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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 Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent on its twelfth session*

(Geneva, 22–26 April 2013)

Chairperson-Rapporteur: Verene Shepherd

Summary

The main focus of the discussions during the twelfth session of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent was the theme of “Recognition through Education, Cultural Rights and Data Collection”. The Working Group acknowledged the importance of the theme and urged the General Assembly to adopt and launch the International Decade for People of African Descent in 2013 and consider in its deliberations the draft Programme of Action for the Decade elaborated by the Working Group under the theme “Recognition, Justice, Development”. The Working Group urged States to revise current curricula and teaching materials and develop ones which respect and recognize the history of people of African descent, including material on the transatlantic slave trade. States were also urged to cooperate with the relevant United Nations agencies and bodies to promote and protect the culture, identity, tangible and intangible heritage of the continent of Africa and people of African descent in keeping with the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. In addition to adopting domestic legislation against racial discrimination, States were also urged to collect, compile, analyse, disseminate and publish reliable and disaggregated statistical data at the national and local levels with the explicit consent of the individuals and groups that are victims of racial discrimination, based on their self-identification and in accordance with provisions on human rights and fundamental freedoms, such as data protection regulations and privacy guarantees. The Working Group reiterated its call for the establishment of a permanent forum on people of African descent at the United Nations. The present report is submitted in accordance with Human Rights Council resolutions 9/14 and 18/28.

* Annex II is reproduced as received, in the languages of submission only.

Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction	1–2	3
II. Organization of the session	3–9	3
A. Opening of the session.....	3–6	3
B. Election of the Chairperson-Rapporteur	7–8	3
C. Organization of work.....	9	4
III. Update and briefings on activities undertaken by the Working Group in the past year	10–12	4
IV. Summary of deliberations	13–44	4
V. Presentation and adoption of the methods of work of the Working Group	45	12
VI. Conclusions and recommendations	46–86	12
A. Recognition.....	49–53	13
B. Education.....	54–70	13
C. Cultural rights.....	71–80	16
D. Data collection.....	81–88	18
 <i>Annexes</i>		
I. Agenda		21
II. List of participants.....		22

I. Introduction

1. The Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent held its twelfth session from 22–26 April 2013 at the United Nations Office in Geneva. It was attended by all the members: Monorama Biswas, Mireille Fanon Mendes-France, Mirjana Najcevska, Maya Sahli and Verene Shepherd. The present report is submitted in accordance with Human Rights Council resolutions 9/14 and 18/28.

2. The participants in the session of the Working Group of Experts included representatives of Member States, the Holy See, international organizations, regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and invited panellists (see annex II).

II. Organization of the session

A. Opening of the session

3. The Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights Flavia Pansieri delivered the opening statement.

4. In her statement, she welcomed the focus of the twelfth session on recognition through education, cultural rights and data collection. She noted that the right to education was critical for people of African descent throughout the world, not only as a means of extricating themselves from historical exclusion and discrimination, but also for the enjoyment, respect and recognition of their cultures, traditions and knowledge. She added that, regrettably, despite an improvement in access to primary-level education among children of African descent, discrimination at secondary and tertiary levels prevailed in several countries, and young people of African descent remained underrepresented or even invisible in higher education. She called upon Member States to adopt affirmative action policies at all levels of education for people of African descent, as means for Governments to recognize the existence of structural discrimination in education and to combat it.

5. The Deputy High Commissioner also highlighted the importance for contemporary societies of recognizing that they were multicultural in more than one sense, comprising indigenous peoples, national and ethnic minorities, immigrants from different cultures and other groups that demand the right to exercise their cultural identity. In the same vein, she suggested that, in order for people of African descent to overcome their situation of “social invisibility”, States should promote self-identification of groups that form part of their populations in all public registries, population census and household survey. She added that the disaggregation of data in accordance with provisions on human rights and fundamental freedoms, taking into consideration data protection regulations and privacy guarantees, was crucial.

6. She also informed the session that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) was hosting the third annual Fellowship Programme for People of African Descent. The selected fellows, from seven different countries, would benefit from an intensive and practical learning opportunity at the United Nations. She closed by reaffirming that OHCHR remained committed to the realization of the rights of people of African descent.

B. Election of the Chairperson-Rapporteur

7. Ms. Shepherd was re-elected Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Working Group for a second and final year.

8. In accepting her role, the Chairperson thanked the other experts for her election and the participants for their support, stressing the importance of working together. The Chairperson highlighted that people of African descent were historically marginalized and stated that the session would seek to address racism, xenophobia and racial intolerance in its deliberations under the theme selected over the week of meetings.

C. Organization of work

9. The Working Group adopted the agenda and programme of work (see annex I).

III. Update and briefings on activities undertaken by the Working Group in the past year

10. Under item 5 of the agenda, the Chairperson presented briefs on the country visits of the Working Group to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from 1 to 5 October 2012 and Panama from 14 to 18 January 2013. She informed participants that, at the end of the visits, the Working Group had released press statements, available from the OHCHR website.¹ The experts thanked the Governments of the United Kingdom and Panama for their invitations and their assistance before, during and after the visits. The Chairperson also thanked the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and people of African descent with whom the Working Group had met during the visits. She stated that the detailed reports of the missions would be made available to the public following their submissions to the twenty-fourth session of the Human Rights Council.

11. Yury Boychenko, Chief of the Anti-Discrimination Section of OHCHR, provided an update on the International Decade for People of African Descent and informed the session that the President of the General Assembly would initiate consultations as envisaged in General Assembly resolution 67/155 and would identify facilitators from among Member States. Pursuant to paragraph 79 of the same resolution, whereby the Secretary-General was requested to report to the Assembly before the end of its sixty-seventh session on the practical steps to be taken to make the Decade effective, Mr. Boychenko also reported that the Secretariat had dispatched a questionnaire to Member States and other stakeholders, including NGOs, for contributions to the report.

12. The Working Group was congratulated by Brazil, China, Gabon, Jamaica and Senegal, all of which expressed their support.

IV. Summary of deliberations

Thematic analysis: discussion and analysis of recognition through education, cultural rights and data collection

13. Ahmed Reid, Professor of History at City University of New York, presented on the topic, "The transatlantic trade in Africans: Recognition through data analysis". Mr. Reid began his presentation by establishing that the transatlantic trade in Africans, which is today considered a crime against humanity, had been a State-sanctioned capitalist venture. He also stated that it had been a racialized trade that involved mainly Africans as victims

¹ See www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=12645&LangID=E and www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=12948&LangID=E, respectively.

and which had denied them the basic notions of natural rights (the right to life, liberty and property). He introduced the University College of London's Legacies of British Slave-ownership database and the recently created Voyages database to highlight the character of the trade and by extension to facilitate a much broader understanding of the experiences of enslaved Africans. He also presented statistical data on the magnitude of the transatlantic slave trade, the mortality rates of the enslaved and the atrocities committed against the enslaved by their enslavers, as well as the resistance against such enslavement.

14. During the interactive discussion, Ms. Najcevska thanked the presenter and suggested that the study of the contents of the database should be included in all school curricula to raise awareness and visibility about the research conducted. Similarly, Ms. Fanon Mendes-France enquired about the linkages between different databases. She further enquired whether the developers of the database were in contact with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Slave Route Project, which Mr. Reid confirmed was the case. Following the presentation, Ms. Fanon Mendes-France also recommended the creation of an international financial fund for historians and researchers on the topic.

15. Susana Baca, the former Minister of Culture of Peru and a singer and two-time Grammy-award winner, delivered a presentation on the promotion of cultural rights of people of African descent. She described the situation of people of African descent in her country, stating that, despite rich cultural diversity, racism and discrimination were still prevalent. She established the relationship between access to education, self-consciousness of peoples' own dignity and their ability to gain political capacity to negotiate. She stated that the poor remained deprived of their rights and emphasized that development indicators needed to be disaggregated by geographical areas, economic levels and ethnic origin, so as to identify and protect the rights of excluded and marginalized groups. Owing to the prevalence of historical discrimination leading to feelings of inferiority among people of African descent, self-esteem through the enjoyment of cultural rights was crucial. Ms. Baca pointed out that it was only in 2012 that Peru had for the first time introduced into its education curriculum the study on the transatlantic slave trade.

16. Ms. Shepherd presented a paper on "Monuments, Memorialization and Black Identity". She pointed out that tangible sites of memory were not only erected to honour heroes, but were regarded as part of a people's cultural expression and an essential reflection of people's cultural rights. They represented the other side of intangible heritage. She also stated that, despite the ubiquitousness of monuments and declared sites of memory, there was no consensus surrounding their purpose, audience or constituency; nor could anyone predict the public response to them. She gave examples from the Caribbean experience showing that Caribbean people had sought to eradicate and dismantle political structures of imperialism and historical representations of the Caribbean in text and image that mostly reflected British colonial subjectivity and authority. In the process, they had sought to reclaim and reconstruct the indigenous, African, Creole and immigrant experiences.

17. According to Ms. Shepherd, the erection of monuments to the leaders of the anti-slavery struggle and black liberation movements had been an essential post-colonial activity. Indeed, all over the African diaspora, the descendants of black freedom fighters had devised creative ways of re-voicing collectively the black experience and finding appropriate ways to honour the memory of the African freedom fighters. Ms. Shepherd stated in her presentation that a continued focus on leaders among the icons memorialized had led to increasing criticism of the project of iconographic and symbolic decolonization and a call for its completion through the construction of sites of memory to the masses, so that the sites of memory could voice the black experience more collectively and include women icons, among others.

18. During the interactive discussion, Ms. Najcevska emphasized the need to have clarity on the influence of cultures of people of African descent at the global level, particularly in relation to the proposed International Decade for People of African Descent. She mentioned the need to highlight the role of women while building monuments and memorials, as women who had contributed to the liberation struggle were often forgotten. An NGO representative enquired about a proposal discussed in New York to construct a memorial to honour the victims of the transatlantic slave trade, and asked whether that monument had indeed been constructed. Ms. Sahli commented that it was important to identify why, how and for whom the reappropriation of culture was being undertaken. She further added that dialogue between Africa and the rest of the diaspora and cooperation were equally important on that matter.

19. Ms. Shepherd responded that the monument had still not been constructed as donations were still needed to fund it. She informed the meeting that discussions about the memorial were still ongoing at the international level and that Jamaica had been leading the project. Ms. Baca also endorsed the comments made on dialogue and international cooperation, and that it was important to establish further linkages with Africa in the process of promoting the rights of people of African descent.

20. Ms. Fanon Mendes-France delivered a presentation entitled “From thoughtless racism to recognition”. Her presentation focused on the causes behind the emergence of racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia, as well as challenges in combating those violations. She stated that ontological hierarchies created differences along racial lines and outlined the impact of history, particularly colonialism and the transatlantic slave trade, and present-day neocolonialism as factors contributing to the emergence of racism. She also added that the ideological superstructure of the State fed further exclusion and emphasized that the non-existence of the so-called distinct human races had been scientifically proven and that all people and individuals constituted one human family, rich in diversity. She mentioned that it was increasingly recognized that race was itself a social construct, reflecting ideological attempts to legitimize domination. Racism was, therefore, not about objective characteristics, but about relationships of domination and subordination, which created stigmatization and violence, and perpetuating economic, social and political inequalities and exploitation. Based on that argument, she therefore proposed a process of deconstruction of the very concept of race as a step towards eliminating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. In conclusion, Ms. Fanon Mendes-France highlighted that true recognition could not be achieved without the end of race. Recognition should therefore aim at achieving full and effective equality for all, in all aspects of life and social interactions. Finally, she proposed in the context of the International Decade for People of African Descent the creation of a group to work on the conceptual deconstruction of racism as an essential process for recognition, justice and development for all individuals and groups.

21. Heidi Safia Mirza, Professor at the Institute of Education at the University of London, delivered a presentation on “Multiculturalism and teacher education: Tackling the underperformance of children of African descent”. She started her presentation by explaining that, while her presentation was a case study of a specific country, the problems identified in the area of education could be related to the challenges faced by people of African descent in attaining access to quality education in any other country. Ms. Mirza stated that, despite a long history of multiculturalism in the United Kingdom, it was considered as a “failed project” and one of the markers of the lack of “multicultural success” had been the considerable differences in educational attainment between different ethnic groups. According to Ms. Mirza, research had shown that, while the improvements in school quality (as measured by class size, teachers’ qualifications, school type, resources, leadership, etc.) and effectiveness had been significant, gaps in achievement remained endemic, especially among pupils of African descent.

22. Ms. Mirza identified as key elements necessary for successfully achieving educational equality for children of African and African Caribbean descent in the United Kingdom the following: multicultural and anti-racist teacher training; the need to develop inclusive classroom pedagogy with culturally relevant curricula; and enhancing school leadership programmes for equality and diversity. In her recommendations, she pointed to a number of initiatives that needed to be undertaken in line with the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, such as developing truly inclusive classroom pedagogy for all with culturally relevant curricula that celebrated the history and contribution of people of African descent. She also recommended instituting compulsory multicultural and anti-racist teacher training programmes at a national level, as well as systematic monitoring and evaluation of the inequitable effects of racism and discrimination on the educational progress of children of African descent with consideration of the intersectional effects of social class, gender, religion and geography. Lastly, she suggested enhancing the recruitment and inclusion of people of African descent into school leadership and for school leadership programmes to include equality and diversity training for all.

23. Edna Santos Roland, Independent Eminent Expert on the Durban follow-up, presented on “Equal Access to Education”. Ms. Roland presented a statistical study based on the census analysis of several Latin American countries (Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras and Panama), including the study of national legal frameworks on equality and non-discrimination in relation to people of African descent and their access to education. A comparative analysis of education levels was also carried out between people of African descent and others. While the data conclusively showed that people of African descent had less access to quality education, it also depicted the struggle for self-recognition of African culture, and the struggle for recognition of the culture of African descent in the Americas, among other ethnic groups. She concluded with a number of recommendations, particularly on introducing affirmative action policies and adopting the legislation necessary in relation to access to higher education, while reducing dropout rates.

24. During the interactive discussion, the representative of Senegal emphasized that the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action remained the key framework for eliminating racism and requested speakers to suggest ways in which recognition for people of African descent could be promoted by implementing strategies under the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action framework in the various priority areas. Ms. Fanon Mendes-France suggested that the Working Group could adopt the approach of the African Union in addressing the issues of race and racism in the diaspora. Mr. Murillo Martinez expressed his support for the proposal made by Ms. Fanon Mendes-France on working together on the Decade and other pertinent issues.

25. Ms. Sahli delivered a presentation on the topic of “Recognition through Education”. She noted that States that had in their jurisdiction people of African descent, whether nationals or non-nationals, had the duty to ensure equal access to education to them; however, discrimination faced by people of African descent and other vulnerable groups in accessing education remained a challenge in many States. She emphasized that recognition of people of African descent could only occur if there was equal access to education. She reinforced the importance of quality education, including the establishment of an education system that allowed for cultural diversity and the value given to the rich heritage of African descendants.

26. Kishore Singh, the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, delivered a presentation on the promotion of equality and opportunity in education for people of African descent. He referred to the importance attached to the right to education in the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, which urged States “to ensure equal access to education for all in law and in practice”, and “to adopt and implement laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin at all levels of education, both formal and non-formal” (paras. 122 and 123). He highlighted the importance of non-discrimination and the equality of opportunity in education for guiding

State actions. In the same vein, he emphasized the importance of quality education. Despite progress made in making education accessible, learning outcomes were frequently below acceptable levels due to poor quality of education. That was an issue particularly faced by people of African descent.

27. Mr. Singh recommended that States should devise promotional measures aimed at ensuring equal access by the children of African descendants to education. These could include scholarships grants and subsidies for schoolbooks and travel expenses to attend school, as well as other support measures to increase those children's school attendance. Moreover, the systemic exclusion of specific groups from higher levels of education could also be addressed through the adoption of temporary special measures. Those might range from the establishment of enrolment quotas to the offer of financial incentives targeted at particularly vulnerable groups.

28. Pastor Murillo Martinez, a member of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, delivered his presentation on the work of the Committee in relation to the theme of recognition for people of African descent through education, cultural rights and data collection. He stated that the Committee's contribution to education, culture and data collection was found in several documents and fields of action, including its general recommendations and concluding observations. For instance, general recommendation No. 32 (2009) on the meaning and scope of special measures in the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination called for special measures (affirmative action) to alleviate and remedy disparities in the enjoyment of human rights affecting particular groups and individuals. Such disparities could include persistent or structural disparities and de facto inequalities resulting from the circumstances of history. Special measures should be carried out by Member States on the basis of accurate data, incorporating a gender perspective, on the socioeconomic and cultural status and conditions of the various groups in the population and their participation in the social and economic development of the country.

29. Similarly, general recommendation No. 34 (2011) on racial discrimination against people of African descent specified the right of people of African descent to their cultural identity, to keep, maintain and foster their mode of life and forms of organization, culture, languages and religious expressions, as well as the right to the protection of their traditional knowledge and their cultural and artistic heritage. Concerning data collection, in paragraph 9 of general recommendation No. 34, it was underlined that States parties should "take steps to identify communities of people of African descent living in their territories, especially through the collection of disaggregated data on the population". Finally, chapter XI of the general recommendation dealt with the importance of taking measures to guarantee the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights by people of African descent, including the right to education.

30. Mr. Murillo Martinez enumerated a number of examples of the Committee's concluding observations in which Member States had been recommended to provide information, including statistical data, on the socioeconomic status of people of African descent. In his recommendations, he stated that the formulation of a declaration on people of African descent, as recommended by the Committee, in line with the proposed plan of action for the adoption of the International Decade for the People of African descent, could represent the opportunity to consolidate the rights of a group long discriminated against. He also hoped that the Decade would be proclaimed soon.

31. Following the three presentations, an NGO representative asked the presenters about the issue of the right to return of people of African descent. The role of the African Union in relation to people of African descent was also discussed. In his response, Mr. Murillo Martinez mentioned that it was important to make the Millennium Development Goals (2015) and the post-2015 agenda more inclusive of people of African descent. Ms. Sahli acknowledged the issue of the right to return to Africa, but stated that more clarity was

required in understanding the concept and what needed to be done to put it into action for a holistic approach beneficial to people of African descent. She indicated the possibility of the need for a global forum for people of African descent to further the discussion in that matter.

32. Ms. Najcevska presented a paper on “Recognition through data collection: Mapping Inequalities”. She highlighted the importance of data collection in depicting racial discrimination and further noted that data collection and analysis could be an essential tool for assessing whether rights under the international and national laws were being infringed and taking corrective action. She also added that the statistical presentation of disaggregated data could be used as an appropriate tool, especially in dealing with structural discrimination.

33. She also mentioned the challenges due to the lack of insufficient statistical data on people of African descent and their resulting invisibility. Similarly, according to her, the lack of a regional or international protection regime designed specifically for people of African descent highlighted the necessity of further developing the international legal framework. She then detailed the need to develop ethnic and racial categories to meet the needs of the national anti-discrimination scheme and enable measuring. Prohibition of data collection on the basis of race in some countries served to inhibit the tracking of racism and anti-Semitism and also made monitoring the progress of anti-discrimination programmes, legislation and other initiatives difficult. She concluded by stating that solid disaggregated data on people of African descent was sine qua non in the recognition of the specific indirect and structural discrimination those persons were facing, but cautioned that, while data disaggregated by race and ethnicity might make racism and racial discrimination more visible, it could also be misused and misinterpreted and could lead to racial profiling or feed stereotypes and prejudices.

34. Carlos Viáfara, a professor of Economics at the University del Valle in Cali, Colombia, delivered a presentation entitled: “Colombia a case study: A social pyramid of pigmentocracy”. He stated that, while the subject of his presentation was a case study of a specific country, it was generally relevant to and reflective of the situation of people of African descent in other parts of the world. The presentation was based on comprehensive research undertaken by The Project on Ethnicity and Race in Latin America (PERLA), a joint project led by Princeton University and the University del Valle and other organizations, in relation to ethnic-racial issues concerning people of African descent, their construction of self-identity and other identity markers. The Project analysed the ethnic and racial inequalities in the educational attainment and income status of the household average in Colombia and other countries in the region. According to the comprehensive survey undertaken by PERLA, unlike existing models (which provided clear and distinctive categories of racial identities), in the Colombian case, ethnic and racial identities were very porous and understood in context of fusion, of the “dark” to “clear”. The PERLA survey utilized colour palettes instead of self-identity categories, to analyse how the external appearances through colour intensity of the skin affected access to valued resources at the societal level. One of the major findings of the survey was that the Afro-Colombian population, in particular people with darker skin tones, had a lower status in terms of socioeconomic achievement. This was not only attributable to historical factors but also to the presence of institutions that had reinforced discrimination, resulting in a continuing inequality trap in the long run.

35. He concluded by offering a number of recommendations, such as the need for countries to follow the experience of Brazil, Ecuador and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in their 2015 population and housing census and ask people of African descent to identify themselves on the basis of an ethnic or racial category. He also emphasized the need to introduce the ethnic/racial variable into household and quality-of-life surveys, forms, administrative registers and statistical processes in general, in order to measure discrimination and formulate, implement and monitor appropriate public policies. He also

recommended the introduction of affirmative action policies in areas where discrimination had historically been felt particularly intensely, such as access to education, health, employment, in both the public and private sectors. Proportional representation or some other suitable electoral system should be put in place in order to increase opportunities for people of African descent to participate effectively in the political life of a country.

36. Ali Moussa Iye, Chief of the History and Memory for the Dialogue Section at UNESCO, delivered his presentation on the respect for the culture, identity, history and heritage of people of African descent, with a focus on analysing the historical sources of prejudices against peoples of African descent and how they were perpetuated today. He said that the threefold discrimination endured by people of African descent consisted of the humanity lost due to slavery, a denial of history of the people of African descent and the denial of citizenship. He said that the perception of an African without history or civilization was the main basis for discrimination. There was a need to review and revise history so that the history of Africa and the contribution of Africans to the world were recognized. He added that there was a need for people of African descent to promote, teach and build the discourse about themselves, without others speaking in their place.

37. He said that the proposal for the International Decade for People of African Descent should provide the opportunity and the resources for more justice and recognition for people of African descent. However, he cautioned that the celebration of the Decade should avoid large programmes and events. He said focus should be on: introducing affirmative action policies; adopting laws on teaching African history in selected countries; providing financial support for films and television programmes to deconstruct discrimination; providing research grants and professorships to study the situation of people of African descent; and naming streets and memorials. He stated that UNESCO was working on some of the above-mentioned issues, including the urgent need to recognize, document and promote the rich contribution of people of African descent to the progress of humanity and the shaping of modern societies. He particularly stressed the importance of teaching the history and civilizations of Africa in redressing the biased discourses on people of African descent. To that end, he indicated the types of actions to be undertaken for the Decade for People of African Descent and in particular the activities that UNESCO planned to implement within the framework of its two ongoing projects, namely the *General History of Africa* and the Slave Route Project.

38. During the interactive dialogue, Mr. Viáfara was asked about the importance in educating people on data collection during census programmes. A State representative suggested that it was important to ensure that data collection was undertaken in the perspective of the provisions of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and further ensuring that such collection of data did not lead to racial profiling or any other misuse of data. In response, Mr. Viáfara highlighted the importance of training the staff of national statistics institutes responsible for collecting and disaggregating data in human rights and the culture and history of the communities about which they would be gathering information and on data protection. He also mentioned the need to adopt laws regulating the collection and processing of ethnic and racial data that protected fundamental freedoms, including the right to privacy, protecting data from misuse and ensuring the confidentiality of information.

39. Following Mr. Iye's presentation, a number of NGOs welcomed the UNESCO programme of action and enquired about grassroots participation in its activities. Mr. Iye maintained that, since the nature of activities was related to grassroots, there would be full partnership with such NGOs. He also suggested the work on the ninth volume of the *General History of Africa* which UNESCO was developing and the fiftieth anniversary of Pan-Africanism as avenues for further collaboration on promoting the rights of people of African descent.

40. Ms. Biswas delivered a presentation on “Recognition and Cultural Rights”. She stated that people of African descent formed parts of multicultural societies. In doing so, they were at the risk of losing their unique individual or group identity to the more dominant native cultures. She said that, for centuries, people of African descent worldwide had played a significant role in industrialization, urbanization and the advance of formal education, science and technology, but had not gained proper recognition for their contribution. Ms. Biswas added that, while colour prejudice had been an outstanding form of social discrimination, other forms of prejudice remained significant. She suggested highlighting endangered cultural and ethnic identities and recognizing that ideal social, ethnic and cultural equality required action from all. In the same context, Ms. Biswas recommended the adoption of affirmative action as a way forward to remedy the suffering of the past exclusions of people of African descent. She stated that the world community at large owed something to the African diaspora – partly out of concern for equitable distribution of the benefits of human society and partly in recognition of the unfair price paid by people of African descent in constructing the modern world.

41. Rita Pemberton, Trinidad and Tobago Organisation for People of African Descent, made a presentation on the topic “People of African Descent and Cultural Rights”. She introduced the work of her organization in promoting the rights of people of African descent in the Caribbean through to grassroots awareness-raising and community outreach activities. She pointed out that the end of colonialism and the institution of self-rule did not mean the end of discrimination against people of African descent in the Caribbean. According to her, discrimination found its roots causes in history. Contemporary manifestations of racism were in some cases more subtle, but institutionalized. While African culture permeated the very being of the people, many had been schooled not to acknowledge its existence and influence whether with respect to food, dance, music, traditional medicine, folklore, proverbs and sayings, religion and beliefs, art and craft, economics, theatre or any other sphere of human activity.

42. Ms. Pemberton offered a number of recommendations, including the promotion of the International Decade for People of African Descent, a systematic mechanism for the promotion of the culture of people of African descent and the establishment of a network to facilitate trade and cultural exchange, promote interaction and collaboration within the African diaspora and between these communities and Africa. The discussion with Ms. Pemberton was held remotely via audio teleconference in Trinidad and Tobago, and included the active participation of schoolchildren from a local school.

43. The representative from the European Union made a statement on behalf of her group and reiterated the European Union’s position regarding some of the issues raised by the Working Group. The representative underlined the active engagement and commitment to the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance of the European Union. The representative stated that International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination remained the fundamental legal basis of the international community to fight discrimination.

44. The representative reiterated the importance the European Union attached to avoiding both the collectivization of human rights and the creation of a hierarchy of discrimination. It expressed its objection to the Working Group’s general approach to collective rights and the need to adopt special measures. The representative also expressed the European Union’s rejection of cultural relativism. On the International Decade for People of African Descent, the representative reiterated the European Union’s concerns about the scope and nature of the Decade, as it covered a broad range of themes and situations, which needed very different responses that were not to be incorporated within a general framework of affirmative action. It welcomed the fact that the General Assembly resolution 67/155 requested the President of the General Assembly, in consultation with Member States, relevant United Nations programmes and agencies, and civil society, to launch a preparatory process for the proclamation of the Decade of People of African

Descent and hoped that the process would contribute to adding value and delivering concrete improvements in the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

V. Presentation and adoption of the methods of work of the Working Group

45. Under agenda item 7, Ms. Shepherd proceeded to present the methods of work of the Working Group. The methods of work take into account the specific features of the terms of reference of the Working Group under Commission on Human Rights resolutions 2002/68 and 2003/30 and Human Rights Council resolutions 9/14 and 18/28. Ms. Shepherd highlighted the major aspects of the methods of work, including the procedure for the election of the Chairperson and the duration of that officer's mandate, the modalities of its country visits and procedures for receiving communications (allegation letters and urgent appeals) on alleged serious human rights violations. The methods of work were formally approved by the members of the Working Group.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

46. **The International Decade for People of African Descent is a timely and important endeavour. The momentum that has been gathering speed since the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in Durban in 2001, the tenth anniversary of the Durban Declaration and the Programme of Action and the International Year in 2011 must be maintained and reinforced. The Decade will be an opportunity to ensure the effective implementation of the crucial provisions laid out in the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, and thus the realization of full and effective equality for people of African descent. Therefore, the Working Group invites the General Assembly to adopt and launch the International Decade for People of African Descent in 2013, and consider in its deliberations the Draft Programme of Action for the Decade drawn up by the Working Group under the theme "People of African Descent: Recognition, Justice, Development".**

47. **Owing to the special and unique nature of discrimination often faced by people of African descent, particularly that related to the legacies of colonialism, slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, the Working Group deems it appropriate to make a careful distinction between their situation and that of other groups who face racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. It also sees the need to construct and delineate specific juridical categories that make it possible to address their needs adequately and overcome the obstacles they face. Therefore, in line with a recommendation from the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Working Group recommends the elaboration of a United Nations Declaration on the Promotion and Protection of the Human Rights of People of African Descent, as one of the main objectives of the Decade.**

48. **The Working Group of Experts at its twelfth session decided to start implementing the Programme of Action for the Decade, which was presented at the Human Rights Council at its twenty-first session and welcomed thereby in resolution 21/33. The theme for the Decade as proposed by the Working Group is "Recognition, Justice, Development", therefore the thematic focus of the twelfth session was recognition through education, cultural rights and data collection.**

A. Recognition

49. Recognition of people of African descent as a distinct group is essential to increasing their visibility and thus to the full realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms. People of African descent must be recognized among others in national constitutions and legislation, through education, awareness-raising measures and the respect of their cultural rights. Self-recognition is also critical for people of African descent. In order to attain full recognition, data collection is crucial so as to confirm the presence, activities and overall situation of people of African descent.

50. Recognition of people of African descent is related to the recognition of their existence, recognition of their contribution in the world development and recognition of their specific culture, history and heritage. It entails recognizing that people of African Descent are particularly vulnerable to racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance across the world, while also recognizing the specific, common history, culture and heritage of people of African descent globally.

51. People of African descent are often categorized as a different race; but “race” is a socially constructed concept. Paragraph 6 of the outcome document of the Durban Review Conference reaffirms that “all peoples and individuals constitute one human family, rich in diversity, and that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights”; although throughout the history of humanity, people have been assigned identity based on race, both as a means of distinguishing one group from another, but more importantly as a means of control and domination. Therefore, an important step in the recognition of people of African descent is the deconstruction of the concept of “race”.

52. The recognition by the Human Rights Council in its resolution 21/33 of the term “Afrophobia”, as had been recommended by the Working Group, requires an active and systematic follow-up in order to assure the full implementation of this important assertion of the special and unique form of discrimination faced by people of African descent and assuring its equal use with analogous terms that are used to address the stigmatization and prejudice against ethnic, religious and other vulnerable groups.

53. The Working Group invites the General Assembly to consider establishing as a result of the Decade a United Nations permanent forum for people of African descent to serve as a consultation mechanism for representative organizations of people of African descent and other interested stakeholder.

B. Education

1. Conclusions

54. Education is an inalienable human right. It is more than a mere commodity or service. It is an indispensable tool that can help humanity to move towards societies free from poverty, exclusion, discrimination, oppression, injustice and war.

55. The right to education is not enjoyed equally by all; millions of girls, boys, women and men of African descent suffer disproportionately from unequal access to quality education. Failure to ensure equal access to education robs people of their opportunity to reach their full human potential and to contribute to the development of their own communities and society at large.

56. In many instances, areas in which people of African descent reside often have poor education facilities and lack the proper infrastructure conducive to enabling teaching and learning. The impact of residential patterns on school enrolments should

be carefully assessed and the results addressed to avoid disparate social and educational outcomes.

57. The right to education is critical for people of African descent throughout the world, not only as a mean of extricating themselves from historical exclusion and discrimination, but also for the enjoyment, respect and recognition of their cultures, traditions and knowledge.

58. Education provides a gateway to the full enjoyment of other rights, including rights to freedom of movement and expression, access to justice and remedies when human rights are violated, participation in the cultural, social and economic life and in public affairs. Lack of education has perpetuated the cycle of poverty, racism and segregation, from the time of the infamous transatlantic slave trade to the present date. Conversely, education provides a vital key to sustainable poverty alleviation.

59. Women and girls of African descent – victims of compounded discrimination – suffer disproportionately from lack of access to education and high illiteracy levels, representing a significant barrier to their overall progress and empowerment.

60. In some countries, as a consequence of poverty or extreme poverty, the ripple effects of widespread child labour, low nutrition levels and poor health, further prevent children of African descent from gaining access to education.

61. The Durban Programme of Action urges States “to ensure equal access to education for all in law and in practice, and to refrain from any legal or any other measures leading to imposed racial segregation in any form in access to schooling”. Enforced segregated schools not only violate the rights of people of African descent but also deprive the entire society of the opportunity to foster social cohesion and respect through the exchange of diverse views and experiences.

62. High dropout rates among learners of school-going age are linked to the underachievement of children and youth of African descent, particularly boys.

63. In a significant number of countries, the low number of teachers of African descent is of concern, as such teachers could potentially be role models for children. Many teachers of African descent face barriers to progression in the education system.

64. In some countries, teachers are not sufficiently trained on equality and diversity issues, particularly those not of African descent working in schools with large populations of students of African descent. Many feel underprepared to teach of issues about African history and culture or to deal with the racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance faced by their pupils.

65. In several countries, young people of African descent are underrepresented in higher education. This is a consequence of the cumulative impact of discrimination at the lower levels of education and their being discouraged from entering the higher education system to avoid incurring financial debts.

2. Recommendations

66. States should fully protect the right of people of African descent to education, and must go beyond issues of physical or economic accessibility, to focus on the ultimate goal of equal access to quality education at all levels and equal achievement outcomes.

67. Every person is entitled to accessible, free and high-quality primary level education. States should take reasonable legislative and other measures to achieve the progressive realization of this right by people of African descent with respect to secondary education and for higher education on the basis of capacity.

68. States should also:

(a) Ensure accessible and available education, particularly in areas where people of African descent live, including in rural and marginalized communities, paying attention to improving the quality of public education;

(b) Take measures to ensure that students of African descent are protected from direct or indirect discrimination, stigmatization, symbolic and physical violence, and racist bullying. The education system should ensure that all students learn in an environment free from racist and hostile attitudes of teachers and peers, and are protected therefrom. Negative stereotypes and imagery in teaching materials should be removed;

(c) Institute a compulsory human rights teacher-training programme at the national level, covering, among other areas, multiculturalism, equality, non-discrimination and gender sensitivity at a national level;

(d) Take into account the cultural and ethnic diversity of the communities served when selecting teachers. The teaching profession should include highly qualified teachers of people of African descent;

(e) Revise and develop specific curricula and corresponding teaching materials which respect and recognize history, including the transatlantic slave trade. Such curricula should be incorporated into formal and informal education at the early childhood, primary, secondary, post-secondary and adult education levels. People of African descent should have the opportunity to contribute to the development of such curricula;

(f) Make history a compulsory subject at the primary and secondary educational levels, thereby giving children of African descent a connection with their past and a sense of cultural identity;

(g) Support the study and recognition and promote greater knowledge of and respect for the history of people of African descent. All students and teachers around the world should be taught about African and African diaspora history, culture and contribution to progress, the impact throughout the time of the movement and settlement of diverse populations, as well as the nature and effects of colonialism and the slave trade, emphasizing people of African descent as survivors or resisters, whilst also recognizing them as victims of human rights violations under international human rights law;

(h) Ensure that people of African descent are provided with adequate means to undertake research to speak about themselves and their role and contribution to the development of society, including industrialization;

(i) Ensure that national curricula include the history of Africa before European contact in history education, in order to empower people of African descent about their past before the transatlantic slave trade. Similarly, history education should feature the liberation struggles during and after the colonial period. History education should also be about the development of world civilizations and should stress the contribution of people of African descent to global economic development, especially that of Europe. This will help the recognition of people of African descent as world actors;

(j) Promote a collective vision and strategy for improving the conditions of people of African descent by empowering them through the right to education. In this context, a database on information pertaining to the status of education of people of African descent should be developed;

(k) Ensure curricula adequately reflect the diversity and plurality of societies. Education should be culturally relevant for children and young people of African descent, including in their own language where necessary;

(l) Take measures to reduce the school dropout rate and improve the underachievement of children of African descent with greater support and attention given to families;

(m) Adopt measures to increase the number of teachers of African descent working in educational institutions;

(n) Promote access to new technologies that would offer people of African descent, particularly women, children and young people, adequate resources for education, technological development and long-distance learning in local communities;

(o) Guarantee a smooth transition from early childhood to primary and secondary educational facilities without discriminatory competitive placement systems (e.g., common entrance examinations);

(p) Provide sufficient budgetary resources and adopt measures, including affirmative action policies, at all levels of education for people of African descent, as a means for Governments to recognize the existence of structural discrimination and to combat it;

(q) Improve quality standards of educational in public education systems;

(r) Develop truly inclusive classroom pedagogy for all with culturally relevant curricula that celebrates the history and contribution of people of African descent;

(s) Institute national systematic monitoring and evaluation of the negative effects of racism and discrimination on the educational progress of children of African descent, including an analysis of the intersectional effects of social class, gender, religion and geography.

69. Civil society and people of African descent groups should continue with the development of a collective vision and strategy for improving the access to quality education for people of African descent by empowering them through the right to education.

70. OHCHR should include in its anti-racial discrimination database information on existing legislation, policies and programmes for the promotion of equal access to education by people of African descent.

C. Cultural rights

1. Conclusions

71. Cultural rights are inalienable human rights.

72. Recalling paragraph 99 of the Durban Declaration, in which States concerned are called upon “to honour the memory of the victims of past tragedies and affirm that, wherever and whenever these occurred, they must be condemned and their recurrence prevented”, States should adopt measures to preserve, protect and restore the intangible patrimony and spiritual memory of sites and places of the slave trade and slave resistance, giving increased visibility to this history and culture through museums, monuments, visual arts and other means, such as the permanent memorial at the United Nations headquarters to honour the memory of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade.

73. Through intercultural education, dialogue and awareness-raising measures help the elimination of sociocultural ideas inherited from the period of slavery and colonialism.

74. The historical acknowledgement of people of African descent in global development has been characterized by the iconic status of some of the heroes and heroines and the development of tangible sites of memory to represent the other side of the intangible heritage of people of African descent. However, there are varying views and a gap in terms of the identification of many such heroes and, more importantly, heroines that have also contributed to the recognition of people of African descent.

2. Recommendations

75. In recognition of the contribution of the continent of Africa and people of African descent to the development, diversity and richness of world civilizations and cultures which constitute the common heritage of humankind, States should, in collaboration with relevant United Nations bodies and agencies, particularly the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and international donors:

(a) Promote and protect the culture, identity and tangible and intangible heritage of the continent of Africa and people of African descent, and keep, maintain and foster their mode of life and forms of organization, languages and religious expressions;

(b) Set up research programmes and circulate information to deconstruct the (mis)representation of people of African descent;

(c) Increase the visibility and recognition of people of African descent and the continent of Africa contributions to their respective societies and to global development; promote research on past and present conditions of people of African descent and compile existing information on their contribution to their respective societies in order to foster the development of intercultural society from a democratic perspective, recognizing diversity and promoting knowledge and understanding of the causes and consequences of racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia;

(d) Support radio, television and Internet programmes about history and cultures of people of African descent and promote more positive and inclusive representations which increase their visibility within society and challenge negative stereotypes and resultant discrimination;

(e) Celebrate the richness and creativity in all forms of artistic expressions by people of African descent;

(f) Consider proclaiming a national day in countries that do not yet have such a day, in order to celebrate the heritage, culture and contribution to the world of people of African descent;

(g) Put in place measures and procedures to prevent the media from perpetuating negative stereotypes;

(h) Promote within the United Nations system, especially through the annual reports of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNESCO and UNDP, the theme of people of African descent for the next year.

76. The Working Group and UNESCO should work together to ensure that the general history of African and People of African descent is promoted among Africans during the International Decade. The Working Group will continue to strengthen its relationship with academia on the situation of people of African descent.

77. People of African descent and African organizations and communities should establish a network to facilitate trade and cultural exchange, and promote interaction and collaboration.

78. Schools should adopt programmes to promote empowerment and help children to develop a positive perception of themselves and reinforce self-assurance and pride in their African backgrounds by demonstrating knowledge about their culture, history and contributions to society. Such measures will also improve their performance in schools.

79. People of African descent should therefore be consulted in the construction of new monuments and the development of memorial sites. Gender balance and diversity should be taken into consideration in the construction of new monuments and memorial sites.

80. The development of the ninth volume of the *General History of Africa* by UNESCO, should also focus on the new aims for Africa and on the African diaspora and its challenges.

D. Data collection

81. Another key enabling factor for ensuring the recognition of people of African descent and overcoming the historical “social invisibility” is through the collection, recording, monitoring and analysis of reliable information on their living conditions. Collecting, disaggregating and analysing data is an important step towards solving acute and long-lasting problems. It is also a demonstration of political will to monitor the human rights situation of groups facing discrimination.

1. Conclusions

82. The existence of this data and appropriate data-collection systems are important tools for formulating, monitoring and assessing public racial-equality policies at the national, regional and local levels. Policies could include national action plans against racism and appropriate affirmative action policies to counter persistent or structural disparities and de facto inequalities stemming from historical circumstances that denied people of African descent the advantages needed to realize their full potential.

83. Data is also extremely useful for national equality bodies and national human rights institutions in monitoring and investigating cases of racial discrimination, planning and orienting their work, and designing national awareness campaigns.

84. There is a need for States to reconcile their obligation to ensure protection of data and the right to privacy, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, to remove bans in constitutions and laws in collecting the data.

85. Special data-processing methods are necessary for protecting people’s identity, in particular procedures that ensure anonymity and guarantee that data could not be traced back to individuals. There is a difference between personal data, which are subject to special protection, and processing impersonal statistical data, which is permitted for historical, statistical or scientific purposes. In that regard, efforts should be made to neutralize the risks inherent in identifying individuals and examine how the data could be dissociated from the identification of individuals. Relevant practice in the field of medicine could be an important guide.

2. Recommendations

86. States are recommended to collect data for use in reports submitted to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, illustrating the situation regarding racial discrimination in the country concerned.

87. In accordance with paragraph 92 of the Durban Programme of Action, States should also:

(a) Collect, compile, analyse, disseminate and publish reliable statistical data at the national and local levels and undertake all other related measures which are necessary to assess regularly the situation of individuals and groups of individuals who are victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;

(b) Such statistical data should be disaggregated in accordance with domestic legislation. Any such information should, as appropriate, be collected with the explicit consent of the victims, based on their self-identification and in accordance with provisions on human rights and fundamental freedoms, such as data protection regulations and privacy guarantees. This information must not be misused. The statistical data and information should be collected with the objective of monitoring the situation of marginalized groups, and the development and evaluation of legislation, policies, practices and other measures aimed at preventing and combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, as well as for the purpose of determining whether any measures have an unintentional disparate impact on victims. To that end, it recommends the development of voluntary, consensual and participatory strategies in the process of collecting, designing and using information. The information should take into account economic and social indicators, including, where appropriate, health and health status, infant and maternal mortality, life expectancy, literacy, education, employment, housing, land ownership, mental and physical health care, water, sanitation, energy and communications services, poverty and average disposable income in order to elaborate social and economic development policies with a view to closing the existing gaps in social and economic conditions;

(c) Adopt domestic legislation on combating racial discrimination. Data collection should result from explicit anti-discrimination laws that require data in order to measure discrimination and formulate, implement and monitor appropriate public policies, including special measures, pursuant to international human rights standards;

(d) Adopt laws regulating the collection and processing of ethnic and racial data that protect fundamental freedoms, including the right to privacy, provide the necessary safeguards for protecting data from misuse, such as racial profiling and negative monitoring, and ensure confidentiality of information, in accordance with relevant regional and international standards, in particular the Guidelines for the Regulation of Computerized Personal Data Files concerning the legality, fairness, accuracy and relevance of data, purpose-specification, interested-party access, non-discrimination, security, oversight and penalties. The normative framework should be approved beforehand and lay down the following minimum conditions: the person must give explicit consent; the data collection must serve the public interest, i.e., the fight against racial discrimination; and the framework must be legally binding;

(e) Develop and identify quantitative and qualitative indicators for promoting and monitoring racial equality and non-discrimination, taking account the methodology approved by the United Nations human rights treaty bodies.²

² See the report on indicators for promoting and monitoring the implementation of human rights

88. States, through their government bodies, as well as national statistics institutes, human rights institutions and organizations for racial equality, in conformity with their mandates, should:

- (a) Include questions on the identities of people of African descent in all relevant data-collection and disaggregation activities;
- (b) Conduct prior research and contextualize the data system so as to ensure that the data are culturally relevant and use appropriate terminology;
- (c) Produce qualitative data to complement quantitative information in order to enhance knowledge of the level of well-being of people of African descent;
- (d) Produce data illustrating the situation of women and children of people of African descent;
- (e) Contribute to formulating survey questions in order to gather information on perceptions of people of African descent;
- (f) Respect and develop methods of self-identification and free consent and encourage participation by people of African descent in all stages of the process, from design to collecting data, formulating questions and analysing results;
- (g) Sensitize and train staff of national statistics institutes responsible for collecting and disaggregating data, in human rights and the culture, history and linguistic profile of the communities about which they will be gathering information;
- (h) Carry out pre- and post-census awareness campaigns on the importance of gathering disaggregated data and disseminate results through the media. Published data should be accompanied by a careful analysis so that the information can serve as a useful tool in devising public policies for racial advancement.

(HRI/MC/2008/3).

Annex I

Agenda

1. Opening of the session.
2. Election of the Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Working Group.
3. Adoption of the agenda.
4. Organization of work.
5. Update and briefings on activities undertaken by the Working Group in the past year:
 - (a) Visit to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland by the Working Group;
 - (b) Visit to Panama by the Working Group;
 - (c) Update on the International Decade for People of African Descent;
 - (d) Report on the internal meeting of the Working Group;
 - (e) Other activities.
6. Thematic discussion on people of African descent, with a focus on the theme “Recognition through education, cultural rights and data collection”:
 - (a) Keynote address;
 - (b) Other presentations;
 - (c) Interactive discussion with participants.
7. Presentation and adoption of the methods of work of the Working Group.
8. Adoption of the conclusions and recommendations of the Working Group at its twelfth session.

Annex II

[English/French only]

List of participants

A. Members of the Working Group

- Ms. Monorama Biswas
- Ms. Maya Fadel-Sahli
- Ms. Mireille Fanon Mendes-France
- Ms. Mirjana Najchevska
- Ms. Verene Shepherd

B. Member States

Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Bahrain, Brazil, China, Colombia, Cote d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Egypt, Gabon, Germany, Haiti, Indonesia, Italy, Jamaica, Mauritania, Madagascar, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, Netherlands, Pakistan, Peru, Russian Federation, Senegal, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Trinidad and Tobago, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam.

C. Non-Member States

Holy See

D. International organizations

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

E. Intergovernmental organizations

African Union, European Union

F. Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

African Canadian Legal Clinic, African Commission of Health and Human Rights Promoters, Association of World Citizens, International Youth and Student Movement for the United Nations (IYSMUN), Rencontre Africaine pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme, SOS Rassismus Deutschschweitz, Women Watch Afrika, World Against Racism Network.

G. Non-governmental organizations not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

Association Miraismo Internacional, Association Pour la Promotion des Droits Humains, Black Mental Health UK, Central American Black Organization.

H. Panellists and presenters

- Ms. Susana Baca, Former Minister of Culture of Peru;
 - Mr. Ali Moussa Iye, Chief, History and Memory for Dialogue Section, UNESCO;
 - Mr. Pastor Elías Murillo Martínez, Member of Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination;
 - Ms. Heidi Safia Mirza, Professor, University of London;
 - Ms. Rita Pemberton, Trinidad and Tobago Organisation for People of African Descent;
 - Mr. Ahmed Reid, Professor of History, City University of New York;
 - Ms. Edna Santos Roland, Independent Eminent Expert on the Durban follow-up;
 - Mr. Kishore Singh, Special Rapporteur on the right to education;
 - Mr. Carlos Viáfara, Professor of Economics, University del Valle, Colombia.
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