

Statement to the Durban Review Conference by National Human Rights Institutions
Geneva April 24 2008

Representatives of 39 National Human Rights Institutions from all regions of the world attended the Durban Review Conference.

We welcome the adoption of the outcome document and call on all countries to adhere to it. It has been the subject of long and often difficult negotiations, and it is a sign of great hope that consensus has been reached on so many issues.

It provides a good basis for making progress in combating racism and racial discrimination (including multiple discrimination) and promoting cultural diversity in a framework of indivisible and universal human rights.

Its adoption is an important milestone in the Durban process and we welcome the strong recognition it gives to the role of NHRIs.

In a side event at the conference on the role of NHRIs in implementing the DDPA, we recognized that there are different manifestations of racism in different regions and countries and identified 14 priorities which we commit to advancing. These include to:

- promote the goals of the Durban process as a global effort to combat racism
- promote the ratification of international treaties and the implementation of their provisions at the national level
- promote reporting to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- further increase engagement with the UN human rights system and the OHCHR as a two way process
- monitor racism at the national, regional and global levels
- establish focal points on racism within NHRIs and network to share good practice
- promote and participate in the development of national plans of action to combat racism
- exercise our mandates in relation to the rights of Indigenous Peoples including by engaging with NGOs, Indigenous Peoples, ethnic and religious minorities, vulnerable groups, business and the media
- ensure that data about racism is collected and that research is conducted ethically, and contribute this information to the observatory to be developed by the High Commissioner for Human Rights
- engage with the wider public on racism and gain public confidence in our procedures by being accessible to victims
- despite the current environment of financial constraints, ensure that governments adequately resource NHRIs to carry out our functions under the Paris Principles independently and effectively.

We will be commending these priorities to NHRIs who were unable to be present and we invite their support, as well as that of States Parties, NGOs United Nations bodies and in particular the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for their achievement.