



*Permanent Mission of the Republic of Zimbabwe  
to the United Nations*

**STATEMENT**

**READ ON BEHALF OF THE**

**SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY**

**BY**

**H. E. BONIFACE G. CHIDYAUSIKU  
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE**

**ON**

**AGENDA ITEM 64  
(ELIMINATION OF RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION)**

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Permanent Mission of the Republic of Zimbabwe to the United Nations – 128 East 56<sup>th</sup> street, New York, NY, 10022  
Tel. (212) 980-9511 – Fax. (212) 308-6705  
E-mail: zimbabwe@un.int.org

Mr. Chairman,

It gives me great pleasure to address this distinguished Committee on behalf of the following Member States of the Southern African Development Community (SADC): Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and my own country, Zimbabwe.

Let me take this opportunity to extend our gratitude to you, and to the members of the Bureau, for the excellent manner in which you are conducting the business of this Committee.

SADC aligns itself fully with the statement made by the delegation of South Africa on behalf of the G77 and China on Agenda Item 64, Elimination of racism and racial discrimination.

We wish to thank the Secretary General for his reports on this agenda item, contained in documents A/61/335 and A/61/337. We see the recommendations made in the reports as useful bases for the way forward as we all join hands in the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. We also thank Mr Doudou Diene for his introductory statement.

Mr. Chairman,

As is well known, SADC Member States lived through apartheid, the worst form of institutionalized racism and racial discrimination. Individually and collectively, and with the support of many in the international community, we fought and defeated this blatant form of racism. This part of our history is still fresh in our minds. We have drawn lessons from it. We are determined and committed to seek solutions to the vestiges of racism's naked past, and to address its contemporary forms.

In this regard, SADC Member States have instituted laws against racism and racial discrimination. We recognise however, that legal provisions alone do not provide sufficient and comprehensive solutions. The elimination of racism must entail equitable distribution of economic, social and cultural resources to ensure social justice and fairness and to promote equality of opportunities.

Mr. Chairman,

SADC believes that racism and racial discrimination, in all its forms and manifestations, constitutes a total negation of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. For this reason, most SADC Member States have signed or acceded to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. While the target for universal ratification by 2005 was not achieved, we remain hopeful that more countries will ratify the Convention.

SADC follows with keen interest the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA) adopted by the 2001 World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance that one of its Members had the honour and pleasure of hosting. We are happy to note that a number of countries have developed action plans called for by the DDPA to combat racism, and hope that many more will do the same. We are encouraged to see that the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, established under paragraph 7 of the DDPA, last year adopted a three-year programme of work and developed modalities towards the implementation of its mandate. We are concerned however, that the Working Group remains under-funded and urge that efforts are made to rectify this situation. It is also regrettable that the group of Independent Eminent Experts on the implementation of the DDPA did not meet during the reporting period. SADC hopes that this will not stall progress on the implementation of the DDPA.

SADC fully supports the proposal by CARICOM for the General Assembly to declare 25 March 2007 a day to commemorate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the abolition of Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and to place this issue on its agenda for this session. We view this in the context of measures to eradicate racism and to implement the DDPA. We will therefore fully and appropriately associate ourselves with this proposal when it is raised in the relevant fora.

Mr. Chairman,

The Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, Mr. Doudou Diene, referred in his report to the “resurgence of racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia”. It is with great concern that we continue to hear numerous reports of racial profiling. We consider this a regression in the fight against racism and racial discrimination. The unlawful use of race in police, immigration, airport security and other procedures is a serious human rights problem that cannot be justified under any pretext. SADC considers that governments need to do more than just enacting laws to provide sufficient and consistent protection against profiling. They need to demonstrate firm and determined political will to combat racial profiling and all other manifestations of racism.

SADC deplores the continuing manifestations of racism in sport. According to Mr. Doudou Diene, the World Football Federation (FIFA) has taken measures to combat racism in the beautiful game. We commend these efforts. Unfortunately, we continue to witness incidents of racism in football, some in which our nationals are the victims. We therefore agree with the Special Rapporteur’s recommendation that FIFA needs to implement and expand programmes aimed at combating racism in soccer. We hope other sporting bodies will do the same.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me conclude by reiterating SADC’s commitment to eradicate racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. We believe that the full implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action will go a long way towards a world free of racism and racial discrimination.

I thank you.