended with a breakthrough agreement against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. The Durban Declaration and Programme of Action condemns those scourges and calls for action by the international community to eradicate them wherever they may be found. "Drawing inspiration from the heroic struggle of the people of South Africa against the institutionalized system of apartheid, as well as for equality and

moment - the conjunction of theme, of time and of place."... "Where else, my friends, could we hold this conference? Who else could teach us how to overcome racism, discrimination and intolerance, if not the people of this country?" Mr. Annan and Conference participants saluted South Africans and the memory of all who struggled for justice and freedom - from Mohandas Gandhi to Oliver Tambo; from Steve Biko to Ruth First - and the very recent passing of the father of President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, Govan Mbeki.

must launch a sustained Programme of Action capable of being implemented by every country at every level." In her opening address, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and Secretary General of the World Conference, Mary Robinson asked three things "...in the week ahead from all parties and especially from delegates: generosity of spirit. It is no small issue we are dealing with in Durban: it is no time to be small-minded. Flexibility and a willingness to meet the views of others. Progress can only

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Breakthrough in Durban

justice under democracy, development, the rule of law and respect for human rights," the Conference adopted texts that commit Member States to undertake a wide range of measures to combat racism and discrimination at the international, regional and national levels.

It all began on the morning of 31 August 2001 when several thousand delegates sent by 170 governments, as well as representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), United Nations agencies and offices, national institutions, international and local media sources, and South Africans gathered in the hushed plenary hall of the International Convention Centre (ICC). They came from all over the world. It had been such a long journey to Durban. In so many ways. And so it began, the lights were dimmed and the crowd was treated to a sophisticated multi-layered modern ballet. The fusion of traditional African and contemporary dance performed by the Ballet Theatre Afrikan, in many ways echoed the themes of harmony and diversity. Then the Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan took the podium to open the Conference. He stated: "Every one of us must feel the symbolism of this

President Mbeki then welcomed Conference participants on behalf of the people of South Africa "to this historic world conference that has the ... responsibility to convey a message of hope to billions of people across the globe." He said: "We have gathered as we have, because we are united in our resolve to ensure that every human being leads a life of dignity. We meet here because we are determined to ensure that nobody anywhere should be subjected to the insult and offence of being despised by another or others because of his or her race, colour, nationality or origin. Together we are committed to the realization of the objective that every human being should enjoy human rights as equals with other human beings, with every right and possibility to determine both their future and the destiny of their countries."

Upon her election as President of the World Conference, South African Foreign Affairs Minister Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma said: "Our Conference must issue a clarion call to the rest of the world to end the unspeakable evils of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. Concomitantly, with this call, we

be made on that basis and the urgency of devising new strategies to combat racism and discrimination requires it. And finally, a sense of vision. I remain convinced that this can be a defining moment for the international community, that we have the capacity at the start of this century to work for a better and fairer world order."

After the opening session which also included a statement by the President of the General Assembly Harri Holkeri, the Conference got down to practical business. In the plenary session, the Conference adopted the rules of procedure and the agenda of the Conference, and established the credentials committee. The Conference also organized its work.

18,810
people from all over
the world were
accredited to attend
the WCAR

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It established a Main Committee which would hear general statements from governments as well as UN officials, and later NGOs, national institutions and youth representatives; and a Drafting Committee, which would continue negotiations on the Draft Declaration and Programme of Action in two working groups.

The other officers of the Conference were also elected, as follows: Vice-Presidents of the Conference: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Barbados, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Croatia, Cuba, India, Iraq, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Senegal, Slovakia, Sweden and Tunisia. Edna Maria Santos Roland (Brazil) was the Rapporteur-General of the Conference.

Claudio Moreno (Italy) chaired the Main Committee. The Vice-Presidents of the Main Committee were: Alexander Slabi (Czech Republic), Hernan Couturier (Peru) and Prasad Kariyawasam (Sri Lanka). Najat Al-Hajjaji (Libya) was Rapporteur. Ali

Prime Minister Pascoal Manuel Mocumbi of Mozambique; President Denis Sassou Nguesso of the Republic of Congo; and Yasser Arafat, President of the Palestinian Authority.

Participating in the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance were over 2,500 representatives from 170 countries, including 16 heads of State, 58 foreign ministers and 44 ministers. Nearly 4,000 NGO representatives and over 1,300 media representatives were accredited to attend the Durban Conference. The participation of a total of 450 NGOs, LDCs, national institutions and experts was made possible through financial contributions from the European Union.

On the morning of 1 September, the general debate in plenary session opened with a videotaped speech by former South African President Nelson Mandela, who said racism was an ailment of the mind and soul, which killed many more people than some dis-

crimination based on gender, sexual orientation, health status, religious belief or economic status.

While there were several difficult issues at the Conference, some issues received a lot of attention: the question of "victims", of "slavery, reparations" or "the past", and the issue of the Middle East. On 3 September, the United States and Israel withdrew their delegations to the World Conference.

Over the week, intensive, political and often difficult negotiations took place. While the general debate continued in plenary, the formal negotiations took place in the drafting committee. In the Working Groups on the Draft Declaration and on the Programme of Action, delegates painstakingly negotiated text projected on large screens in meeting rooms 1 and 2 of the International Convention Centre. Informal discussions were also going on in the halls and coffee rooms of the ICC and at the Hilton Hotel. Regional groups would also meet daily. NGOs accredited to



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Khorram (Iran) served as Chairperson of the Drafting Committee and John Dauth (Australia) as Vice-President/Rapporteur. Marc Bossuyt (Belgium) chaired the Drafting Committee's Working Group I, on the Declaration, and Bonaventure M. Bowa (Zambia) chaired Working Group II, on the Programme of Action.

Later that day, an interactive dialogue among heads of State and Government chaired by President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, set the stage for the opening plenary debate and the many high-level and working group negotiations that took place during the Conference. Sixteen heads of State and Government debated a broad agenda to combat racism and related issues, including some of the Conference's main objectives: to produce a Declaration reflecting a new global awareness of modern forms of racism and xenophobia; and to agree on a strong, practical Programme of Action.

Roundtable participants were: President Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria; Jozo Krizanovic, Chair of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina; President Pedro Verona Rodrigues Pires, of Cape Verde; President Fidel Castro, of Cuba; President Vaira Vike-Freiberga of Latvia; President Olusengun Obasanjo of Nigeria; President Paul Kagame of Rwanda; President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal; President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda;

and dehumanized all those it touched. Fighting racism entailed administering holistic and comprehensive treatment. The plenary debate¹ over the next seven days featured a number of dominant substantive issues, including: slavery and reparations, contemporary forms of intolerance, human rights education, globalization and poverty, indigenous peoples, and the Middle East.

146 States took the floor during the plenary sessions of the Conference. Around 80% of the speakers were men. 125 NGO representatives also spoke. About 60% of them were women

Many NGO representatives addressed the plenary in morning and afternoon meetings during the last three days of the Conference, many urging effective action on behalf of the millions of people across the globe who suffered from a wide range of discrimination on a daily basis. Other civil society actors, representing women's groups and persons with disabilities, among others, shared their personal experiences of

the Conference lobbied delegates about their concerns and issues. Negotiations often began as early as 7am and continued all day and night until the early morning only to begin again a few hours later.

On the morning of 7 September, with negotiations still ongoing, a robust and enthusiastic musical performance by the Center for Jazz took place in the plenary hall. The eclectic mixture of African rhythms, Indian melodies and Western jazz was a welcome break for some exhausted delegates and many Conference participants. The concert had been planned as part of the closing ceremony of the World Conference, but the negotiations continued that day through the night and into the next morning. The Conference had gone past its official last day into Saturday 8 September.

Late that afternoon, and after several tense moments, the delegates to the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance were finally in a position to agree on a consensus Declaration and Programme of Action.

Before the the draft Declaration and draft Programme of Action were adopted, statements and reservations were made by the representatives of Australia, Belgium (on behalf of the European Union), Canada, Chile, Ecuador (also on behalf of Brazil, Canada, Chile and Guatemala), the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Syrian Arab Republic and



Switzerland. The President of the Conference, Dr. Zuma indicated that about ten other delegations had asked to make statements or reservations on the adoption of the Declaration and Programme of Action, but that as there was not time for all of them to be heard, their statements would be fully reflected in the final report of the Conference². The Rapporteur-General of the Conference, Edna Maria Santos Roland, introducing the draft report, said she believed that in spite of the unusual challenges the Conference had faced, together with the usual difficulties to reach consensus on certain relevant issues, this Conference would stand as a landmark, a guiding light in the struggle against the evils of racism and to construct a commonly shared future, based on the values of justice, equality and solidarity. The Conference then decided, without a vote, to adopt the draft report, and to authorize the Rapporteur-General to complete it, in conformity with the practice of the United Nations, with a

The Conference also recognized the importance of equal participation in just, equitable, democratic and inclusive societies; the right to live in peace and freedom; and the right to equal participation without discrimination in economic, social, cultural, civil and political life.

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

The Conference recognized the importance of existing international instruments to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and in particular the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the Conference set the goal of universal ratification of the Convention by 2005, and called for additional resources for the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination which monitors the implementation of the Convention.

individuals and groups. The Conference also recognized that victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance can suffer from multiple or aggravated forms of discrimination based on other grounds such as sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, social origin, property, birth or other status.

The Conference agreed, *inter alia*, on measures with respect to the following groups:

Africans and people of African descent

The Conference adopted a number of provisions concerning Africans and people of African descent, including a paragraph requesting the Commission on Human Rights to consider establishing a working group or other mechanism to study the problems of racial discrimination experienced by people of African descent living in the African diaspora and to make proposals on how to eliminate such discrimination.



view to its submission to the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

The Conference then adopted the resolutions of thanks to the South African Government and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and Secretary General of the World Conference against Racism, Mary Robinson, by acclamation.

Closing statements were made by the representative of Kenya, on behalf of the African Group; the representative of India, on behalf of the Asian Group; the representative of Slovakia, on behalf of the Central and Eastern European Group; the representative of Mexico, on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean States; the representative of Belgium, on behalf of the European Union and associated States³.

What follows is a summary of some of the key themes of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action⁴:

Core human rights values

The Conference emphasized core human rights values and standards, including the principles of equality and non-discrimination as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; it underlined the importance of tolerance and respect for diversity; and it reaffirmed that cultural diversity should be valued, enjoyed, accepted and embraced as a permanent feature that enriches societies around the world.

The Conference also recommended that the Commission on Human Rights prepare complementary international standards to strengthen and update international instruments against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in all their aspects. The Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism and all other Special Rapporteurs and Working Groups were invited to consider the Conference texts in fulfilling their mandates.

Women

The Conference recognized the gender dimension of racial discrimination, and that women should be involved in decision-making at all levels when working towards the eradication of such discrimination. It further urged States to undertake gender analyses in all economic and social policies and programmes, particularly poverty eradication measures designed to benefit, among others, individuals or groups who are victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

"Victims" of racism/Multiple discrimination

The Conference recognized that countless human beings continue to the present day to be victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. To this end, the Conference adopted a victims approach to address the suffering of

Indigenous peoples

The Conference adopted a number of provisions on indigenous peoples, including a recommendation that the Secretary General conduct an evaluation of the results of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People and to make recommendations concerning how best to mark the end of this Decade, including an appropriate follow-up.

Migrants

The Conference called for OHCHR support to combat discrimination against migrant workers. It requested the OHCHR to pay special attention to violations of the human rights of victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, in particular migrants, including migrant workers to promote international cooperation in combating xenophobia and, to this end, to develop programmes which can be applied in countries on the basis of appropriate cooperation programmes.

Refugees

The Conference urged the international community to provide refugees, asylum seekers and displaced person with protection and assistance in an equitable manner, in keeping with the principles of international solidarity, burden sharing and international cooperation, to share responsibilities;



it also encouraged the United Nations to promote and make use of the "Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement", particularly those provisions relating to non-discrimination.

Other victims and minorities

The Conference also adopted a number of provisions specifically aimed at eliminating racial discrimination suffered by victims of trafficking, people of Asian descent, mestizos, Roma/Gypsy/Sinti/Travellers and by national and other minorities.

"The past"

Concerning the past, the language adopted was historic. The Conference "acknowledge[d] that slavery and the slave trade, including the transatlantic slave trade, were appalling tragedies in the history of humanity not only because of their abhorrent barbarism but also in terms of their magnitude, organized nature and es-

called upon all States to support the peace process and bring it to an early conclusion. The Conference also recalled that the Holocaust must never be forgotten. The Conference also calls upon States, in opposing all forms of racism, to recognize the need to counter anti-Semitism, anti-Arabism and Islamophobia world-wide and urges all States to take effective measures to prevent the emergence of movements based on racism and discriminatory ideas concerning these communities.

National action plans

The Conference recognized States had the primary responsibility in combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and encouraged them to develop national action plans to promote diversity, equality, social justice and equity, including through, among other things, affirmative or positive actions and strategies.

Globalization

The Conference noted "that the process of globalization constitutes a powerful and dynamic force which should be harnessed for the benefit, development and prosperity of all countries, without exclusion" and "recognized that developing countries face special difficulties in responding to this central challenge. While globalization offers great opportunities, at present its benefits are very unevenly shared, while its costs are unevenly distributed. We thus express our determination to prevent and mitigate the negative effects of globalization. These effects could aggravate, *inter alia*, poverty, underdevelopment, marginalization, social exclusion, cultural homogenization and economic disparities which may occur along racial lines, within and between States, and have an adverse impact. We further express our determination to maximize the benefits of globalization through, *inter alia*, the strengthening and enhancement of interna-



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pecially their negation of the essence of the victims and further acknowledge that slavery and the slave trade are crimes against humanity and should always have been so, especially the transatlantic slave trade and are among the major sources and manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and that Africans and people of African descent, Asians and people of Asian descent and indigenous peoples were victims of these acts and continue to be victims of their consequences."

The Conference also "invited the international community to honour the memory of the victims of these tragedies, the Conference also noted that some States have taken the initiative of regretting or expressing remorse or presenting apologies, and called on all those who have not yet contributed to restoring the dignity of the victims to find appropriate ways to do so."

The Middle East

Concerning the Middle East and related issues, the Conference expressed concern about the plight of the Palestinian people under foreign occupation and recognized the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the right to an independent state. The Conference also recognized the right to security for all States in the region, including Israel, and

National legislation, the administration of justice, impunity, and national institutions

The Conference also called for specific measures to be taken in the following areas:

- better national legislation to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;
- ending discriminatory practices in the administration of justice, the extension of legal assistance to victims of racial discrimination, and the end to racial profiling;
- the prosecution of perpetrators of racist acts;
- the establishment, or reinforcement where they already exist, of independent national institutions to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and to provide assistance to victims.

Data collection and research

The Conference urged international organizations to improve data collection and analysis, to promote research, exchange of experiences and successful practices and develop promotional activities in this area; and to develop indicators of progress. It further urged the United Nations to redress the marginalization of Africa's contribution to world history and civilization by developing and implementing a specific and comprehensive programme of research, education and mass communication to disseminate widely a balanced and objective presentation of Africa's seminal and valuable contribution to humanity.

tional cooperation to increase equality of opportunities for trade, economic growth and sustainable development, global communications through the use of new technologies and increased intercultural exchange through the preservation and promotion of cultural diversity, which can contribute to the eradication of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. Only through broad and sustained efforts to create a shared future based upon our common humanity and all its diversity, can globalization be made fully inclusive and equitable."

Employment, health and the environment

The Conference adopted provisions calling for better protection of the rights of workers who are subject to racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance through better enforcement of legislation, public education and communications in the workplace; it also urged States to eliminate disparities in health status and to improve the health status of marginalized communities; and it also urged States to provide a safe and healthy environment on a non-discriminatory basis.

Education and awareness-raising

The Conference called for better human rights education to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and in particular has called for measures to

facilitate access to education without discrimination, for additional steps to be taken in the field of human rights education, for specific human rights education for children and youth, as well as for public officials. The Conference urged that the marginalization of Africa's contribution to world history and civilization be redressed; and it invites States and others to build upon the efforts of UNESCO's Slave Route Project and its theme of "Breaking the Silence" by developing documentation to diffuse information relevant to the history of slavery and the trans-Atlantic, Mediterranean and Indian Ocean slave trades.

New information and communications technologies

The Conference called upon States to implement legal sanctions in respect of incitement to racial hatred through new information and communications technologies, including the Internet.

Follow-up to the World Conference

The outcomes of the World Conference will be considered by the Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly on 31 October. The final documents of the Conference contain specific proposals for follow-up, such as:

Anti-Discrimination Unit

The Conference welcomed the intention of the High Commissioner to create an anti-discrimination unit at OHCHR and invited her to consider including in its mandate, *inter alia*, the compilation of information on racial discrimination and its development, on legal and administrative support and advice to victims of racial discrimination and the collection of background materials provided by States, international, regional and non-governmental organizations and national human rights institutions under the follow-up mechanism of the World Conference. The Conference also foresaw such activities as part of

Goodwill Ambassadors and the CERD

The Conference encouraged OHCHR to continue and expand the appointment of goodwill ambassadors in all countries of the world. It called upon the Office to further increase awareness of the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Adequate funding

The Conference recognized that "the success of this Programme of Action will require political will and adequate funding ... and international cooperation."

¹ The written and audiofiles of many of these interventions can be found on the OHCHR website at www.unhchr.ch/html/racism/

^{2 and 3} The full texts of these statements can be found in the report of the World Conference against Racism (A/CONF.189/12) (Part II)

⁴ For the complete texts of the Declaration and Programme of Action, consult the full official texts in document A/CONF.189/12) (Part I) or the OHCHR website at www.unhchr.ch



Remedies

The Conference urged States to ensure that all persons have access to effective and adequate remedies and enjoy the right to seek from competent national tribunals and other national institutions just and adequate reparation and satisfaction for any damages suffered. The Conference also underlined the importance of access to the law and to the courts, and the need for judicial and other remedies to be made widely known, easily accessible, expeditious and not unduly complicated.

NGOs and youth

The Conference urged States to provide an open and conducive environment to enable NGOs to be able to function freely and openly in their societies so that they can make an effective contribution to eliminating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. The Conference also urged States to encourage the full and active participation of youth in the elaboration, planning and implementation of activities to fight racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and further urged States, in cooperation with others, to intensify the fight against racism by educating youth that sport should be practised without discrimination of any kind and in the Olympic spirit, which requires human understanding, tolerance, fair play and solidarity.

the work to promote equality and non-discrimination. OHCHR plans to locate its work on racial discrimination within its overall programme on equality and non-discrimination.

Technical cooperation

The Conference called upon OHCHR to develop and fund specific technical cooperation projects aimed at combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

Database

The Conference recommended that OHCHR create a database containing information on practical means to address racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, including anti-discrimination legislation, as well as legal means to combat racial discrimination; on remedies available through international mechanisms; opportunities for technical cooperation; academic studies and specialized documentation.

Eminent persons

In follow-up to the World Conference, the High Commissioner is also requested to cooperate with five independent eminent persons to follow the implementation of the provisions of the Declaration and Programme of Action. An annual progress report to the Commission and the General Assembly would be part of the follow-up process.

The Others are Us

Ricardo Ramirez Arriola is a Guatemalan photographer living in Mexico. He came to the World Conference against Racism to display his exceptional photographs at the Durban Exhibition Centre. He spent most of the Conference behind his camera where he captured so many moments over the two weeks. He has kindly agreed to share some of his images and impressions with us.

"The 36 photographic images that I displayed at the DEC were large format, black and white, and mostly of faces. These faces mixed with the thousands of delegates who circulated in front of them daily: Zulus, Anglo-Saxons, Ndebele, Afro-descendants from all corners of the world, Maya-Quichés, Bere-bere, Pigmies, Dalits, Roma and Sinti, Bedouins, Palestinians and Jews, Xhosa, Kurds, disabled, Mapuches, Tutsis and Hutus, Yorta yorta and Dayak, and many others. My photo images bore silent testimony to that rich and invaluable exchange of cultures, to the dialogue and negotiation between thousands of participants that allowed many of us to both put into perspective and enrich our own experience. Some delegates told me that the photos "were very evocative" or that they were like "windows to reality". These comments struck me for I had never perceived the glances, the smiles, the expressions of sorrow or despair in my photographs as moving, but rather simply as daily life. I then understood, in a more complete sense, the importance of images – those windows of silver on gelatin – in a world that prevents us from stopping to look at the faces and expressions of others, and truly seeing the yearnings and realities that they hold."

NGOs in Durban

Over the course of two weeks in late August and early September, thousands of representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from every region of the world gathered in Durban to participate in the NGO Forum, the World Conference against Racism and other related events.

From 28 August to 1 September, about 7,000 NGO representatives took part in the NGO Forum held at the Kingsmead Cricket Stadium in Durban. South African President Thabo Mbeki opened the Forum on 28 August at a ceremony which featured a group of traditional Zulu dancers. The Secretary General of the World Conference, Mary Robinson also gave an opening address. The NGO Forum was organized by the South African NGO Coalition (SANGOCO) and the International Steering Committee.

Besides several hundred workshops held throughout the city, many participants at the NGO Forum divided their time over the five days between the plenary sessions and 25 working groups dealing with specific themes ("thematic commissions"), all held in large tents on the grounds of the stadium. The plenary sessions focused on four major themes – "colonialism", "institutionalized racism and castism", "self-determination", and "globalization" – while delegates taking part in the "thematic commissions" worked on specific issues such as slavery, religious intolerance, environmental racism and the administration of justice. These commissions later submitted their recommendations for the final NGO Declaration and Programme of Action to the drafting committee, which was made up of one representative from all four regions and from South Africa, as well as from international NGOs, youth and indigenous peoples. After further negotiations, the drafting committee presented the final documents to the plenary of the NGO Forum. The NGO Declaration and Programme of Action was adopted on the last day of the Forum, on 1 September, and brought to the attention of the plenary of the World Conference on 5 September.

Approximately 4,000 NGO representatives accredited to the World Conference against Racism continued working over the nine days of the Conference itself. They attended the Working Group on the Draft Declaration and the Working Group on the Draft Programme of Action. They distributed leaflets, position papers and suggested texts, and lobbied in the corridors of the International Convention Centre. Some NGO participants peacefully demonstrated outside the Convention Centre about issues of special interest to

them. Representatives from three NGOs - the Law Society, the National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom - made statements at the Round Table of Heads of State and Heads of Government on 31 August. Later in the week, around 125 NGO representatives took the floor at the Conference's plenary sessions. These NGO interventions began on 5 September with a presentation of the NGO Declaration and Programme of Action.

At the Kingsmead Stadium, hundreds of NGOs also set up information stands about their organizations and featured brochures and documents on key issues. A great many mounted diverse exhibitions of arts and culture and took part in



(Photo courtesy of HRFI)

cultural events such as the Film Festival against Racism, organized by the South African Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology which took place in venues around Durban. NGO representatives also organized and participated in the various parallel events held at the Durban Exhibition Centre throughout the week of the Conference.

Some reflections on the NGO Forum

"Amongst a bevy of white plastic tents, thousands of delegates buzzed around with a sense of purpose and determination, strong in the resolve that they had come to do serious work. The NGO Forum preceding the World Conference against Racism is indeed proof, if ever it was needed, that we are able to come together and successfully deal with the considerable social, political and economic challenges that face our generation. While arguments threatened at times to spill into violence, the overall mood remained one of hope and a genuine desire to craft processes that will move us forward. Strong, heart wrenching addresses from the descendants of slavery, powerful sometimes unyielding positions on the conflict in Israel and Palestine, a plea by the Dalits for the simple recognition of their humanity, the call from the various indigenous peoples of the world for the restoration of their rightful place in the global landscape, all punctuated the humid air in the bowl of the Kingsmead Stadium. Notwithstanding confusion around the programme and other logistical and organizational difficulties (not unusual for an event of this magnitude), the benefits of the process became evident even before it began. The public awareness created in relation to issues of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance has ensured the activation of a necessary global debate. The sharing of personal and collective experiences by

thousands of delegates has been cathartic, educative and instructive. And as NGO delegates pursued the task of developing strategies for combating racism they did so mindful that they were engaged in a process that had the potential to change and shape how this century, which has just begun, evolves into a century of hope, of justice, and of dignity. The final Declaration and Programme of Action was delivered and the NGO community immediately went about the task of lobbying, persuading, cajoling and convincing the delegates to the intergovernmental conference to consider and adopt the stances and positions adopted at the Forum. Whispered conversations, strident appeals, demonstrations and hunger strikes all became tools in this process. And as the government delegates went about their work, it was clear that they did so mindful of the strong and present NGO lobby, and without a doubt, the results that emerged from the governmental meeting carried with it the influence that was brought to bear by the deliberations at the Kingsmead Stadium."

Jody Kollapen, Commissioner
South African Human Rights Commission

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Youth Summit: Feedback and Follow-up

(Secretariat photo)



On 26 and 27 August 2001 at the Elangeni Hotel in Durban, the International Youth Summit brought together - for the first time - 750 youth representatives from all over the world interested or already engaged in combating racism and racial discrimination. The Youth delegates adopted a 22-page Youth Declaration and Plan of Action which candidly points out the situations of multiple discrimination that youth face and proposes some action to combat racism experienced by young people. Over the two days, many interesting and high-profile people dropped by, gave speeches or met formally or informally with the young delegates, including Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Minister of Foreign Affairs of South Africa, and the Secretary General of the World Conference and High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson. There was extensive media interest in the historic Youth Summit and

many youth from around world were interviewed about racial discrimination and xenophobia in their countries. On the 27th, the draft versions of the Declaration and Plan of Action compiled by the International Youth Committee were examined by youth in eight thematic working groups while others took part in a motivational session and a racism "experience-sharing"

workshop. Rapporteurs from the working groups then reported back to the main plenary and possible follow-up mechanisms to the Youth Summit were discussed. The Youth Declaration and Plan of Action was prepared by a youth drafting committee representing all the regions, and was later adopted by consensus. A few youth delegates presented a summary of their main recommendations to the Plenary of the World Conference itself on 5 September. The Youth Summit proved to be an incredible opportunity to network, and it is very likely that those present will continue to exchange information and share experiences well beyond Durban. The Summit ended with a strong desire by youth to keep the momentum going and to build on Durban to create a Global Youth Network engaged in the struggle against racism.

"Many young delegates argued that the Summit tried too hard to copy 'grown up' structures such as those used by the United Nations and the NGO Forum, i.e., plenary sessions, formal proceedings and lots of men in suits! We did not feel as if we had to emulate our older peers in order to be validated and that we could offer concrete solutions and devise plans in our own way. But the Summit has led to new domestic initiatives. My organization, the National Black Youth Forum, is now working in conjunction with other UK and regional organizations to host an international youth conference next year drawing on the lessons learnt at the Durban Summit. It is hoped that through the contacts we made in Durban, young people from all over the world will be able to attend."

Champa Patel (United Kingdom)
National Black Youth Forum

"It must be acknowledged that youth are often the victims of racism and have a key role in fostering tolerance, understanding, peace and harmony. Unfortunately, like many forums, the Youth Summit was sometimes also party to internal politicking, lobbying, and sadly, bickering. But, there are lessons to be learnt from this and one of them is that no single issue must overshadow the whole agenda. No form of racism is superior in its plight or manifestation and all forms of discrimination are evil in essence. In striving to let our cries be heard let us not stamp out the screams of fellow victims."

Nilesh Goundar (Fiji Islands)

"As a result of my participation in the WCAR, there is a greater level of credibility of my work within my organization. I am now expected to give reports of my participation and to share with major youth groups within Jamaica, my experiences and the knowledge acquired through the WCAR. I recognize the efforts of the United Nations Secretariat and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in providing the avenue for the participation of young people from other regions to share in such an important process. The experience was truly priceless and the knowledge gained will enable us to have a greater input in the long fight against racism."

Anneta Pinto (Jamaica)

**Coalition for Community Participation
in Governance**

The International Youth Declaration and Plan of Action are available at www.racism.org.za For video diaries and reports of youth delegates at the International Youth Summit, visit www.youthchannel.org/durban

"Attending the Youth Summit in Durban was a landmark experience for me. This was a singular opportunity to listen to views from youth on discrimination and to see them work on a joint Youth Declaration. The Declaration focused on issues like gender, health, reproductive health, HIV/AIDS and STDs, education and information, multiple discrimination to mention a few, and the different sessions were very educative and important to me. I was personally involved in the session on multiple discrimination against women as this directly affects my organization. Young people will carry my experiences - and hopefully that of others - from the Summit back to their different communities or organizations and continue their work. A youth wing has now been formed in our organization to focus on the rights of youth and this wing is expanding as many young Nigerians are interested in active participation. I propose that for every world conference there should be a youth

summit or gathering as youth represent a reasonable percentage of the entire population and there is need to give a voice to youth which should be heard."

Olasimbo Olateru-Olagbegi (Nigeria)
Women's Consortium of Nigeria (WOCON)

"In barely two days it was not easy to find the necessary time to allow every different position to be voiced. Also, due to several circumstances, the participation of young people from the different regions of the world was not as equal as it should have been. [Now] our role is to convince all the young people who were not present in Durban that if we don't start tackling the problems we have at the local level and in our daily lives, we will never manage to build the peaceful and just world we are dreaming for the next generations to come."

Giacomo Filibeck (Italy)

**European Youth Forum & Member of the
International Youth Committee**

Something historic happened in Durban, Conference President says

"At the end of this landmark and historic Conference, I think we will all agree that it was right that this Conference was held and consensus reached on practical steps to be taken to push back the frontiers of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance which are frighteningly on the rise in many parts of the world. I would imagine that we would also agree that it was proper that this Conference should be held in South Africa, a country that has witnessed the most egregious form of institutionalized racism, yet rose to become a living testimony that racism can be defeated with the collective efforts of the international community. Gathered at this Conference, as Member States, we have at some time or another stood at the precipice. At each moment we stepped back and courageously dug deep into our strength and made a supreme effort to make the Conference a success, that really it is. It was through the daring act of faith that sustained us through to the finish, because, we must have said to ourselves that for the sake of posterity we must lay a firm foundation for the future of tolerance and harmonious co-existence that will be free from the cancer of racism.

Indeed, we have found our way through the turbulent sea of events, at each point along the way, we had to respond creatively to both anticipated and unanticipated events. Like the blooming and blossoming flower in the spring, we have agreed on a fresh start and the new roadmap. We have agreed that the depredation of the systems of slavery and colonialism had the degrading and debilitating impact on those who are black, broadly defined.

We also agreed that slavery is a crime against humanity and that an apology is necessary, not for monetary gain, but to restore the dignity and humanity of those who suffered. We also looked at the Middle East. I think everybody in this Conference could not help but be moved by the suffering they saw every day on their television screens. It was those images of

suffering Palestinian men, women and children that made us here feel that this matter needed to be discussed.

Consequently, we agreed that a clear and unequivocal apology constitutes a starting point in a long and arduous journey of finding one another. An apology restores the dignity, self-worth and humanity of the black body, broadly defined. We also agreed that other remedial actions would have to be adopted to correct the legacy of slavery and colonialism and all other forms of racism. We agreed to work consciously to up-lift women who have been victims of these ills, because, of their race and gender. We agreed that the discrimination against, and the lack of opportunities by the minorities and the indigenous people everywhere as a result of their origin, culture, tradition, language, standing in society and their refugee status could only be ignored to our perpetual peril. Accordingly, we have reached consensus that access to education and changing curricula to reflect the interests of every group in every society must be encouraged. We requested the media and other forms of communication medium to help promote positive values of tolerance, understanding, ubuntu-humaness and the richness of our world diversity.

We have agreed at the Conference, that entering our jargon and global discourse is the notion and the process of globalization. We have equally agreed that globalization has impacted on countries differently. It has rendered precarious the economies of countries with the terrible legacy of slavery and colonialism while benefiting mostly the developed countries. Wherever it went, especially in the developing South, it has left in its wake the dehumanizing absolute poverty, economic marginalization, social exclusion and underdevelopment. Globalization has created the economic refugees who have taken to fleeing the misery of poverty in their countries in search of succour and better living conditions in the rich and prosperous developed countries. Unfortunately, these refugees have been at the receiving end of the worst form of racism and xenophobia.



The Conference, therefore, agreed that this process should be harnessed and directed at the most pressing challenge of our time -- "poverty eradication". Globalization has generated enough wealth and resources to do that. We also agreed to deal with the structural conditions that sustain inequality and inequity of the global economy, that in turn encourages underdevelopment and marginalization, which is at the root of racism today.

Through the Programme of Action and the Declaration we unanimously agreed to launch the Global Army against Racism in all countries to work assiduously to roll back and uproot the scourge of racism. From the intergovernmental, to non-governmental and civil society we agreed in our various fora to work jointly in partnerships to take our work forward. The political Declaration we have just adopted is indeed action orientated and practical. It is now up to governments and civil society to ensure its implementation...

In closing, I want to refer to one of our finest poet, Wally Mongale Serote, who had these beautiful words to say in his work 'Ofay-Watcher Looks Back':

"I want to look at what happened;
That done,
As silent as the roots of plants pierce the soil
I look at what happened
Whether above the houses there is always
either smoke or dust...
I want to look at what happened
That done
As silent plants show the colour; green
I want to look at what happened,
When houses make me ask: do people live
there?
As there is something wrong when I ask-is
that man alive?
I want to look at what happened,
That done
As silent as the life of a plant that makes you
see it...
as silent as plants bloom and the eyes tells
you: something has happened."

Something historic has indeed happened here today."

Excerpted from the closing statement of Conference President and South African Foreign Affairs Minister Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma of 8 September 2001.

National institutions

Johannesburg welcomed about 50 national human rights institutions (NIs) to the pre-World Conference meeting held from 27 to 29 August, organized by the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) and OHCHR's National Institutions Team. At the meeting, NIs began work on a consensus statement for the World Conference. They carried on their discussions in Durban during morning meetings, and on 1 September, adopted the National Institutions' Statement to the World Conference against Racism. The document, which defines the role of NIs through a forward-looking preventive agenda, was presented to the Conference plenary on 4 September on behalf of all NIs accredited to the World Conference. The Statement was also issued as an official Conference document – a first in UN history. Twenty-nine NIs took the floor during plenary sessions to highlight issues such as caste, migration and xenophobia, remedial measures and their role in conflict prevention and post-conflict rebuilding.

“Unparalleled” Events

Just a hundred meters away from the tense political negotiations underway at the International Convention Centre (ICC), different kinds of gatherings took place in the Durban Exhibition Centre (DEC). The 42 parallel events at the DEC offered a frank and diverse exchange on issues of racism and racial discrimination. Large numbers of conference participants responded to the invitations plastered on the walls of the DEC and the thousands of pamphlets handed out by organizers to take part in the interactive parallel activities on a variety of cross-cutting issues, which ranged from discrimination in adolescent reproductive health to the impact of racism on sustainable development. The discussions, which brought people from different sectors together – UN Special Rapporteurs, heads of agencies, business leaders, NGO representatives, student artists and even actors – often flowed from meeting rooms 3 and 7 to continue informally at the cafeteria of the DEC. The open exchange of views created at these fora allowed Durban participants to keep sight of the core issues of the Conference and keep in mind the human faces behind them.

Taking this same cobblestoned path between the two buildings herself, the Secretary General of the World Conference, Mary Robinson, took part in half of the parallel events organized by United Nations bodies and agencies, non-governmental organizations, national institutions and governments. UN agencies, like the UN Development Programme (UNDP), UNICEF and the UN Research Institute on Social Development (UNRISD), sponsored over 26 innovative panels and roundtables on topics such as new forms of racial discrimination stemming from the progress in genetics and the impact of racially-motivated conflicts on children. The South African Human Rights Commission also organized a number of events, such as the symposium on the New Africa Initiative to overcome the legacy of racism in Africa. OHCHR took the organizational lead on 10 parallel activities by preparing a number of panels which raised enduring issues – such as the concerns of indigenous peoples, minorities, and women facing multiple forms of discrimination, as well as new and current themes. For example, Peter Piot, Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), stressed how little people understand the link between discrimination and the AIDS epidemic at the panel on HIV/AIDS

stigma, discrimination and racism, co-organized by OHCHR, UNAIDS and the World Health Organization (WHO). Along with the Secretary General of the World Conference, he forcefully argued for the need to see the fight against AIDS as a human rights issue, saying that “it is impossible to have a sustainable impact on the AIDS epidemic without fighting stigma and discrimination”.

Some comments about the media coverage of the Conference as “unbalanced” and “lacking seriousness” prompted one of the liveliest discussions during the high-profile panel on racism and the role and impact of the media, jointly organized by OHCHR and UNESCO, with the International Federation of Journalists and the International Council on Human Rights Policy. Riz Khan, formerly of CNN International, moderated a panel which included the Secretary General of the World Conference, Mary Robinson, civil rights activist Jesse Jackson and actor Harry Belafonte, and attracted numerous print and electronic media sources and professionals to the crowded room. The heated debate on racism, media depiction, public opinion, and the obligation of journalists to combat racism, illustrated the frankness and enthusiasm that characterized the many exchanges which took place at the DEC. The Global Compact high-level dialogue, featuring the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, the Secretary General of the World Conference and top executives from companies committed to the Secretary General’s Global Compact, was one of

three main activities focusing on the expanding role of the corporate community in combating racial discrimination. Business and trade union leaders, and representatives from NGOs, governments and UN agencies who took part in the three-part “Discrimination is Everybody’s Business” initiative - a joint

OHCHR, Volvo Car Corporation, and International Labour Office (ILO) enterprise – looked at private-sector initiatives to promote equality and inclusion in and out of the workplace. Participants also explored possibilities for new cross-sectoral partnerships to promote diversity and fight discrimination.

Rallying more than 300 parliamentarians from over 50 countries, the one-day parliamentary meeting on “Action of Parliaments and their members in the fight against racism,” organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Parliament of South Africa, was another event that attracted much attention. These parliamentarians adopted a declaration recognizing not only the role and responsibility of parliaments in the fight against racism, but also the personal responsibility of members of parliament to use their influence on public opinion to promote the values of diversity and tolerance.

This series of substantively diverse and challenging panel discussions and roundtables helped to focus attention on how racism and racial discrimination affect human beings, and on how best to develop solutions for the future. The impact of these and the many other parallel events was felt by the delegates and conference participants, who crossed back to the meetings at the International Convention Centre, with a more acute sense of the issues at stake.

“THE VOICES OF VICTIMS ARE CALLS TO ACTION”

With these words, the Secretary General of the World Conference against Racism, Mary Robinson, echoed the inspiring message of the “Voices Special Forum” organized by the International Human Rights Law Group and the South African Human Rights Commission. Twenty-one women and men representing people deeply affected by racism, gathered daily over the lunch break at the ICC to share with Conference participants their vivid and courageous testimonies. They also reminded everyone of the reality of racial discrimination in the 21st century and the urgency of the Conference’s work. Among the voices heard were those of:

- An Afro-Colombian woman who has been displaced from her land and saw many members of her family killed, and who is now a community coordinator advocating the return of the land to its people;
- A Kurdish lawyer who advocates human rights in Turkey, who was imprisoned and tortured, and now defends minority language and culture before the European Court of Human Rights;
- A man whose son was killed by New York City police officers in February 1999 and who speaks out against racial profiling by the police in the United States.

Putting Durban into action

© Ricardo Ramirez Arriola



The World Conference was a breakthrough. It has not solved all the problems of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. But we have made a start and that is what counts.

Durban gives us a series of concrete recommendations - for national plans and programmes to fight racism, for better treatment of victims, for tougher anti-discrimination legislation and administrative measures, for universal ratification and implementation of ICERD and other relevant treaties, for strengthening education, for improving the remedies and recourses available to victims, and many more.

The past was indeed present at Durban. There were texts adopted on the legacies of slavery and colonialism. They set out the issues in plain, unequivocal language for the first time in a document of this kind, and agreed to by the international community.

The focus of media attention was often on the intensive and difficult negotiations. But those of you who were there know that was far from being the whole picture. The Conference took place at different levels. For the first time, the world in all its rich variety gathered to discuss the range of forces that threaten diversity. New and stronger alliances against racism took shape: NGOs, parliamentarians, national human rights commissions, treaty bodies and special mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights,

media and the private sector. Durban also gave a voice to the excluded and the marginalised.

In this, our final issue of Durban 2001 we have presented some of the stories, words, pictures and images of the Durban Conference.

So where do we go from here? There can only be one answer: follow up. It might be thought that concern to follow through on the World Conference has been overtaken by ongoing international events. But follow up is even more relevant after the horrific September 11 attacks. Implementation of the Durban documents is central to the preventive part of an effective global campaign against terrorism.

Action at OHCHR

My Office is now actively engaged in the follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. We are consulting with States and discussing how to put Durban's plans into action. We are meeting and talking with our NGO partners on the ground and our offices in the field. We are exchanging information and solidifying our working relationships with UN agencies and programmes and human rights bodies. We are designing a new public information strategy to get the word out about the Durban texts and the values and principles contained in them, and we are beginning to integrate the Durban commitments into our everyday work. All this in an effort to fill in the framework and put into action the breakthrough achieved at Durban.

First stocktaking: 10 December 2001

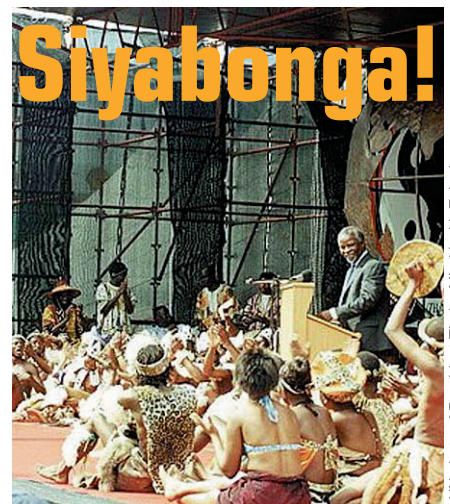
I have designated 10 December, International Human Rights Day, as the OHCHR date for a first stocktaking on follow up to the World Conference. I am writing to all partners for feedback on what is happening and what is planned on follow up. Let's get started!

Mary Robinson

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

2 independent daily newspapers on the Conference were produced in Durban and distributed free to all participants. With support from OHCHR, the Earth Times Foundation published 15,000 copies of "Conference News Daily" each day

at the ICC 63 well-placed water coolers supplied with 30,000 cups kept Conference participants hydrated over 9 long days and nights



UN photo of President Thabo Mbeki with Zulu dancers at the opening of the NGO Forum.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights would like to extend a warm and very heartfelt "thank-you" in Zulu to the Government of South Africa and to the people of the city of Durban. As many Conference participants will agree, from the moment that we landed at the airport our hosts did their utmost to make our stay in South Africa hospitable and memorable. It was fitting that it was in South Africa that we charted a new course against racism; it is now up to the international community to transform the outcomes of Durban into action.

Follow-up to Durban

A number of diverse follow-up initiatives, actions and events are taking place and will occur to build on the momentum of the Durban Conference. OHCHR will play a central role in a lot of the follow-up. Here are some examples:

New!

Anti-Discrimination Unit at OHCHR

The High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson has announced the creation of an Anti-Discrimination Unit (ADU) at the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) that will be operating, on an interim basis, by 1 December 2001. The idea of the ADU was initiated by the High Commissioner and later included in the Programme of Action as part of the follow-up measures to Durban. The future Unit will, among other things:

- compile and prepare annual progress reports on actions taken by governments, national human rights institutions, treaty bodies and civil society organizations, towards implementing the Programme of Action;
- assist the five independent eminent experts who will help implement the Programme of Action;
- promote and strengthen active liaison and consultations on Durban follow-up with NGOs and other civil society organizations, as well as with UN agencies and other intergovernmental bodies;
- initiate and support awareness-building projects with various institutions; and
- establish a database of good practices in addressing racism and racial discrimination.

Council of Europe meets to develop Action Plan for Europe

The Council of Europe will hold an ad hoc meeting from 3 to 5 December 2001 in Strasbourg, France, to start up the process of implementation of the Durban Programme of Action at the European level. Representatives from Council of Europe member states and relevant bodies, other European institutions, OHCHR, as well as NGOs, will meet to develop an Action Plan for Europe to put in practice the recommendations adopted at the World Conference.

Madrid Conference on School Education and Freedom of Religion

The UN Special Rapporteur on the question of religious intolerance, Abdelfattah Amor, in cooperation with the Government of Spain, is organizing the International Consultative Conference on School Education in Relation to Freedom of Religion or Belief, Tolerance and Non-Discrimination. Representatives of governments, intergovernmental organizations, major religions and other communities in the field of religion and belief, NGOs, and various experts will come together for the three-day conference in Madrid, starting on 23 November 2001.

Participants will develop an international education strategy on the right to freedom of religion and belief, and adopt recommendations about curricula and textbooks relating to tolerance and non-discrimination in the field of religion or belief.

Youth meetings after Durban

Intergovernmental organizations and NGOs are planning events to build on the global youth action against racism started in Durban. The High Commissioner for Human Rights will attend the Lisbon Forum (24-26 November 2001) on "Children and Youth in Africa: Actors of their own Development". The Council of Europe's North-South Centre is organizing this Forum which will focus on issues of poverty, slavery and conflicts, in relation to children and youth.

Young people from various minority communities in Europe will meet in Bucharest, Romania, from 27 November to 2 December 2001 to attend a seminar organized by Minorities in Europe and the WCAR Roma Youth Project. They will evaluate their role at the Durban World Conference, consolidate networks and develop collective strategies and projects to put the Youth Summit Plan of Action into practice in their local communities.

Around 100 young people from all over Europe will be in Berlin, Germany, from 20 to 23 October 2001 for the Conference "Youth for Tolerance and Democracy – A European Perspective in the fight against Racism and Xenophobia", to promote their new projects and networks between youth engaged in the fight against racism. Supported by the European Commission and the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, the conference will also give youth participants the opportunity to discuss issues important to them with politicians and experts.

National Institutions taking action

Last month, various national institutions met in Colombo, Sri Lanka to look at a number of cross-sector issues including racism and internally displaced persons, and in Copenhagen, Denmark to discuss how to implement domestically the Durban Programme of Action and the National Institutions' Statement to the World Conference.

Mediterranean national institutions will meet in Athens, Greece from 1 to 3 November, to discuss immigration and racism. OHCHR and the Danish Centre for Human Rights are supporting the development of a national institutions global website which will include a section on best practices by NIs to fight racism, which is slated to be ready this November.

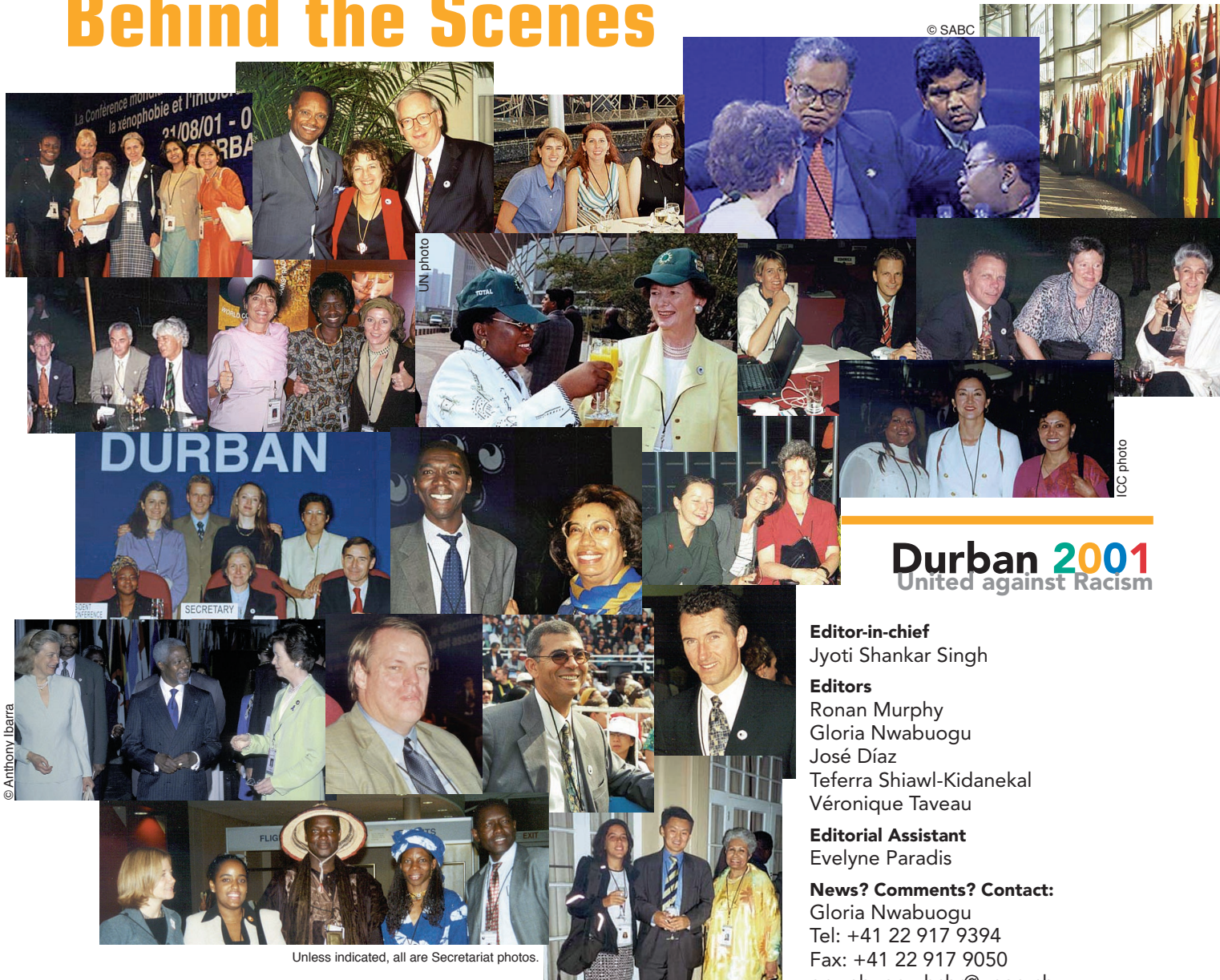
OHCHR will assist with several upcoming NI activities including: a workshop in the Asia Pacific region on racism, the media and human rights education; a workshop on reproductive rights and the intersectionality of gender and race for the Latin American region; and, a workshop in the Caribbean on indigenous peoples' rights.

UNIC Brussels takes another look at racism and the media

A few days before the World Conference, the United Nations Information Centre in Brussels hosted a seminar on "The role of the media and the fight against racism." This 22 August Seminar was attended by journalists, media professionals and students from Benelux countries, and a representative of the World Conference against Racism Secretariat. They discussed the impact and role of the media, media portrayals and current initiatives already in use by some European media sources. UNIC Brussels plans to release a summary of the Seminar. There will also be a follow-up Seminar in early 2002, to review the media "action" in the Durban Programme of Action.

**more than
1,000,000 people
have signed the UN
"Pledge against
Racism" through the
Internet
(www.un.org/WCAR),
UNIC offices and NGOs
since December 2000**

Behind the Scenes



Unless indicated, all are Secretariat photos.

Durban 2001 United against Racism

Editor-in-chief

Jyoti Shankar Singh

Editors

Ronan Murphy
Gloria Nwabuogu
José Díaz
Teferra Shiawl-Kidanekal
Véronique Taveau

Editorial Assistant

Evelyne Paradis

News? Comments? Contact:

Gloria Nwabuogu
Tel: +41 22 917 9394
Fax: +41 22 917 9050
gnwabuogu.hchr@unog.ch
or José Díaz
Tel: +41 22 917 9242
jdiaz.hchr@unog.ch

Design

Anne Iten graphiste, Geneva
Joseph Maye

Printer

SADAG Imprimerie, Bellegarde

Editorial Offices

OHCHR – Palais des Nations
8-14 Av. de la Paix
CH-1211 Geneva 10 – Switzerland

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Ce bulletin est également disponible en français. Este boletín también está disponible en español.

Last but not least...

On behalf of the editorial team, I would like to thank all those who contributed their time, thoughts and creativity over the past year to make this newsletter series an important part of our preparations for the World Conference.

We are grateful to the States, UN agencies, intergovernmental organizations, national institutions and NGOs which kept us informed of their preparatory activities, and to the staff at OHCHR who submitted articles on racial discrimination and how it relates to their work. So many people helped make the production and distribution of the newsletters possible, including: Sandro Bisceglia, Michel Duchêne, Juan Faz, Alexandre Girard, Anne Iten, Pierre Lipschutz, Joseph Maye, Mariluz Molares, Céline Renaulaud, Nathalie Uriot, Sylvia Vasquez, Guy Viviani and the staff members of the World Conference against Racism Secretariat. Our thanks also go to Teresa Alberio (for meticulous proofreading of the Spanish translations), Norha Restrepo and Ricardo Treithamer (for technical and website support), and Laurie Wiseberg (for so many great pictures).

We hope that the newsletters were an informative and inspired companion to everyone who worked towards Durban and continues to fight against racial discrimination. OHCHR is planning other public information activities to keep the international community informed of our anti-discrimination efforts well beyond Durban.

Jyoti Shankar Singh
Editor-in-chief