

**Check Against Delivery**



**Statement of**

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60<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly  
Third Committee

Item 69: Elimination of racism and racial discrimination

Item 70: Right of peoples to self-determination

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Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour of introducing several reports of the Secretary-General prepared under agenda items 69 and 70. They relate to the follow-up to the Durban World Conference against Racial Discrimination, the right of peoples to self-determination the UN Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, the right to development, globalization and its impact on the full enjoyment of human rights, human rights and cultural diversity, the effective promotion of the Declaration of the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, strengthened United Nations action in the field of human rights through the promotion of international cooperation and the importance of non-selectivity, impartiality and objectivity, human rights and unilateral coercive measures, protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, and human rights and terrorism. I will also outline information contained in reports before the General Assembly, relating to Nepal, Afghanistan, Sierra Leone and Turkmenistan, and the issue of Palestinian pregnant women.

### **ITEM 69: Elimination of racism and racial discrimination**

The report on the Follow-up to the Durban World Conference against Racial Discrimination (A/60/307) was submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 59/177. It focuses on responses received by States, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations bodies, specialized agencies, international and regional organizations, national human rights institutions, non-governmental organizations and youth groups and other organizations on implementation of the Durban Declaration. To provide a more comprehensive overview, this year's report also includes a part on human rights mechanisms: short overviews are given on activities undertaken by the Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent and the Independent Eminent Experts Group.

The report demonstrates that the various stakeholders use the platform of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action to act against racism, racial discrimination and related intolerance. New forms of racism are receiving increasing attention. Governments are reacting against cyber crime and the dissemination of racist ideologies via the Internet. At the same time, Governments, intergovernmental organizations, national human rights institutions and civil society organizations are using the Internet to inform about their work and spread positive messages of equality and non-discrimination. A trend is developing towards more reporting and monitoring of racist crimes and incidents.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights includes the effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action among its priorities. It has provided substantive and organizational support to the Durban follow-up

mechanisms; organized regional seminars; cooperated within the United Nations system and with various other partners and stakeholders, especially non-governmental organizations; and undertaken outreach and awareness-raising initiatives.

### **ITEM 70: Right of peoples to self-determination**

I would now like to bring your attention to the Report of the Secretary-General on the Right of Peoples to Self-determination (A/60/268), submitted pursuant to resolution 59/180 which requested the Commission on Human Rights to continue to give special attention to the violation of human rights, especially the right to self-determination, resulting from foreign military intervention, aggression or occupation, and requested the Secretary-General to report on this question to the Assembly at its sixtieth session. The report undertakes a thematic approach and summarizes the developments pertaining to the issue at the sixty-first session of the Commission on Human Rights as well as the relevant principles from the jurisprudence of the United Nations Human Rights Committee.

Also, before you is the report of the Special Rapporteur on the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right to self-determination (A/60/263). Ms. Shaista Shameem was appointed Special Rapporteur in 2004. This is the Special Rapporteur's second and final report in that capacity as the mandate has been terminated and replaced by a Working Group. As such, Ms. Shameem is not presenting her report to the Third Committee in person. Ms. Shameem has been appointed as a member of the new Working Group.

The report attempts to draw attention to what the Special Rapporteur considers the root causes of the phenomenon of mercenaries, and calls for a reconsideration of the nature of modern warfare and the roles and responsibilities of relevant actors. The Special Rapporteur met with a number of representatives of private military companies in a "Chatham House rules" meeting in June which yielded a statement, contained in the report, committing them to work on a code of conduct explicitly cognizant of human rights.

Finally, you have before you a note prepared by the Secretariat in lieu of a report by the Working Group on the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right to self-determination (A/60/319). The two-page document was submitted prior to the constitution of the Working Group. It outlines its mandate and provides information on the steps taken by the Chair of the Commission to nominate its members.

The Working Group is composed of Ms. Najat Al-Hajjaji (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Ms. Amada Benavides (Colombia), Mr. Jose Luis Gomez del Prado (Spain), Mr. Alexander Nikitin (Russia) and Ms. Shaista Shameem (Fiji). Its members held their first session from 10-14 October 2005.