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Agenda item 9

**Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance, follow-up to and implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action**

## **Report of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action on its seventeenth session\***

### **Note by the Secretariat**

#### *Summary*

The Secretariat has the honour to transmit the report of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action on its seventeenth session, held in Geneva from 16 to 20 December 2019 and on 16 January 2020. The report was prepared pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 34/34.

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\* Agreement was reached to publish the present report after the standard publication date owing to circumstances beyond the submitter's control.



## **I. Introduction**

1. The present report is submitted by the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 34/34.

## **II. Organization of the session**

2. The Working Group held its seventeenth session from 16 to 20 December 2019 and on 16 January 2020. Participants discussed and shared views on the situation of racial discrimination worldwide, on challenges faced by women of African descent and on measures to enhance the effectiveness of the follow-up mechanisms to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and to ensure better synergy and complementarities in the work of those mechanisms. The Working Group reviewed the progress achieved concerning the implementation of the programme of activities for the International Decade for People of African Descent. It held a half-day meeting to exchange preliminary views on the preparations for the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

### **A. Attendance**

3. The session was attended by representatives of States Members of the United Nations, observers for non-Member States and representatives of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations (see annex).

### **B. Opening of the session and election of the Chair-Rapporteur**

4. The seventeenth session of the Working Group was opened by the Chief of the Anti-Racial Discrimination Section of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). During the session, presentations were made by human rights experts.

5. In his statement, the Chief of the Anti-Racial Discrimination Section recalled that inequalities of wealth and income had reached historic proportions, threatening all pillars of the United Nations, from development to human rights to peace and security. Those inequalities were nourished by prejudices, racism, hatred and violence and aggressively infiltrated every aspect of life. He recalled that those inequalities disproportionately affected people of African descent and, in particular, women and girls of African descent who suffered intersecting forms of discrimination. In that respect, he referred to a recent publication of OHCHR in which some of the challenges faced by women and girls of African descent, including high school dropout rates, discrimination in employment and in the workplace, discrimination in access to health services, notably in the area of sexual and reproductive health and rights, hate crimes, sexual and gender-based violence and negative stereotyping, were highlighted. He informed the Working Group about a regional seminar on the empowerment and political participation of women of African descent organized by OHCHR, in collaboration with the government of Costa Rica, which was held in December 2019 in San José. At the seminar, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights acknowledged that there had been unprecedented growth in the number of women in positions of power in the Latin America and the Caribbean region, but it had not been beneficial to all women equally. The obligation of States to ensure inclusiveness in the exercise of the right to participate in public affairs and the need to collect data, disaggregated by relevant factors, on participation in political and public affairs were emphasized, and the adoption of policy measures, including temporary special measures, and institutional arrangements to promote and ensure the equal participation of women of African descent at all levels of decision-making processes and institutions was recommended.

6. The Permanent Representative of Lesotho to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, Refiloe Litjobo, was elected Chair-Rapporteur.

7. After the election of the Chair-Rapporteur, the Working Group adopted the programme of work for its seventeenth session.

### C. Statements

8. The Chair-Rapporteur invited general statements from participants.

9. The representative of Brazil highlighted the special and unique nature of the discrimination faced by people of African descent in Brazil and added that the International Decade was a historic opportunity to promote change and encourage international efforts, such as the establishment of a permanent forum on people of African descent and the launch of negotiations on a United Nations declaration on the rights of people of African descent.

10. The representative of the European Union stated that the intersecting forms of discrimination faced by women of African descent merited urgent discussion. She agreed that there was a need to begin reflecting on the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and on how best to use that milestone to focus on the fight against racism.

11. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran stated that a worldwide wave of contemporary forms of racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, violent extremist movements, national populism, neo-Nazism and related intolerance continued to exist, threatening the enjoyment of human rights around the globe.

12. The representative of Cuba noted that his Government had adopted a national programme to combat racial discrimination and that a governmental committee was set up by the President of Cuba to coordinate the programme. He expressed deep concern about the increase and resurgence in many countries of neo-Nazism and xenophobia.

13. The representative of Nigeria stressed that, in the interest of peaceful coexistence and security, there was a need to collectively renew commitment to combating racism and discouraging racist and xenophobic political narratives.

14. The representative of Trinidad and Tobago recalled that her country had recently organized a one-day discussion on the International Decade in collaboration with the Caribbean Community, OHCHR and the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent. She stressed that, while the achievements of women and girls of African descent were being celebrated, there was a need to reflect on the continued challenges and obstacles that they faced.

15. The representative of South Africa expressed concern about the current global trend of the resurgence of racist and extremist movements promoting false supremacist ideologies based on extreme populist and nationalist ideologies. He added that such movements had become emboldened by the anonymity of modern means of communication.

16. The representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela noted with concern the increase in racist manifestations, xenophobia and hate speech, as a result of which millions of people had suffered acts of violence, including the death of innocent people. Those tragic events had disproportionately affected people in situations of poverty.

17. The representative of Egypt expressed deep concern that certain types of xenophobia continued to exist in the world and were expressed through hate speech on the Internet and in social media, in particular by the extreme right and affiliated groups. He stressed the importance of taking global action to address those issues.

18. The representative of Azerbaijan shared the experience of Azerbaijan in promoting intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity, noting its unique location at the crossroads of Europe and Asia and that it had historically been a place for the peaceful coexistence of different cultures.

19. The representative of Colombia recalled that Colombia had 1.7 million Venezuelan migrants in its territory and that his Government was implementing special policies to ensure the rights of Venezuelans, including granting Colombian nationality to the children of Venezuelan migrants born in Colombia.

20. The representative of India affirmed the importance of changing social attitudes and emphasized the need for continued focus on education and information to instil the right values in young minds.

21. The representative of Angola, speaking on behalf of the African Group, reaffirmed the importance of the Intergovernmental Working Group to ensuring follow-up on the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. She noted that measures undertaken to date seemed insufficient to reverse the negative impacts of racism and hate speech. She recalled that Human Rights Council resolution 42/29, which was adopted by consensus, had sent a positive signal with regard to international cooperation to fight racism.

22. The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic expressed concern about the rise of manifestations of xenophobia, Islamophobia and hate speech against people of African descent, members of minority groups, migrants and refugees and the need to deal with those grave violations.

23. The representative of Ecuador noted that his Government had updated its national agenda for the equality of nationalities and peoples, 2019–2021, through dialogue and the participation of civil society. He mentioned that the official visit of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent to Ecuador was an excellent opportunity to identify achievements and challenges in that regard.

24. The representative of China stated that some countries had achieved some progress in the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, however, other countries had failed to take measures to prohibit racist and hate speech or attempted to justify the lack of such prohibitions in the name of freedom of speech.

25. The representative of the World Council for Peace highlighted episodes of xenophobia against Venezuelan migrants and citizens in various countries and recalled the importance of ensuring respect for the rights of migrants.

### **III. Discussion on the situation of racial discrimination worldwide**

26. The Working Group considered agenda item 5, “Discussion on the situation of racial discrimination worldwide”, on which three experts gave presentations: Dominique Day, member, Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent; Joel Malesela Modiri, lecturer, Faculty of Law, University of Pretoria; and Pastor Murillo, member, Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

27. Ms. Day pointed out the resurgence of hate crime incidents and incendiary political rhetoric against people of African descent. She noted that, in many countries, political discourse was being instrumentalized against people of African descent as a means of gaining or consolidating power. She also noted that there had been a troubling attempt to justify racial discrimination and racial hatred, including at their intersections with gender and gender identity, disability, belief and sexual orientation, under the guise of freedom of speech or freedom of religion. She further noted the violence against women of African descent and transgender women of African descent. Ms. Day expressed concern regarding the rise of Big Data and artificial intelligence products that disproportionately burdened and penalized people on the basis of race and the pervasive racial discrimination that might result from algorithmic bias. Health-care coverage algorithms might allocate less care for people of African descent with the same medical symptoms and conditions as people in other groups. Ms. Day stated that the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent had had the opportunity to speak with people of African descent globally and that it remained stunning how similar their stories and their concerns were, country to country.

28. In his presentation, Mr. Modiri explained that, on the one hand, the world was still reeling from the effects, including protracted effects, of the unresolved and unbearable histories of enslavement, colonization, apartheid, neocolonialism, ethnic genocides and “tribalism”. The effects of those phenomena, he argued, included highly racialized socioeconomic inequality and inequalities in participation, decision-making and vulnerability to violence. He noted that anti-black, xenophobic, Islamophobic, anti-Semitic and neo-Nazi

political forces were expressing themselves in resistance to globalization and inclusion. He recalled that racial minority groups, refugees, migrants, indigenous peoples and people of African descent, among others, were most at risk of exposure to violent attacks, harassment and discrimination. He noted that progressive movements and movements for racial, gender, sexual and economic equality were also growing with greater vigour and visibility in response to continuing inequalities and injustices, including the movements for recognition of indigenous rights, racial and historical justice, reparations and redress. He stressed that there was a need to develop alternative approaches, especially from the political, intellectual and cultural perspectives of the survivors and victims of colonization, enslavement and racial oppression.

29. In his presentation, Mr. Murillo noted that, in various parts of the world, there was a climate of racial attention quite comparable to the one that preceded the Second World War, with the emergence of supposed identity claims and ethnonationalism in the political and economic fields. He acknowledged that as being a threat to democratic values, which had been thought to have been consolidated. Mr. Murillo said that racism was being expressed in new theories, such as the so-called “demographic reconversion”, in attempts to mobilize voters in the supposed defense of national identity. He was of the view that such ideas were behind the rejection of migrants. He commented upon the inadequate use of the digital revolution and the relationship between racism and algorithms. He mentioned that the financial, education, health and housing sectors were increasingly governed by algorithms that defined the treatment of people of African descent and other groups and individuals facing racial discrimination.

30. The representative of the European Union noted that the European Union requested its States members to penalize public incitement to violence or hatred against persons defined by reference to race, colour, religion, dissent or national or ethnic origin, including when committed online. In 2016, the European Union established a high-level group, which had compiled and endorsed guiding principles against hate crimes and delivered training for law enforcement and criminal justice authorities. The representative of the European Union underlined the vital importance of applying a human rights-based approach to data collection, in which the principles of data protection and the right to privacy were essential.

31. The representative of Brazil noted that, in order to reduce racial inequality in Brazil and contribute to the inclusion of people of African descent, his Government was employing affirmative action policies and quotas in public universities and in the public service, among other actions. He added that Brazilians of African descent had also benefitted from the national policy of integral health for the black population and the national pact for the reduction of maternal and neonatal mortality. He informed the Working Group about the national plan for the prevention of violence against young people in situations of vulnerability.

32. The representative of the Russian Federation noted that racial discrimination was systemic and that people of African descent were often deprived of the possibility of full development. He expressed concern about neo-Nazi movements and movements with similar ideologies appearing in politics and about young people being attracted to such ideologies.

33. The representative of Angola expressed concern about the failure of education systems to address issues of racism and racial discrimination in States that were witnessing the resurgence of racism. She referred to the most recent report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance (A/74/321), in which the Special Rapporteur had asserted that ignorance and lack of public awareness were some of the primary causes of the resurgence of racism.

34. In response to the question on the role of education and public awareness, Mr. Modiri stressed the importance of acknowledging that anti-racist ideas must be instilled at a younger age. In his view, the educational materials, which responded to imperatives of nation-building and tended to reduce racial oppression to misunderstanding, must be revised in order to better account for the historical contributions of Africans and people of African descent. He also stressed the importance of promoting the values of democracy, pluralism and diversity, with a view to eradicating the racial hierarchy and inequalities that continued to prevail in many countries.

35. In response, Ms. Day emphasized the responsibility of all to engage in national discourses in order to include in interpretations of national identity the recognition of the increasing diversity and complexity in our societies and families. In her view, one of the reasons for the rise of nationalist politics was that the conversation about race was seen as challenging national and family identities. She stressed the urgency of developing an alternative, enriched narrative to the nationalist discourse. She added that recognition was an essential element in that respect, in particular the recognition that people of African descent had contributed to our societies and that national identities had been shaped and enriched through racial diversity. In that regard, data disaggregated by relevant factors has had a major role in highlighting racial disparities and discrimination and would also have a role in the development of effective measures to remedy it.

36. In response, Mr. Murillo reaffirmed the importance of education for promoting the values of respect and tolerance. He acknowledged the challenges in the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action due to the weakening of momentum after the attacks of 11 September 2001 and called upon Member States to recover that momentum. He recalled the specific challenges resulting from the development of artificial intelligence and social media in terms of the propagation of racism. He stressed the importance of using those new technologies to educate society and prevent racism and racial discrimination.

#### **IV. Discussion on measures to enhance the effectiveness of the follow-up mechanisms to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and to ensure better synergy and complementarities in the work of those mechanisms**

37. The Chair introduced the speakers, Ms. Day and Mr. Murillo. He then asked them what measures should be taken to enhance the effectiveness of the Durban follow-up mechanisms.

38. Ms. Day highlighted the importance of reflection and the renewal of understanding and commitments regarding the Durban follow-up mechanisms, in particular with regard to racial justice. She stated that the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent was of the view that there was a great need for more resources, dedication and commitment, as well as a focus on synergy, complementarity and impact, to mount an effective defence against the exploitation of the lands, bodies and resources of people of African descent.

39. Synergy and complementarity were deemed by Ms. Day to be important because the available resources to dismantle structural and systemic racism, which was so embedded in our modern global economy, would always be challenged by certain powerful sectors of society.

40. The establishment of a permanent forum for people of African descent was needed to articulate ideas and an agenda for all of the existing Durban follow-up mechanisms and should be the priority for the beginning of 2020. The midterm review of the International Decade would allow for pivoting towards maximum engagement and real outcomes for the remainder of the decade.

41. The upcoming twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action provided an important opportunity to recognize the centrality of the Durban follow-up mechanism as a comprehensive tool for anti-racism efforts and to create space for renewed investment, synergy and complementary engagements. The Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent planned to host a one-day event on the twentieth anniversary of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action in 2020 .

42. On enhancing the effectiveness of the Durban follow-up mechanisms, technology should serve as an accelerator. There was mounting need to seek ways to record and webcast sessions in advance and to facilitate remote participation by civil society and other groups.

43. Mr. Murillo stated that the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action was at the heart of the action of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, in particular in the context of the periodic review of the implementation of the International Convention

on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination by States parties. The Committee could ensure that the periodic reporting covered progress made by States parties in the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. The Committee welcomed the initiative to draft an international declaration for the human rights of people of African descent. The general recommendations that were adopted by the Committee were instruments that enabled it to take up the various topics related to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, two examples of which were its general recommendation No. 35 (2013) on combating racist hate speech and its draft general recommendation on racial profiling and algorithmic bias. The Committee was now receiving inter-State communications. It received a communication from Qatar against the United Arab Emirates and one from the State of Palestine against Israel.

44. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran highlighted that among the measures to be taken to enhance the effectiveness of the mechanism to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action was the enhancement of multilateralism. Colonialism had been a clear symbol of unilateralism over the past century; returning to such state of affairs would undermine efforts to implement the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, given that it stirred up xenophobia, racism and anti-immigration sentiment across the globe.

45. The representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela highlighted the fact that the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action had called for basic measures to strengthen education against racism, reaffirming the need to make available the necessary resources to victims and to ensure their human rights. The representative noted that a decree had been signed in 2019 by the Head of State establishing a decade for people of African descent.

46. The representative of the European Union highlighted that, limited resources notwithstanding, work was being done on proliferation of the mechanisms and not as much on effective implementation. She stated that the European Union supported the renewal of the mandate of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent. She highlighted some negative aspects of the functioning of the five independent eminent experts on the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, namely, that two of the five members had been serving since its creation in 2002 and that the mandate of the mechanism did not have any fixed duration, which, in the view of the European Union, should be three years. With regard to the Ad Hoc Committee on the Elaboration of Complementary Standards to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, she pointed out that it had been mandated with drafting an additional protocol in 2016, but a compromise could not be reached. She also highlighted the lack of compromise on the establishment of the forum on people of African descent, in particular with regard to whether it would be based in Geneva or New York.

47. A representative of civil society highlighted that the establishment of the forum for dialogue on people of African descent was set out in the programme of activities. The failure to establish such a forum was a missed opportunity, given that it could have been a mechanism by which to hold countries accountable. He stated that all the various mechanisms had their roles and that a discussion should be held on how they could work more closely together.

48. Mr. Murillo, with regard to the proposal for a protocol to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, stated that the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination had emphasized on several occasions that the Convention was a living instrument that fostered the interpretation of the means of dealing with racism and racial discrimination. Examples of that were the Committee's general recommendation No. 35 and its draft recommendation on racial profiling and algorithmic bias, the latter in particular addressing issues not specifically covered by the Convention. He recalled that thematic debates and consultations with States parties were held before drafting such general recommendations. He also recalled the Committee's fluid communications procedure and interactions with the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, as well as their exchanges of views and examinations of various cross cutting issues.

49. Ms. Day affirmed the need for more resources and agreed on the need to develop real mechanisms for assessing impact and ensuring the maximization of efforts. She highlighted

that the permanent forum could play an important role in that regard, bringing together civil society and articulating an annual agenda, key priorities, indicators and metrics for monitoring. She stated that the varying expertise of the members of the various mechanisms might make an even greater impact in the work towards common agenda items and priorities. She highlighted that the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent cooperated in a number of ways, whether formally or informally, and relied on each other's work, in particular with regard to communications to Member States.

50. The Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Complementary Standards made also a presentation on agenda item 6. He noted the historical link to the mechanisms to support the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. He stated that, although all mechanisms were important and established to support the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, there were fears that the roles of the three mechanisms were not complementary when attempting to work together to promote and implement the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. He called for the prevention of duplication by all mechanisms and underscored the need for effectiveness. He thought further emphasis should be placed on combating the hate speech that was taking place online and offline and for focus to be placed on more preventive measures. The Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee welcomed recommendations and knowledge from independent experts, however, he was of the view that close attention must be paid to adopting a national approach for the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. He emphasized that the subject of racism did not belong to a particular group or country but to those who were affected. Awareness-raising and visibility through campaigns of international organizations and national Governments and social and cultural events were required to promote the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

## **V. Discussion on challenges faced by women of African descent**

51. The Working Group considered agenda item 7, "Exchange and discussion on challenges faced by women of African descent". Presentations were made by the following six experts: Ana Carolina Lourenço, Regional Advocacy Coordinator of the Fundación Ciudadanía Inteligente; Ms. Day; Mr. Modiri; Ntambwe Modi, Chair of the Migrant Women Network; Ms. Monica Ferro, Director of the United Nations Population Fund; and Mr. Murillo.

52. In her presentation, Ms. Lourenço explained that, over the past 20 years, systematic analysis of the situation of women of African descent had shed light on the interconnections between gender, race, ethnicity and social class and those findings echoed the growing demands of the movement of women of African descent. She also explained that the perspective of intersectionality was a tool that revealed not only the different manifestations of discrimination, such as sexism, racism and class prejudices, but also the crossing and overlapping of discrimination, where two, three or more grounds of discrimination entwined.

53. In that respect, she referred to the experiences in the States of Latin America and the Caribbean where, despite the fact that States engaged in a series of international agreements and conferences aimed at recognizing the rights of people of African descent, they continued to be discriminated against in access to opportunities and in the exercise of their rights, especially women living in poor and rural areas. She stressed the importance of acknowledging the differing situations of people of African descent in Latin America and the Caribbean and of adopting differentiated approaches in analysis.

54. She highlighted some of the structural forms of discrimination faced by women of African descent in Latin America, such as inequalities in wealth, lack of political representation and vulnerability to violence, and emphasized the need to develop measures that took into account the wider context of the communities in which women of African descent lived.

55. In his presentation, Mr. Modiri stated that the lack of gender equality remained a major problem in Africa. He recalled that the colonialism that had produced the racialization of African peoples was also a highly gendered project that relied on particular concepts of



family and domesticity that ensured that African families could be controlled. Those concepts underlined the division of labour, processes of land disposition and labour exploitation. He stressed the importance of addressing those issues also in light of the ways in which colonialism had shaped the experiences of African men.

56. He argued that those issues should be addressed not only in terms of the intersectionality of gender and race, but also from an African perspective and, more specifically, taking into account the very different cultural meanings of gender and motherhood that differed from the ways in which those concepts were framed in international law and international gender discourses. It was important to address African women's circumstances to find ways of articulating notions of freedom and justice in accordance with each woman's own cultural self-understanding. In that regard, specific issues faced by African women included economic exclusion and financial discrimination, which were exemplified by the lack of access to formal employment, lack of access to financial credit and exclusion from political participation.

57. He underlined the importance of education and the need to better reflect the historical contributions of women in textbooks, in particular their contributions to the anti-colonial struggles. In that respect, he stressed the necessity of shifting not only our knowledge of politics at the national and international levels, but also the historical archive and the historical evidence in order to promote a more positive image of African women. He highlighted the issue of low school attendance among African girls. He referred to recent measures taken in South Africa to counter that trend by creating minimum standards for schools, sanitation, hygiene and infrastructure and improving safety on the road to school. He encouraged other States to implement such measures. He highlighted the issue of sexual harassment and violence at schools against female students and teachers, which was also present at universities and in the workplace. He stressed the importance of addressing the problems of HIV/AIDS and referred to the holistic approach adopted in South Africa to curb the issue.

58. He argued that the debates around traditional cultural practices, in particular about female genital mutilation and certain marriage customs, had played a role in limiting opportunities for African women. In his view, gender equality for African women could only be achieved through recognizing the singularity and diversity of African women's cultural and historical experiences. He argued that the communities themselves should lead the transformations.

59. In her presentation, Ms. Day provided an analysis based on data, disaggregated by relevant factors, on the power of individuals and local decision-making to have an impact on access to resources and the enjoyment of human rights. Drawing upon concrete cases of discrimination faced by students of African descent, she highlighted the effects of negative stereotyping in terms of lowering the expectations of students of African descent and in sustaining massive racial disparities in child protection and in the removal of children on allegations of abuse and neglect. She also highlighted the discrimination faced by women of African descent in access to the right to health, noting that women of African descent faced higher rates of maternal mortality and morbidity, irrespective of income and geographical location. She stressed that those issues were not intrinsic or inherent to women of African descent, but the outcomes of systemic and structural racism and of a global mindset that reflected a legacy of trade and trafficking in enslaved Africans.

60. She argued that data, disaggregated by relevant factors, was an essential tool with the potential to reveal racial discrimination and barriers to access for women of African descent in claiming their human rights and to determine effective ways to redress those issues. She noted, however, that data might also be used to perpetuate human rights abuses. She emphasized the key role of policymakers in protecting human dignity and human potential in interpreting the data properly and that data analysis required context and sound interpretation. By focusing on local conditions, data, disaggregated by relevant factors, could be used to identify racial disparities, test new practices and policies, determine what people or practices were driving racial disparities and measure progress in reducing racial disparity and racial discrimination.

61. The representative of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) welcomed the discussion on women and girls of African descent and expressed the hope that the intersection between gender and race would be better reflected in the future. He recalled that UNFPA was working towards that goal, notably through the development of data for identifying people in situations of vulnerability. He stressed the importance of addressing issues faced by people of African descent, in particular women, within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to ensure that people of African descent were not left behind. He stressed that the collection of data, disaggregated by relevant factors, documenting the patterns of discrimination faced by people of African descent was crucial to that purpose.

62. The representative of Brazil presented national policies and measures that had contributed to improving the situation of people of African descent in his country, including affirmative action measures. He mentioned the decision by the Supreme Court of Brazil that upheld the constitutionality of the quota policies to combat racism and inequalities and promote education and entrepreneurship.

63. The representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela presented measures that that country had taken to ensure equality and non-discrimination, including by encouraging the participation of women of African descent to participate in decision-making processes.

64. The representative of Namibia asked Mr. Modiri how the black economic empowerment legislation implemented in South Africa after independence had contributed to addressing some of the challenges of economic exclusion, including the exclusion of women of African descent.

65. The representative of the European Union recalled that women and girls of African descent were exposed to and faced intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination, including discrimination based on race, ethnicity, sex, nationality, migration status, sexual orientation, gender identity and any other social status. She explained that the first European Union week for people of African descent, which had taken place at the European Union parliament in 2018, showcased inspiring stories of many women and girls of African descent across the European Union. She stressed the urgency to take steps to ensure that public service providers, in particular in the fields of social protection, health, education and justice, adopted policies and procedures to eliminate all forms of discrimination and barriers faced by women of African descent.

66. The representative of Angola stressed the importance of not only addressing the challenges faced by women and girls of African descent, but also of highlighting the positive contributions made by women of African descent in history and today, as political leaders, diplomats and judges, among other important functions.

67. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran stated that the problems and challenges discussed by the panellists were not specific to African women or women of African descent, but were challenges shared by women in all parts of the world. He asked the panellists about the root causes that created those challenges and how to tackle those root causes, including changing the structures and behaviours underlying the manifestations of discrimination.

68. In response, Ms. Day recalled that the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action included consistent references to women and girls of African descent and to intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination that highlighted the duties of Member States in that respect. She agreed that women all over the world faced complex and serious challenges, irrespective of race, but also emphasized the need to take into account the specificity of intersecting forms of discrimination, especially discrimination based on race and gender. She explained that understanding the root causes of discrimination required thorough analysis of the context based on sound data, disaggregated by relevant factors.

69. In response, Mr. Modiri recalled that the debate on whether issues faced by specific groups, such as women of African descent and African women, should be addressed as part of the general problem, or as a specific problem that required specific policies and measures. In his view, the challenge was to find strategies that could speak to and accommodate the diversity of women, including African women and women of African descent, and their experiences. He argued that one of the main challenges for policymaking in Africa was to

move away from Western and European models in theories of development and theories of justice and to ground it in African cultural and social paradigms.

70. In response to the question on black economic empowerment, he highlighted some of the problems and challenges faced in South Africa regarding the implementation of that policy framework, including the fact that that policy was benefitting only a small group of politically connected elites, and the massive corruption that undermined public tenders.

71. In response to the question about root causes, Ms. Lourenço recalled the ongoing debates on the historical causes of discrimination, in particular the history of colonialism and the enslavement and trafficking of Africans, and explained that many countries had benefitted from the tremendous wealth derived from enslavement and colonialism. She reaffirmed the importance of collecting data based on sound scientific methods.

72. In her presentation, Ms. Modi spoke about the pragmatic approach of many African women to countering racial discrimination in Europe. Despite all the challenges that African women and women of African descent encountered in terms of residency permits, access to education and access to work and entrepreneurship possibilities, the majority managed to find a job and a solution for their situations. She spoke about the richness of the professional experiences and backgrounds of African women and women of African descent, and noted that the problem was that those capacities were not being used to their full potential. African women and women of African descent living in Europe who could not exercise their expertise might lose those skills and, subsequently, it was very difficult to re-enter the labour market. Ms. Modi also spoke about the problems faced by children and young people of African descent in the education system, including facing diminished expectations and bias in the orientation of studies. She explained that many children of African descent were oriented towards vocational education and not towards university studies.

73. Ms. Ferro stated that the empowerment of women and girls was at the core of the work of UNFPA and underpinned their strategy. She stated that, in many countries, women of African descent were more likely to be underemployed and engaged in unstable informal jobs and were often represented among domestic workers, and they had less access to contraceptives and were more vulnerable to sexual and gender-based violence, including rape, child marriage, sexual exploitation, abduction and trafficking. In the Latin America and the Caribbean region, national illiteracy rates and secondary school dropout rates among girls of African descent in rural areas were disproportionately high, often owing to poverty, early pregnancy, child marriage and child labour. The highest levels of maternal mortality were among women and girls of African descent – they were up to three times more likely to die during childbirth than other cohorts of women, and they often suffered institutional discrimination in the health sector. Ms. Ferro called upon States to ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health for women and young people and to commit to the eradication of poverty and the guarantee of real development opportunities and increased participation in decision-making processes for women of African descent.

74. Mr. Murillo mentioned that discrimination on the basis of gender was among the most deeply entrenched forms of inequality around the world, given that it affected half of the world population. He recalled that, in Switzerland, it was only in 1971 that women got the right to vote and only in 1981 that the principle of equality between men and women was enshrined in the Constitution. Men earned 12 per cent more than women, and that percentage rose to 18.5 per cent in managerial positions. Mr. Murillo mentioned that there were 200 million people of African descent living in the Americas and 60 million of living in extreme poverty. Latin America and the Caribbean had the highest homicide rate in the world. Data showed that, in Brazil in 2013, the majority of young people murdered were of African descent and, in 2018, more than 5,000 people had died at the hands of the police.

75. Mr. Murillo said that the assassination of Rio de Janeiro City Councillor, Marielle Franco, in March 2018, had laid bare the seriousness of violence against women of African descent. He was pleased to hear from the representative of Brazil that important progress had recently been made in access to higher education for young women of African descent, through the Quota Law. Women of African descent were also disproportionately the victims of homicides in other countries, such as the United States of America, and in cities in Latin America with a high concentration of people of African descent, such as Cali, Colombia. Mr.

Murillo highlighted important recent milestones in access to political positions for women of African descent in the region. He underlined the urgent need to study the global situation of women of African descent worldwide. He was of the view that most equality laws that had been adopted in various countries in order to promote women's rights unfortunately did not benefit women of African descent on an equal footing with other women. He called for the adoption of quota laws specifically targeted at women of African descent and other women facing discrimination on the basis of race.

76. In the context of the debate on the Working Group's conclusions and recommendations (see paras. 89 (f) and 90 (h) below), the representative of Brazil declared the support of Brazil of the right to life from the moment of conception and the country's concern about the use of ambiguous concepts that could be interpreted as an encouragement to abortion, which constituted an illegal practice in its territory, and it was the view of Brazil that it should not be used as a contraceptive measure. He also explained his Government's commitment to strengthening the fight against crime and to reducing insecurity in the country and provided information on the State's actions in response to the murder of City Councillor Franco.

77. The representative of Guatemala stated that Guatemala maintained the duly presented reservations to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, in accordance with its national legislation.

## **VI. Review of progress achieved concerning the implementation of the programme of activities for the International Decade for People of African Descent**

78. The representative of the European Union noted that, on 26 March 2019, the European Parliament had adopted a resolution underlying that active and meaningful social, economic, political and cultural participation by people of African descent was key to tackling the phenomenon of "Afrophobia" and ensuring their inclusion in Europe. The European Parliament had also called upon the European Commission to develop a European Union framework for national strategies for the social inclusion and integration of people of African descent.

79. The representative of Cuba noted that much progress in implementing the International Decade had already been achieved in Cuba, including the approval of a national programme against racism. He stated that civil society organizations were important, in particular when it came to implementing the programme of activities for the International Decade.

80. The delegate of Brazil noted that people of African descent were the majority population in Brazil. He expressed the support of Brazil for the negotiation of a United Nations declaration on the human rights of people of African descent and invited other States to join in those efforts.

81. The representative of the International Youth and Student Movement for the United Nations noted that his organization had been active in promoting the International Decade and that its programme of activities must be implemented by all sectors of society, not only by people of African descent.

82. The representative of Angola reported that Angola had ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and that her country had embarked on activities to implement the International Decade. In particular, she noted a museum project that would be organized jointly with the United States to commemorate people with roots in Angola who had been enslaved and sold.

83. The delegate of South Africa noted that South Africa had been vigorously implementing the programme of activities for the International Decade, including the fight against hate speech in social media and on the Internet. It had adopted laws that prohibited online discrimination and had already gained experience in prosecuting online hate crimes.

The delegate encouraged other countries to support the creation of a forum of people of African descent and to promote international rules to regulate online hate speech.

## **VII. Preliminary exchange of views on the preparations of the twentieth anniversary of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action**

84. The Working Group devoted one meeting to a preliminary exchange of views on the preparations for the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. The outcome of those discussions will be reflected in a separate report to be presented to the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session and to the Human Rights Council at its forty-fifth session.

## **VIII. Conclusions and recommendations**

### **A. Situation of racial discrimination worldwide**

#### **1. Conclusions**

85. **The Working Group:**

(a) **Expresses concern with regard to the increase in the incitement to violence, racial hatred, hate speech, hate crimes, neo-Nazism, neo-Fascism and violent nationalist ideologies based on racial or national prejudice, including the resurgence of white supremacist ideologies that fuel contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, in particular in relation to Africans, people of African descent, Asians and people of Asian descent, Roma, Travelers, Sinti, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers;**

(b) **Emphasizes the need to shift away from approaches that manage racial conflict and disparities through policies that keep historical vested interests intact and from the language of “hatred”, “intolerance” and “prejudice”, to an approach that analyses structural power relations, institutions and systems that reproduce racial inequalities and seeks to understand and deconstruct the historical links and current situation of inequalities;**

(c) **Acknowledges that many contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance are related to the legacy of slavery, the slave trade, especially the transatlantic slave trade, apartheid, colonialism and genocide and also acknowledges 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;**

(d) **Recognizes that the complexity of debates about racial justice and equality must reflect the complexity and richness of people of African descent, indigenous peoples, national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, migrants and refugees;**

(e) **Recognizes that victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance can suffer from multiple, aggravated and intersecting forms of discrimination based on other related grounds, such as sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, social origin, property, birth, disability or other status;**

(f) **Notes with concern that the automatic processing of personal data for individual profiling, automated decision-making and machine-learning technologies, sometimes referred as artificial intelligence, without adequate safeguards and oversight in their design, development, evaluation and regulation, may lead to discrimination or decisions with a negative impact on people of African descent, minorities, migrants and others;**

(g) Underlines the importance of equal access to high-quality education, notes with concern the unequal opportunities in that field, with the failure to recognize the potential, talents and teachability of children belonging to minority groups, indigenous children, migrant children and children of African descent, alongside the structural barriers that they face and acknowledges the existence of practices that diminish the potential of children belonging to those groups;

(h) Recalls the urgency of States and international and regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector addressing the situation of persons with disabilities who are also disproportionately affected by racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and to multiple or aggravated forms of discrimination.

## 2. Recommendations

### 86. The Working Group urges Member States:

(a) To fully and effectively implement their obligations arising under international law, particularly the non-discrimination clauses in the Charter of the United Nations and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and to sign and ratify the two Covenants and the Convention, if they have not yet done so;

(b) To establish mechanisms, as appropriate, to follow up and implement recommendations on combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, including those relating to people of African descent, emanating from international mechanisms, such as the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and other treaty bodies, special procedures mandate holders and the universal periodic review, and relevant regional mechanisms;

(c) To cooperate fully and respond positively to requests for country visits by the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and other human rights mechanisms working on issues related to racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;

(d) To establish national legislative frameworks and national action plans against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, in accordance with the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, if they have not already done so;

(e) To recognize the importance of sharing good practices, including legislation and initiatives taken at the national and regional levels, in addressing the issue of online hate speech, including on social networks, and in that connection to encourage the adoption of policies at the regional level on combating online hate speech, such as the adoption of codes of conduct on countering illegal online hate speech by information technology companies and social media providers in the fight against hate speech;

(f) To establish or strengthen, as appropriate, public policies to eradicate racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, equip specialized bodies and mechanisms for the implementation thereof, and to promote racial equality with suitable financial resources and the capability and capacity to survey, investigate, educate and undertake public awareness-raising activities in line with the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and the outcome document of the Durban Review Conference;

(g) To take the measures necessary to ensure the full enjoyment of all human rights of persons with disabilities and to facilitate their full integration into all areas of life and in that regard to sign and ratify the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto as a matter of priority, if they have not already done so.

**B. Measures to enhance the effectiveness of the follow-up mechanisms to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and to ensure better synergy and complementarities in the work of those mechanisms**

**1. Conclusions**

**87. The Working Group:**

(a) Recognizes the importance of continued efforts aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Durban follow-up mechanisms and commits to increasing efforts aimed at avoiding overlapping and/or the duplication of initiatives;

(b) Acknowledges the need to enhance further the effectiveness of the mechanisms dealing with or addressing racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, with a view to achieving better synergy, coordination, coherence and complementarity in their work;

(c) Commits to improving its methods of work with a view to enhancing its effectiveness and efficiency, including deciding that procedural issues, including ones relating to the agenda, programme of work and themes for deliberations, will be addressed by the Chair at least three months before the beginning of the respective session, requesting that the secretariat circulate all relevant documents, both procedural and substantive, at least six weeks before the respective sessions and that the Secretariat notify non-governmental organizations, national human rights institutions and other stakeholders well in advance with regard to upcoming sessions;

(d) Commits to increasing efforts to complement the work of other Durban follow-up mechanisms with a view to avoiding overlapping and/or the duplication of initiatives and agrees to continue discussion of those efforts at future sessions;

(e) Requests OHCHR, in scheduling the relevant sessions of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action follow-up mechanisms, to avoid overlap between their respective sessions and also to avoid overlap with sessions of the Human Rights Council and its various mechanisms, in order to allow the meaningful participation of Member States, regional and subregional organizations, national human rights institutions or similar bodies and civil society organizations;

(f) Underlines that the limitation of resources should not affect the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, while acknowledging the need to enhance the effectiveness of the mechanisms related to or addressing racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, with a view to achieving better synergy, coordination, coherence and complementarity of work;

(g) Underlines the imperative of the full and effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and is of the view that the twentieth anniversary of its adoption should be seen as an important opportunity to strengthen its role as a comprehensive tool for the anti-racism agenda and an occasion to assess the impact of the work of the Durban follow-up mechanisms and provide for increased publicity and outreach on their contributions.

**2. Recommendations**

**88. The Working Group recognizes the importance of continued efforts aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Durban follow-up mechanisms and commits to increasing efforts aimed at avoiding overlapping and/or the duplication of initiatives. It reiterates its request for more cooperation between the Durban follow-up mechanisms and relevant human rights bodies, including treaty bodies and special procedures mandate holders, with the aim of developing synergy and complementarities between those mechanisms, and invites the group of independent eminent experts on the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent:**

(a) To leverage the inputs of other United Nations mechanisms aimed at the elimination of racial discrimination;

- (b) To increase efforts aimed at avoiding overlapping and/or the duplication of initiatives.

## **C. Challenges faced by women of African descent**

### **1. Conclusions**

#### **89. The Working Group:**

- (a) Recalls that discrimination faced by women of African descent in many parts of the world is the clear outcome of, inter alia, systemic and structural racism and a global mindset that reflects the legacy of the trade and trafficking in enslaved Africans;
- (b) Recognizes that women and girls of African descent face intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination and that a holistic approach should be used while countering the multiple forms of discrimination faced by women and girls of African descent;
- (c) Remains concerned about the fact that many women of African descent are disproportionately represented among persons living in poverty, as a result of lack of economic opportunities and autonomy and access to economic resources, including credit, landownership and inheritance, which force women into situations of vulnerability and exploitation;
- (d) Expresses concern that a high number of women and girls of African descent lack access to education, owing to obstacles to educational and academic achievement and practices that diminish the expectations of their teachers, and about the disproportionately high dropout rates among women and girls of African descent;
- (e) Condemns the inequality entrenched in education systems, which contain negative gender and racial stereotypes, contributing in many parts of the world to the low quality of the educational experiences of women and girls of African descent, and lack inclusion in their curricula of the histories and contributions of women of African descent in the formation of societies;
- (f) Remains concerned about the fact that, in many parts of the world, women and girls of African descent face discrimination in their enjoyment of the right to health, resulting in structural discriminatory patterns of ill-health, that women and girls of African descent do not have equal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, resulting in particular in their receiving low-quality prenatal care and higher maternal mortality and morbidity rates among those women, especially with regard to HIV infection and women living with HIV/AIDS becoming victims of stigmatization;
- (g) Considers that, in many parts of the world, women of African descent face intersecting forms of discrimination in employment, manifesting in high rates of unemployment, low wages, precarious working conditions and overrepresentation in domestic work;
- (h) Condemns the fact that, in many countries, women of African descent experience low levels of political participation and representation and of access to decision-making positions, as a result of structural discrimination, even when the political participation of women is regulated through quota laws, which do not take into account systemic inequalities faced by women of African descent;
- (i) Expresses concern about the fact that women and girls of African descent are often, to a disproportionate extent compared with other groups, victims of violence and harmful practices, such as homicide, domestic violence, sexual and gender-based violence and harassment, rape, sexual exploitation, abduction, trafficking, child marriage and female genital mutilation, which in some countries continue to prevail, given the narrow scope of interventions;



(j) Notes with concern the rise in the negative stereotyping, racist and sexist bullying and harassment of women of African descent, which often results in the normalization of discriminatory attitudes, insults and ridicule, especially in the media and on the Internet, and recalls that such media platforms can be harnessed to play a key role in advancing human rights and equality;

(k) Emphasizes the need for data and statistics, disaggregated by relevant factors, on the specific situation of women and girls of African descent, which strengthens the assessment of the enjoyment of their rights and contributes to revealing and determining effective ways to redress racial and gender-based discrimination and barriers and promotes meaningful recognition in the analysis of their experiences and highlights the need to use data collection responsibly and in line with international human rights law, including the right to privacy;

(l) Regrets that the human rights situation of women of African descent is often subsumed under data on women in general, which conceals patterns of inequality among women and misrepresents the situation of women of African descent;

(m) Recalls that all policymaking requires a comprehensive approach that takes into consideration the particular experience of women and girls of African descent and allows for their participation and guidance in setting agendas and determining their priorities and needs.

## 2. Recommendations

90. The aforementioned key areas affecting the rights of women and girls of African descent must be addressed. The Working Group therefore urges States:

(a) To respect, protect and fulfil all human rights of women and girls of African descent and recognize the fundamental role that women of African descent have played in national development processes and the urgent need to ensure that all their human rights are fully promoted, fulfilled and protected;

(b) To adopt a holistic and intersectional approach to public policymaking, taking into account gender, race, ethnicity, social origin, migration status, disability and religion, and any other status;

(c) To develop public policies aimed at eliminating inequalities, in line with provisions under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and taking into account relevant recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women;

(d) To consider establishing legislative and policy frameworks to mainstream intersectional, gender and racial perspectives into poverty-reduction policies and policies for tackling economic exclusion and financial discrimination, ensure that all measures to improve the living conditions of women of African descent have a strong commitment to the eradication of discrimination and to guaranteeing effective development opportunities; those policies must take into account the broader context of the communities in which women of African descent live and the specific needs and experiences of those women, as well as the disproportionate burden of child-rearing and household responsibilities, the lack of access to markets and credit and the income disparities in the workplace that they face;

(e) To ensure specific attention to the situation of rural women in the area of land and food security;

(f) To ensure access to education at all levels for women and girls of African descent, with particular attention given to those in the most vulnerable and marginalized situations, allocating adequate resources and adopting temporary special measures when necessary, particularly for access to tertiary education, and take appropriate

measures to address high rates of school dropout, sexual violence in schools and gender bias regarding the academic achievements of women and girls of African descent;

(g) To intensify their efforts in the field of education, including human rights education, in order to promote an understanding and awareness of the causes, consequences and pernicious nature of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, in consultation with education authorities and the private sector, as appropriate, to develop educational materials, including textbooks and dictionaries, aimed at combating those phenomena and, in that context, to prioritize, if appropriate, textbook and curriculum review and amendment, so as to eliminate any elements that might promote racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance or reinforce negative racial and gender stereotypes and include material that refutes such stereotypes, including by ensuring the inclusion of the history and contribution of women and girls of African descent;

(h) To ensure equal access to comprehensive, high-quality and affordable health care for women of African descent, with a particular focus on sexual and reproductive health, and eliminate all forms of discrimination in that area;

(i) To eliminate all forms of discrimination in the area of employment, effectively addressing high rates of unemployment, disproportionately low wages, overrepresentation in domestic work and precarious working conditions, among other factors;

(j) To consider adopting policies to support the political participation of women of African descent, recognize the place that they deserve and undertake steps to address their exclusion from political power and decision-making, including, where appropriate, temporary special measures, such as affirmative action and quota laws;

(k) To develop measures to end all forms of violence against women of African descent, including sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices, as both a cause and a consequence of discrimination and its disproportionate incidence;

(l) To counter negative stereotypes, racist and sexist bullying against women and girls of African descent, in particular allocating resources towards the responsible use of the media and the Internet as a means of achieving equality and respect and protecting and fulfilling the human rights of women and girls of African descent;

(m) To support actions that promote the positive representation of women of African descent in accordance with their specific and diverse reality, in order to put an end to representations that undermine their dignity and autonomy;

(n) To collect, disaggregate and analyse statistical data in accordance with paragraph 92 (a) of the Durban Programme of Action, with particular regard to gender, race and ethnicity, in order to continually evaluate the situation of women and girls of African descent, assess progress made, identify social inequalities and guide the formulation of policies to prevent, combat and eradicate racial discrimination.

## **D. Progress achieved concerning the implementation of the programme of activities for the International Decade for People of African Descent**

### **1. Conclusions**

91. The Working Group reaffirms the programme of activities for the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent, as contained in the annex to General Assembly resolution 69/16.

### **2. Recommendations**

92. The Working Group recommends that Member States:

(a) Commit themselves to delivering tangible and meaningful results by the end of the International Decade for People of African descent;

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- (b) Continue taking the steps towards the establishment of a permanent forum on people of African descent, which will serve as a consultation mechanism for people of African descent and other interested stakeholders and a platform for improving the quality of life and livelihoods of people of African descent, contribute to elaborating a United Nations declaration on the promotion of and full respect for human rights of people of African descent and conclude the modalities, format and substantive and procedural aspects of the permanent forum at the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly;
- (c) Consider further measures to promote and protect the human rights of people of African descent, as enshrined in international instruments, including through the elaboration of a draft United Nations declaration on the promotion of and full respect for the human rights of people of African descent;
- (d) Share best practices towards the documentation of and advancement of racial equality worldwide and raise awareness about the challenges faced by people of African descent;
- (e) Consider the efforts against “Afrophobia” and all forms of discrimination against people of African descent as part of national plans against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;
- (f) Welcomes the booklet on the International Decade for People of African descent published by OHCHR and the Department of Global Communications of the Secretariat and requests OHCHR to publish the programme of activities for the International Decade in an easily accessible brochure format in the official languages of the United Nations, for wide dissemination, and invites States to publish translations thereof.

## **Annex**

### **List of participants**

#### **Member States**

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Germany, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Japan, Lebanon, Lesotho, Luxembourg, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Russian Federation, Senegal, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Ukraine, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zimbabwe

#### **Intergovernmental organizations**

European Union

#### **United Nations bodies and specialized agencies**

United Nations Population Fund

#### **Non-governmental organizations**

International Youth and Student Movement for the United Nations

World against Racism Network

World Council for Peace

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