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

### **Report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, Mutuma Ruteere**

#### **Implementation of General Assembly resolution 66/143**

##### *Summary*

The Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance submits the present report pursuant to General Assembly resolution 66/143, in which the Assembly requested the Special Rapporteur to prepare for submission to the Human Rights Council at its twentieth session a report on the implementation of that resolution.

The present report analyses the latest developments identified by the Special Rapporteur with regard to the human rights and democratic challenges posed by extremist political parties especially in the context of the current economic crisis. The report further addresses the use of the Internet and social media by extremist political parties, movements and groups; the adverse effects of such phenomena on youth; and the need for preventive measures to address extremism in sport in the light of the upcoming sports events in 2012.

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## **I. Introduction**

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 66/143 on the inadmissibility of certain practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, in which the Assembly requested the Special Rapporteur to prepare for submission to the Human Rights Council at its twentieth session a report on the implementation of that resolution.

2. The Special Rapporteur notes that a report including contributions received from States and other stakeholders on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 66/143 will be submitted to the Assembly at its sixty-seventh session, in accordance with paragraph 24 of said resolution.

3. In chapter II of the present report the Special Rapporteur addresses the human rights and democratic challenges posed by extremist political parties, movements and groups in the context of the current economic crisis. He examines the use of the Internet and social media by extremist political parties, movements and groups in chapter III and considers the adverse effects of such phenomena on youth in chapter IV. In chapter V, the Special Rapporteur raises the need for preventive measures to address extremism in sport, while chapter V contains his conclusions and recommendations.

## **II. Addressing the human rights and democratic challenges posed by extremist political parties, movements and groups in the context of the current economic crisis**

### **A. Democratic challenges posed by extremist political parties, movements and groups in the context of the current economic crisis**

4. The Special Rapporteur is concerned that the current economic and financial crisis and its consequences on poverty and unemployment may have further contributed to the rise of extremist political parties, movements and groups, and exacerbated identity-related issues. Indeed, societies have become more and more diverse in terms of cultural and ethnic origin and religious affiliation, and in some instances, such diversity has led to identity-related tensions that have been exploited in the context of the current economic crisis by some extremist political parties to incite discrimination and hatred against specific groups. In some countries, it has been reported that the financial aspects of the crisis have rekindled old negative stereotypes and racial prejudices against members of minorities such as the Roma. Furthermore, in some regions, fear and discontent occasioned by social and economic problems such as pauperisation, unemployment and budget cuts in social benefits have manifested themselves in votes in favour of extremist political parties, including those with racist and xenophobic programmes. The Special Rapporteur is concerned that in some instances this has led to the electoral success of such political parties, which are, for the first time, gaining seats in national parliaments. For instance, it was reported that this year, far-right political parties, which did not previously enjoy representation in national parliaments, have managed to obtain seats in the context of austerity policies and measures implemented in response to the economic crisis at the national level. In other countries, extremist political parties have become the third political party, with an increased number of seats in national parliaments, which gives them more influence in the political arena and the national legislature. The Special Rapporteur is concerned that in this context vulnerable groups have been particularly targeted and stigmatized. Indeed, reports received indicate that the tendency of political leaders to promote their platforms in ethnic terms, while

stigmatizing other peoples and blaming them for any problems experienced, appears to have grown. In this connection, it appears that extremist political parties have effectively placed the burden of the negative consequences of the crisis on minorities, foreigners, migrants, including irregular migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. These groups have been labelled as a threat to the standard of living of the general population and blamed for being responsible for the rise in unemployment and the State debt. Reports received indicate that Muslim populations have also been particularly singled out and stigmatized, especially during electoral campaigns carried out this year in some countries, including at the presidential level.

5. The Special Rapporteur is concerned that some traditional political parties have also engaged in the rhetoric of extremist political parties and have scapegoated vulnerable groups, instead of using rational and objective arguments to counter the rather simplistic solutions often put forward by extremist political parties to solve the political, societal and economic problems resulting from the crisis. The previous mandate holder had already pointed out the sometimes equivocal position taken by mainstream political parties towards extremist political parties, including through coalitions formed with such parties and the fuelling of populist ideas during electoral campaigns (A/HRC/15/45; A/HRC/18/44). In order not to lose part of their electorate, some traditional political parties and leaders continue to favour nationalistic rhetoric that is sometimes openly racist and xenophobic. For instance, it was reported that some mainstream political parties, like extremist political parties, have repeatedly, based their electoral campaigns on the rhetoric of national identity, threats posed by foreigners and migrants, including irregular migrants, to the economy, employment, security and national identity. The problem is that the spiral of scapegoating creates a climate in which such rhetoric may increasingly be seen as the norm. Indeed, it was reported that traditional political parties and politicians, including high-level political leaders, do not always condemn such discourse and rhetoric. Yet the absence of condemnation may send a wrong signal that the ideas promoted by extremist political parties are acceptable, despite the fact that they represent a danger to democracy and the cohesion of societies. The Special Rapporteur calls on traditional political parties and leaders to take a strong public stance against extremist political parties and politicians who propagate racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. He also urges all politicians and political parties to break out of the spiral of intolerant, racist and xenophobic discourse that seeks primarily to blame, and above all serves to inflame tensions rather than build mutual understanding and respect. Furthermore, the Special Rapporteur emphasizes that it is equally important that such a stance be taken by traditional political parties against expressions of intolerance, racism and xenophobia when these expressions come from their own ranks.

## **B. Persistence of racial violence against vulnerable groups**

6. As stated above, in this period of economic crisis, non-citizens, members of minorities, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are still the main scapegoats of extremist political parties with a xenophobic and racist agenda, which blame them for the social problems of the population and sometimes incite racial discrimination and violence against them. Indeed, an increase in incidents involving racist violence perpetrated by extremist movements and groups, including neo-Nazis, skinheads, and other right-wing movements were reported in some countries. In this regard, the Special Rapporteur is concerned about reported cases of violence and harassment perpetrated by neo-Nazis and skinheads against

individuals of African descent.<sup>1</sup> He is also concerned by information indicating that Roma continue to be at a high risk of racist and xenophobic violence by individuals or groups closely linked to extremist political parties, movements and groups. For instance it was reported that groups of neo-Nazi armed with knives and metal sticks attacked Roma settlements where Roma children, women and older people lived. Furthermore, according to information received, threatening fascist ideology messages and swastikas are frequently tagged on Roma's houses or near Roma settlements.<sup>2</sup> Of particular concern are also reports indicating that in some countries, Muslims and Jews have been targeted by individuals or groups linked to extremist political parties, movements or groups. In this regard, the Special Rapporteur is concerned, *inter alia*, about reports of physical attacks against Muslims and Jews, perpetrated by individuals belonging to extreme right-wing movements; paintings of Swastikas on monuments dedicated to the victims of the Holocaust<sup>3</sup> and anti-Semitic acts committed by neo-Nazi groups registered as legal entities under different names.<sup>4</sup>

7. Xenophobia against foreigners, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers is a predictable trend in many parts of the world when the economic situation deteriorates, and this should be carefully addressed by all actors. Indeed, according to information received, extremist groups and movements inciting racial hatred and violence against migrants continue to operate in a number of countries. It was reported for instance, that several marches against irregular migrants were organized by individuals belonging to far-right groups, followed by violent attacks against migrants.<sup>5</sup> Foreigners, including foreign students, have also been targeted. In this regard, it was reported that raids have been organized by far-right groups on dormitories where a number of foreign students were living. The Special Rapporteur is concerned that in some instances, activities by individuals linked to extremist groups or movements, including for instance the distribution of leaflets and posters propagating hatred against migrants have contributed to increased hostility against foreigners and migrants among the local population.<sup>6</sup> In addition, it was reported that in some countries, anti-immigrant border vigilante groups have attacked, harassed and sometimes killed individuals they perceived to be irregular migrants. In this connection, the Special Rapporteur warns States about the adoption and implementation of policy and legislative measures targeting migrants – especially irregular migrants – that may contribute to exacerbating xenophobic violence and hostility against them. He calls on States to ensure that those responsible are prosecuted and sanctioned.

8. While minorities, migrants, foreigners, asylum seekers and refugees continue to be the main victims of racist and xenophobic violence by individuals linked to extremist political parties, movements or groups, the Special Rapporteur is concerned that such individuals also target persons on the basis of their sexual orientation. In this regard, he is deeply concerned about information received recently regarding the death of a young gay man of 24 years old, following a brutal attack by individuals linked to a neo-Nazi group, who beat him unconscious and cut swastikas on his chest and arms with a broken bottle.

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<sup>1</sup> European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), Fourth report on Ukraine (CRI (2012) 6). Available from [http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/library/publications\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/library/publications_en.asp).

<sup>2</sup> Alternative report submitted to the Committee on Racial Discrimination at its 78th session (14 February–11 March 2011)

<sup>3</sup> ECRI, Fourth report on Latvia (CRI (2012) 3). Available from [http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/library/publications\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/library/publications_en.asp).

<sup>4</sup> ECRI, Second report on Serbia (CRI (2011) 21). Available from [http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/library/publications\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/library/publications_en.asp).

<sup>5</sup> Alternative report submitted to the Committee on Racial Discrimination at its 79th session (8 August–2 September 2011).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

The Special Rapporteur draws the attention of States and relevant actors to prejudice and behaviour that tends to stigmatize and place individuals into a single category. Like his predecessor, he recalls that the identity of each individual is made up of a multitude of components, including gender, age, nationality, profession, sexual orientation, political opinion, religious affiliation and social origin (A/HRC/14/43, para. 13). He calls for further tolerance, mutual understanding and respect for all, without prejudice, stereotyping or discrimination of any kind. In this regard, it is essential that appropriate measures be taken by States to address the multiple and often interlinked forms of discrimination faced by individuals on the basis of their race, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin and sexual orientation.

9. The Special Rapporteur shares the view of the High Commissioner that States should investigate promptly all reported killings and other serious incidents of violence perpetrated against individuals because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, whether carried out in public or in private by State or non-State actors (A/HRC/19/41, para. 84 (a)), including extremist movements and groups, and to hold the perpetrators accountable. Indeed, reports received indicate that racist, xenophobic and intolerant acts perpetrated by persons belonging or linked to extremist political parties, movements and groups are not always prosecuted or adequately sanctioned. In this regard, the Special Rapporteur received information about a case regarding the murder of nine migrants by a neo-Nazi group during a 13-year crime spree, which the authorities allegedly failed to adequately investigate. Cases of law enforcement agents, including the police, refusing to record and investigate acts of racial violence perpetrated by individuals linked to extremist movements, groups or political parties were also often reported. Yet without investigation and prosecution, the rights of the victims to justice, including access to effective remedies and reparation, remain hampered. Some reports further indicate that in some instances, police officers did not intervene to stop harassment, verbal abuse and violent attacks targeting, in particular, members of minorities, including Roma. Similarly, the Special Rapporteur notes with concern that racist crimes committed by individuals linked to extremist groups are sometimes sanctioned by light sentences. As an illustration, he highlights the case reported about a neo-Nazi supporter who was sentenced to 400 hours of community labour for having gravely attacked a Roma.<sup>7</sup>

10. While the Special Rapporteur notes with appreciation measures taken to end the recruitment of police officers from extreme right-wing groups, and specific training provided by civil society actors to law enforcement agents on recognizing and dealing with hate crimes as well as threats posed by extremist movements and groups, he urges States to duly prosecute and sanction those responsible for racist and xenophobic violence, while taking into account the rights and interests of the victims. He also urges States to ensure that mandatory training on human rights, including on how to address racially motivated crimes committed by individuals linked to extremist political parties, movements and groups, are provided to law enforcement agents, including the police. Furthermore, the lack of data remains an important obstacle to effectively addressing racist, xenophobic and intolerant crimes by individuals closely linked to extremist political parties, movements and groups. In this regard, the Special Rapporteur reiterates, as his predecessor, the importance of collecting accurate data on racist and xenophobic crimes. He further encourages States and civil society actors to establish systems for recording, reporting and monitoring racist incidents and to encourage the victims of racist acts to report them.

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<sup>7</sup> Alternative report submitted to the Committee on Racial Discrimination at its 79th session (8 August-2 September 2011).

### III. Challenging the use of the Internet and social media by extremist political parties, movements and groups

11. In his report (A/HRC/18/44), the previous mandate holder expressed concern about the increased use of the Internet by individuals and groups of individuals closely linked to extremist movements to disseminate racist ideas and propagate racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. Reports received recently confirm that extremist political parties, movements and groups are still actively present on the Internet, including through material published on their website or in the web pages of sympathizing organizations that promote and incite racial discrimination and violence, and that their use of the Internet remain of particular concern.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore the Internet not only remains an important channel for extremist movements and groups to spread hate speech and incite racial violence and abuse against specific groups of individuals, but it has also been used as a means to expand their networks of individuals, movements and groups worldwide. In this regard, some reports indicate that exchanges between right-wing extremists through social networking sites and YouTube are more and more ubiquitous. It was also reported that the Internet is used by a number of extremist movements and groups, especially far right-wing movements, as the perfect recruitment platform for potential new members, as it enables easy invitations to various events and meet-ups without distance constraints. The Special Rapporteur also received information about overtly anti-Semitic statements in ultra-nationalist or far right-wing publications posted on the Internet that are reportedly often made with impunity.<sup>9</sup> Cases of persons being attacked following the publication of their personal details in a list of anti-fascist activists on a neo-Nazi website were also reported.<sup>10</sup>

12. The Special Rapporteur is alarmed by the use of the Internet and social media by extremist groups and individuals to disseminate racist ideas and propagate racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. However, he reiterates that the Internet and social media can also be a useful tool for preventing the spread of racist ideologies by extremist political parties, groups and movements. In this connection, he welcomes information received about projects set up at the national level by civil society groups with the support of public authorities, including the creation of a social network-based platform targeting young people and aiming specifically at countering right-wing extremism and fostering a democratic culture. Reports received indicate that young people of all social backgrounds are interested in politics, although there is still a lack of sufficient knowledge of the challenges posed by extremist political parties, movements and groups. In this regard, the Special Rapporteur urges States to sensitize children and youth, including through human rights classes, about the challenges that such parties, groups, and movements pose to democracy, especially with regard to the principle of non-discrimination.

13. Like his predecessor, the Special Rapporteur encourages States to use the opportunities provided by new technologies, including the Internet, to counter the dissemination of ideas based on racial superiority or hatred. He warns States about any attempt to unduly limit the right to freedom of expression when adopting measures to counter extremist political parties, movements and groups. In this regard, he calls on States

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<sup>8</sup> Alternative report submitted to the Committee on Racial Discrimination at its 79th session (8 August-2 September 2011).

<sup>9</sup> ECRI, Fourth report on Turkey (CRI (2011) 5). Available from [http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/library/publications\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/library/publications_en.asp).

<sup>10</sup> ECRI, Fourth report on Poland (CRI (2010) 18). Available from [http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/library/publications\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/library/publications_en.asp).

to fully respect their obligations under articles 19 and 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and reiterates, like his predecessor, that determining which acts or expressions may meet the thresholds determined in articles 19 to 20 of the Covenant and article 4 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination is ultimately a decision that is best made by an independent and impartial court or tribunal in accordance with international standards, after a thorough assessment of the individual circumstances of each case (A/HRC/18/44, para. 30).

#### **IV. Preventing the adverse effects of extremist political parties, movements and groups on youth**

14. It is a major concern that youth are particularly vulnerable to extremist political parties, movements and groups, including neo-Nazis, skinhead groups and similar extremist ideological movements. A similar issue was already raised by the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination which expressed its concern at the rise in xenophobic and right-wing tendencies among youth and at the reported growth in outreach activities by extremist organizations using electronic social networks to expand their propaganda specifically among youth.<sup>11</sup> In this regard, repeated attacks against foreigners and members of minorities by young extremists were reported, including a specific case regarding the attack on foreign students by a group of high school students, who reportedly had an initiation video of a far-right activist group on their mobiles.<sup>12</sup> According to information received in some countries, violent racist attacks are often committed by groups of skinhead youth who are not necessarily members of structured right-wing organizations or formally registered groups, but rather belong to a skinhead subculture. In this regard, it was reported that such attacks are frequently severe, resulting in serious wounding by beating, knifing or shooting.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, extremist movements and groups, including neo-Nazis, reportedly often use fashion to get their ideologies accepted, including through stores selling fashion brands popular among neo-Nazis that attract young people. It was reported that such shops serve for networking and have also become meeting points for local neo-Nazi groups, where “cool” brands give their young customers a sense of belonging. According to information received in some countries, music concerts have been used by extreme right wing and neo-Nazi groups as a space to spread their ideology,<sup>14</sup> attract young people and recruit new members, including unemployed youth.

15. Specific awareness-raising campaigns aimed at preventing and dissuading youth from joining extremist political parties, movements and groups, including neo-Nazi and skinhead groups and similar extremist ideological movements, should be carried out. In this regard, the Special Rapporteur welcomes information provided about campaigns launched in schools by civil society organizations to raise awareness about neo-Nazi ideology. He emphasizes that human rights education is a key tool in countering the rise of extremist political parties, movements and groups among the young generation, and building a society based on pluralism, tolerance, respect for cultural diversity, multiculturalism and non-discrimination. Furthermore, while it is important to educate and sensitize youth about

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<sup>11</sup> See CERD/C/LIE/CO/3; CERD/C/UKR/CO/19-21.

<sup>12</sup> Alternative report submitted to the Committee on Racial Discrimination at its 79th session (8 August-2 September 2011).

<sup>13</sup> ECRI, Fourth report on Ukraine (CRI (2012) 6). Available from [http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/library/publications\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/library/publications_en.asp).

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

human rights and the principle of non-discrimination, it is equally essential to sensitize parents and teachers. Indeed, reports received indicate that youth are also influenced by extremist ideas based on racial superiority and hatred at homes.

## **V. The need for preventive measures to address extremism in sport**

16. The presence of extremist groups, including neo-Nazis and skinhead groups in the field of sport, in particular football, is also an important concern that arises from information received by the Special Rapporteur. In this regard, he is concerned about reported cases of Nazi symbols and banners deployed during football matches, as well as the shouting and show of Nazi slogans and gestures on those occasions, often directed at players or supporters of African origin.<sup>15</sup> The Special Rapporteur calls on States and all relevant actors, including football federations, to deal with the presence of extremist groups, including neo-Nazi and skinhead groups, as well as hooligans at sports events, including football matches. Indeed, in light of upcoming sports events, including the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) Euro 2012 championship and the Olympics, it is crucial that preventive measures be taken to avoid acts of racial violence, abuse and incitement to racial hatred by extremist individuals or groups. In this regard, initiatives, such as a handbook to assist law enforcement officials in identifying racist symbols used by supporters and fans, including neo-Nazi and skinhead members, as well as preventive measures aimed at fostering tolerance and respect are encouraged by the Special Rapporteur. He also encourages national and international sports organizations and federations to develop and implement codes of conduct that would address the issue of extremist ideologies and behaviours among supporters. In addition, such events could be used as an opportunity for host States to further promote human rights, democracy and the rule of law, and to address human rights and democratic challenges posed by extremist political parties, movements and groups.

## **VI. Conclusions and recommendations**

17. **The rise in extremist political parties, movements and groups, including neo-Nazi and skinhead groups and similar extremist ideological movements, continue to pose major human rights and democratic challenges. The Special Rapporteur notes with concern that the economic crisis in different parts of the world may have further aggravated this trend. He acknowledges that a number of efforts have been taken by States and civil society actors to address the problem, but he is of the view that more needs to be done in order to effectively counter such phenomenon which threaten democracy, affect vulnerable groups and have spread its roots among the young generation. Greater efforts and increased vigilance from States and all relevant actors are therefore required. In this regard, the Special Rapporteur shares the view that a comprehensive approach based on a solid legal framework that also includes key complementary measures should be developed and implemented. The Special Rapporteur emphasizes that the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, the outcome document of the Durban Review Conference and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination constitute a major comprehensive framework to be implemented in this respect.**

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

18. As long as extremist political parties, movements and groups continue to exist, they will remain a major challenge to democracy. In this regard, States should always bear in mind that preserving and consolidating democracy is essential to effectively preventing and combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. Therefore the Special Rapporteur recommends, as did the previous mandate holder, that respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law be the cornerstone of any programme or activity developed by political parties. He further urges political leaders and political parties to refrain from disseminating discourses that scapegoat vulnerable groups. On the contrary, political leaders and political parties have an important responsibility to explicitly and strongly condemn all political messages that disseminate ideas based on racial superiority or hatred and that incite racial discrimination or xenophobia. Political leaders and political parties are therefore urged to promote multiculturalism within their societies, as well as tolerance and mutual understanding and respect.

19. The Special Rapporteur recommends that appropriate legislation conforming to international human rights standards be adopted by States to prevent and address such phenomenon. In this regard, he recalls that according to article 4 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, States parties shall:

(a) Declare as an offence punishable by law all dissemination of ideas based on racial superiority or hatred, incitement to racial discrimination, as well as all acts of violence, or incitement to such acts, against any race or group of persons of another colour or ethnic origin, and also the provision of any assistance to conduct racist activities, including the financing thereof;

(b) Declare illegal and prohibit organizations and all organized and other propaganda activities which promote and incite racial discrimination, and recognize participation in such organizations or activities as an offence punishable by law;

(c) Not permit public authorities or public institutions, national or local, to promote or incite racial discrimination.

In this connection, it is crucial to introduce into domestic criminal law a provision to the effect that the commission of an offence with racist or xenophobic motivation or aim constitutes an aggravating circumstance attracting heavier sanctions.

20. Any form of impunity for crimes motivated by racist and xenophobic attitudes weakens the rule of law and democracy and tends to encourage the recurrence of such acts. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that States ensure that those responsible for crimes with racist or xenophobic motivation are prosecuted and adequately sanctioned. In this connection, prompt, thorough and impartial investigations are crucial as a first step towards ensuring justice for the victims and fighting impunity. Victims should be provided with effective access to legal remedies, including the right to seek just and adequate reparation for any damage suffered as a result of a racist or xenophobic crime.

21. The Special Rapporteur strongly recommends that States collect data on racist and xenophobic crimes in order to identify the types of offences committed, the characteristics of the victims and of the perpetrators, including whether they are affiliated with an extremist political party, movement or group. Such data would further enable a better assessment of the effectiveness of measures taken to address racist crimes. The Special Rapporteur also recommends that the necessary financial, human and technical resources be provided to improve the quality of data-collection systems where they already exist, while ensuring that civil society is involved in this process.

22. The Special Rapporteur recommends that the capacity of law enforcement agents and members of the judiciary to address crimes motivated by racist or xenophobic attitudes be strengthened through adequate and mandatory human rights training, including training with specific focus on racist and xenophobic crimes perpetrated by individuals linked to extremist political parties, groups and movements. Law enforcement agents should also be provided with the necessary instructions, procedures and resources to identify, investigate and register such crimes. Like his predecessor, the Special Rapporteur emphasizes that States should also ensure that law enforcement agents further engage with vulnerable groups who are at particular risk of racist or xenophobic crimes, in order to reduce their fear, restore confidence in law enforcement officers and allow for better reporting of racist crimes.

23. A significant challenge posed by extremist political parties, movements and groups is the need to ensure full respect for human rights and democratic principles, while adopting measures to counter the rise of such phenomenon. In this context, the positive role that freedom of expression can play in promoting democracy and combating racist and xenophobic ideologies based on racial superiority should be stressed. Indeed, States should take all opportunities, including those provided by the Internet, to counter the dissemination of ideas based on racial superiority or hatred and promote the values of equality, non-discrimination, diversity and democracy. Therefore the Special Rapporteur strongly recommends that States respect their obligations under articles 19 and 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which guarantee the rights to freedom of expression and determine the limitations thereto.

24. The Special Rapporteur recommends that concrete steps be taken to raise awareness among youth about the adverse effects of the ideologies and activities of extremist political parties, movements and groups, including neo-Nazi and skinhead groups and similar extremist ideological movements. He recalls that education remains one of the most effective means of countering the negative influence that extremist political parties, movements and groups may have on youth. Reiterating the call in the Durban Programme of Action (para. 136), he urges States to ensure that education and training, especially teacher training, promote respect for human rights and the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and that educational institutions implement policies and programmes agreed by the relevant authorities on equal opportunities, anti-racism, gender equality and cultural, religious and other diversity, with the participation of teachers, parents and students, and follow up on their implementation.

25. In the light of the upcoming sports events in 2012, including the UEFA Euro 2012 championship and the Olympics, the Special Rapporteur calls on States to strengthen measures to prevent racist and xenophobic incidents on these occasions, including by individuals or groups of individuals linked to extremist movements and groups. He reiterates the key role of sport in promoting cultural diversity, tolerance and harmony and recommends that States take advantage of such events to promote racial harmony. The Special Rapporteur further recalls the Durban Programme of Action (para. 218) which urges States, in cooperation with intergovernmental organizations, the International Olympic Committee and international and regional sports federations, to intensify the fight against racism in sport by, among other things, educating the youth of the world through sport practised without discrimination of any kind and in the Olympic spirit, which requires human understanding, tolerance, fair play and solidarity.

26. The Special Rapporteur strongly recommends that States closely cooperate with all the relevant actors, including civil society and national human rights institutions, in order to effectively prevent and address the challenges posed by extremist political parties, movements and groups, including neo-Nazi and skinhead groups and similar extremist ideological movements.

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