



SOUTH AFRICAN ITEM 7 STATEMENT

**27TH SESSION OF THE WORKING GROUP OF EXPERTS
OF PEOPLE ON AFRICAN DECENT**

3 December 2020

GENEVA

Check against delivery

Chair,

When the General Assembly proclaimed the year 2001 as the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations, which underlines tolerance and respect for diversity and the need to seek common ground among and within civilizations in order to address common challenges to humanity that threaten shared values, universal human rights and the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, through cooperation, partnership and inclusion, the participants at the World Conference against Racism in Durban in 2001, took up the challenge with some very robust dialogue. The outcome being the DDPA.

Our delegation therefore thanks the panelist and the members of the Working Group of Experts for their views on the pressing issue of the preparations for the 20th Anniversary of the DDPA in 2021.

As we mentioned in our general statement on Tuesday, the first major opportunity to start off the 20th anniversary of the DDPA, will be at HRC46 in Geneva from 22 February to 19 March 2021, with the discussions at the high-level panel on human rights mainstreaming in 2021, with the expected theme of "***The state of play in the fight against racism and discrimination 20 years after the adoption of the DDPA and the exacerbating effects the COVID19 pandemic has had on these efforts***", and culminating in September 2021 with a panel discussion at the general assembly in New York.

Much work, in preparation, needs to be done by the OHCHR, States and Civil Society before these two events as it is important that the DDPA is celebrated, as the major instrument it is, for combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and other related intolerances.

South Africa is aware that the draft Conclusions and Recommendations of the 18th Session of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the DDPA will only be officially adopted at HRC46, however, that draft document that is available in the IGWG's webpage, contains a lot of valuable recommendations on how to increase regional and international engagement and actions, including actions to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the DDPA.

Our delegation would like to briefly highlight a few of these recommendations that should in-fact be acted on as soon as possible;

- The international community, including States, international and regional organizations, in particular relevant United Nations programmes, funds, specialized agencies and other bodies, international financial and development institutions, and other international mechanisms within their areas of competence ***should give high priority to programmes and projects specifically tailored for combating racism and racial discrimination taking fully into account the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and should, inter alia:***
 - (a) Assist States in the full and effective implementation of their commitments under the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, taking into account the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on individuals and groups facing racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance
 - (b) Take measures to raise awareness about the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, including through awareness-raising campaigns, and organizing and supporting other activities;
 - (c) Continue to disseminate widely the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action,
 - (d) Continue to raise awareness about the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;
 - (e) Fully include individuals and groups facing racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in their efforts to achieve 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- Requests the undertaking of effective media campaigns by the United Nations, stressing the importance in connection with the 20th anniversary to enhance the visibility of the message of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and its follow up mechanisms and whilst mindful of the importance of strengthening the information and outreach capacity of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights as requested by the General Assembly;
- Requests the OHCHR to contribute to the development of a multi-year programme of action to provide for the renewed and strengthened outreach activities needed to inform and mobilize the global public in support of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, and to strengthen awareness of the contribution it has made in the struggle against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;
- *Requests* an update from the High Commissioner on the preparations of public information materials on the twentieth anniversary, to be disseminated at various events, through United Nations information centres and the website of the Office of the High Commissioner and of other United Nations entities;

- Take measures for strengthening resource mobilization to enhance the effectiveness of the comprehensive implementation of the DDPA at the UN, through increased regular as well as voluntary budget resources, and in this respect requests the Secretary-General to reactivate and revitalize the Trust Fund for the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination prior to 47th regular session of the Human Rights Council;

And lastly Chair

- Encourages the mobilization of political will at the national, regional and international levels for the full and effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, the Outcome Document of the Durban Review Conference and the political declaration of the General Assembly to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, and their follow up processes.

In conclusion, it is only fitting that the Working Group of Experts assist in the celebration of the 20th Anniversary of the DDPA in 2021, and help to ensure that the celebration and programme for the 20th anniversary ***is as universally inclusive as possible, to ensure that the necessary political will be enhanced for all states to more actively engage to ensure that the DDPA is fully implement.***

Thank you