

1999/12. Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

The Economic and Social Council,

Taking note of Commission on Human Rights resolution 1999/78 of 28 April 1999,¹⁵

1. *Approves* the recommendation of the Commission on Human Rights that the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, request the Secretary-General to assign high priority to the activities of the Programme of Action for the Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination and to earmark adequate resources to finance those activities;

2. *Also approves* the Commission's request to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to undertake research and consultations on the use of the Internet for purposes of incitement to racial hatred, racist propaganda and xenophobia, to study ways of promoting international cooperation in this area, and to draw up a programme of human rights education and exchanges over the Internet on experience in the struggle against racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism;

3. *Further approves* the Commission's appeal to the High Commissioner to provide those countries which were visited by the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, at their request, with advisory services and technical assistance to enable them to implement fully the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur;

4. *Endorses* the Commission's decision, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 52/111 of 12 December 1997, which indicates that the Commission will act as the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance:

(a) That the sessions of the Preparatory Committee scheduled in 2000 and 2001 will be headed by the same bureau, composed of ten members, that is, two representatives per regional group, in order to ensure continuity and the adequate representation of all States Members of the United Nations;

(b) To recommend to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, that the World Conference and the sessions of the Preparatory Committee should be open to participation by:

- (i) All States Members of the United Nations and States members of the specialized agencies;
- (ii) Representatives of all regional organizations and regional commissions involved in the preparation of regional meetings;
- (iii) Representatives of organizations that have received a standing invitation from the General Assembly to participate in the capacity of observers;

(iv) Representatives of the specialized agencies, the secretariats of the regional commissions and all United Nations bodies and programmes;

(v) Representatives of all United Nations mechanisms in the field of human rights;

(vi) Other interested governmental organizations, which shall be represented by observers;

(vii) Interested non-governmental organizations, which shall be represented by observers in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996;

5. *Approves* the Commission's recommendations to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, that, if no offer is made to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for hosting the World Conference by the end of the first session of the Preparatory Committee to be held in 2000:

(a) The World Conference should be held in Geneva;

(b) The World Conference should be held in 2001, but after the session of the Commission on Human Rights and before that of the General Assembly;

6. *Also approves* the Commission's requests to the High Commissioner:

(a) To prepare, immediately following the fifty-fifth session of the Commission, the questionnaires referred to in the report of the open-ended Working Group to review and formulate proposals for the World Conference on Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance,¹⁶ with a view, on the one hand, to reviewing progress made in the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, particularly since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,¹⁷ and, on the other, to reappraise the obstacles to further progress in the field and ways to overcome them, and to send them as soon as possible to States, specialized agencies, international and non-governmental organizations and national institutions;

(b) To review and analyse the replies and submit a report to the Preparatory Committee, at its first session, six weeks before the beginning of its work;

(c) To open an Internet site on the preparations for the World Conference, in close cooperation with the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat;

(d) In her capacity as Secretary-General of the World Conference, to prepare and carry out, in close cooperation with the Department of Public Information, an effective world information campaign, with a view to mobilizing support for the objectives of the World Conference by all sectors of political, economic, social and cultural life, as well as other interested sectors;

(e) To include in her strategy for informing international public opinion and sensitizing it to the objectives of the World Conference:

¹⁵ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1999, Supplement No. 3 (E/1999/23)*, chap. II, sect. A.

¹⁶ E/CN.4/1999/16 and Corr.1 and 2.

¹⁷ General Assembly resolution 217 A (III).

- (i) The appointment of renowned ambassadors from the entertainment, arts, culture, sports and musical worlds, and any other field, who might mobilize the attention of civil society;
 - (ii) An invitation to the sports world to cooperate actively as a partner in the World Conference;
 - (iii) Additional private-sector funding through sponsoring;
 - (iv) The need to ensure full coverage of preparatory activities and the World Conference by the media by making full use of the services of United Nations information centres;
 - (v) Sending to all Governments, international and non-governmental organizations and national institutions information handbooks and pamphlets that can be made available to the public and the media, as well as to United Nations information centres;
- (f) To set up a voluntary fund designed specifically to cover all aspects of the preparatory process for the World Conference and the participation of non-governmental organizations, especially from developing countries, by requesting all Governments, international and non-governmental organizations and private individuals to contribute to this fund;
- (g) To undertake appropriate consultations with non-governmental organizations on the possibility that they might hold a forum before and partly during the World Conference, and, insofar as possible, to provide them with technical assistance for that purpose;
- (h) To undertake a study to be submitted to the Preparatory Committee at its first session on ways of improving coordination between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and all specialized agencies and international, regional and subregional organizations in the field of action to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;
- (i) To help the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance to carry out a study on preventive measures relating to ethnic, racial, religious and xenophobically motivated conflicts and to formulate recommendations intended for the first session of the Preparatory Committee;
- (j) To invite the Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance to participate actively in the preparatory process and in the World Conference by initiating studies on action to combat incitement to hatred and religious intolerance;
- (k) To review progress made in the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, in particular since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and to reappraise the obstacles to further progress in the field and ways to overcome them, with a view to submitting her conclusions to the Preparatory Committee;

(l) To organize an international seminar of experts on the remedies available to the victims of acts of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and on good national practices in this field, which will be financed by voluntary contributions, to encourage other activities, particularly seminars forming part of the preparations for the World Conference, and to submit the recommendations of those seminars to the Preparatory Committee;

(m) To draw up a draft agenda for the first session of the Preparatory Committee;

7. *Approves* the Commission's appeals to the High Commissioner to help States and regional organizations, on request, to convene national and regional meetings or to undertake other initiatives, including at the expert level, to prepare for the World Conference, and also to the specialized agencies and the United Nations regional commissions, in coordination with the High Commissioner, to contribute to the holding of regional preparatory meetings;

8. *Also approves* the Commission's requests:

(a) To the Secretary-General, the United Nations specialized agencies and the regional commissions to provide financial and technical assistance for the organization of the regional preparatory meetings planned in the context of the World Conference, and stresses that such assistance should be supplemented by voluntary contributions;

(b) To the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights¹⁸ to undertake a study on ways of making United Nations activities and mechanisms in the context of programmes aimed at combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance more effective;

(c) To the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Commission at its fifty-sixth session on the implementation of Commission resolution 1999/78 under the item entitled "Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and all forms of discrimination";

9. *Endorses* the recommendations of the Commission that the World Conference should adopt a declaration and a programme of action to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, that the particular situation of children should receive special attention during the preparations for and during the World Conference itself, especially in its outcome, and that the importance of systematically adopting a gender-based approach throughout the preparations for and in the outcome of the World Conference should be stressed;

10. *Decides* to extend the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance for a further period of three years.

*42nd plenary meeting
27 July 1999*

¹⁸ Formerly known as the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities (see decision 1999/256).