

Country Visits

- Belgium (2005)
- Ecuador (2009)
- U.S.A. (2010)
- Portugal (2011)
- UK (2012)
- Panama (2013)
- Brazil (2013)
- The Kingdom of the Netherlands (Curaçao & the Netherlands) (2014)
- Sweden (2014)

Future Plans

- Activities to promote the International Decade for People of African Descent
- Country visits & follow-up visits
- Publication of meetings proceedings
- Expanding Partnerships

International Standards

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Durban Declaration and Programme of Action
- Durban Review Conference Outcome Document
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
- International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women
- Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice
- Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities.

AFRICAN DESCENT

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For more details on the WGEPAD,
and its current members, visit:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Racism/WGAfricanDescent/Pages/WGEPADIndex.aspx>



UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent Recognition, Justice & Development



Working together to end racial discrimination,
xenophobia and related intolerance
against people of African descent

Background

The Durban Programme of Action, adopted at the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCAR) in 2001, recognizes that people of African descent have for centuries been victims of racism, racial discrimination and enslavement. One of the outcomes of the WCAR was the establishment of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent. Its mandate was spelled out in the Commission on Human Rights resolutions 2002/68 and resolution 2003/30 and further expanded by Human Rights Council Resolution 9/14. The WGEPAD is composed of five independent experts appointed on the basis of equitable geographic representation. At the beginning of each session the five members elect a Chairperson-Rapporteur who is elected on a rotational basis to reflect the regional representation of the Group.

Mandate

The Working Group is specifically mandated to examine the problems of racial discrimination, faced by people of African descent, to collaborate with States to devise policies aimed at eradicating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and other related intolerance; as well as to propose measures to ensure access to justice for all persons of African descent. The mandate of the WGPAD also includes

- Study the problems of racial discrimination faced by people of African descent living in the diaspora and, to that end, gather all relevant information from Governments, non-governmental organizations and other relevant sources, including through the holding of public meetings with them;
- Propose measures to ensure full and effective access to the justice system by people of African descent;
- Submit recommendations on the design, implementation and enforcement of effective measures to eliminate racial profiling of people of African descent;

- Make proposals on the elimination of racial discrimination against Africans and people of African descent in all parts of the world;
- Address all the issues concerning the well-being of Africans and people of African descent contained in the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.
- To elaborate short-, medium- and long-term proposals for the elimination of racial discrimination against people of African descent, bearing in mind the need for close collaboration with international and development institutions and the specialized agencies of the United Nations system to promote the human rights of people of African descent.

Parameters of Work

In the fulfilment of its mandate, the Working Group:

- Prepares thematic reports of special importance regarding the promotion and protection of the rights of people of African descent on issues of access to justice; the media; access to education, employment, health, and housing, and multiple discrimination faced by children, youth and women.
- Based on country visits, reports on the overall human rights situations of people of African descent in selected countries.
- Presents its reports to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly.
- Addresses specific cases of alleged serious human rights violations of the rights of people of African descent through communications with Governments, in order to induce national authorities to undertake investigations of cases reported.
- Holds two 5-day sessions every year.

Priority Areas

The General Assembly adopted the theme “Recognition, Justice, Development” for the International Decade for People of African Descent.

- Recognition: increasing the visibility of people African descent, adopting anti-discrimination laws and policies, collecting data to assess their human rights situation, respecting their cultural identity and acknowledging their contribution to society.
- Justice: combating impunity including on instances of the phenomenon popularly known as racial profiling, ensuring equal access to justice and equal protection of the law at all stages of judicial proceedings.
- Development: promoting the right to development, poverty eradication strategies and debt relief; developing programmes for social and economic inclusion; ensuring equal access to education, health, employment and promoting political participation.

Strategy

The Working Group undertakes efforts to:

- Strengthening of national, regional and international action to the full enjoyment of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights by people of African descent.
- Promoting the International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024).
- Consolidating and renewing partnership with all major stakeholders to enhance visibility of people of African descent by engaging with States, international and regional organizations, including United Nations departments, bodies and agencies, national human rights institutions (NHRIs) and/or equality bodies and various civil society segments.
- Promoting good practices, including new laws and programs that promote the rights of people of African descent.
- Empowering people of African descent and facilitating their participation in all activities of the Working Group.