**Situation regarding racial equality in the world**

According to the part VII of the resolution, and what General Assembly requested from Human Rights Council “to continue paying attention to the situation regarding racial equality in the world” and, more concretely, to prepare through its Advisory Committee “a study on appropriate ways and means of assessing the situation, while identifying possible gaps and overlaps.”

17 Equality and non-discrimination are two interdependent and complementary concepts, often presented as the two faces of the same coin as mentioned in Report of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee point 17

Equality affirms that all human beings are born free and equal. This means that laws, policies and programs should not be discriminatory, and also that public authorities should not apply or enforce laws, policies and programs in a discriminatory or arbitrary manner.

Non-discrimination is an integral part of the principle of equality. It ensures that no one is denied their rights because of factors such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property or birth. In addition to those grounds, discrimination on certain other grounds may also be prohibited. These grounds include age, nationality, marital status, disability, place of residence within a country and sexual orientation.

There is no doubt that the scourge of racism remains pervasive and widespread, affecting all countries and regions around the world. Today, however, there is a better understanding of the drivers of this phenomenon and more knowledge about its root causes and effects. Governments, societies and individuals are equally more aware of the harmful societal effects of all forms of racism. Experience has taught us that systemic discrimination, neglect or exclusion, is often among the root causes of conflict situations and a breeding ground for violence.

8“Poverty, discrimination and vulnerability often concentrate in racial and ethnic minorities who historically have suffered from structural and socioeconomic marginalization: African descent, indigenous peoples and the Roma as well as migrants, displaced people and refugees”

9“The COVID-19 pandemic has made evident the negative consequences of lack of racial equality, bringing new concerns to society as a whole. The virus itself has no race or class bias” as mentioned in Report of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee point 8 and 9

1. Disparities in COVID-19 outcomes can arise from unequal exposure to transmission risks that concentrate in disadvantaged populations, amplified by various economic and social factors both inside and outside the household, including working outside the home as essential workers; working hourly wage jobs; living in large, multigenerational households; and having limited access to housing and to health care. Essential workers are often unable to work from home and therefore are more likely to be in contact with infectious people. Larger household sizes, especially in physically smaller homes, make it more difficult for people to quarantine if they have been exposed or to isolate if they have been infected. Households with crowded conditions and essential workers are often poor and might not be able to access testing or treatment promptly. Lack of adequate and timely testing and diagnosis that can improve prognosis and break cycles of transmission further increases risks for infection and illness.

Heightened risk for exposure at the household level can be magnified in communities within small geographic areas in which household-level risks are concentrated, resulting in substantially higher case rates. Systematic racism in employment markets, financial institutions, and housing access results in larger numbers of essential workers, smaller houses, and more geographically concentrated populations for Black, Latino, Asian, and Indigenous people. “racialization of poverty” also encompasses a lack of meaningful participation and representation in the decision-making processes and public life.

1. The forms of prejudice we live with today have different names, one being modern racism. Modern racists neither express nor endorse racist views and stereotypes. They believe in greater integration between people. However, modern racists also believe racial equality has been achieved and that we need no further policies to promote equality. If racism has been neutralised, then it’s reasonable to maintain the status quo. For people who think in this way, racism is over and there’s nothing left to discuss. Modern racism reveals itself at opportune moments, is more oblique than confrontational, and often leads to a conflict in our own personal values.

In other words, racial prejudice has not disappeared, it has mutated. Today, racism manifests itself in numerous ways:

* First, avoiding any meaningful contact with the minority group
* Second, practising racial discrimination when the circumstances allow it
* Third, rather than criticising a minority group, those with racist beliefs will attack a policy or action, and use that as an outlet for their attitudes
* Fourth, making a distinction between groups in terms of their ‘values’

Put simply, overt and obvious forms of prejudice are witnessed less than they were and it is comforting to believe that racism is becoming a thing of the past; that somehow we live in an enlightened age where judging people by the colour of their skin is no longer acceptable.