

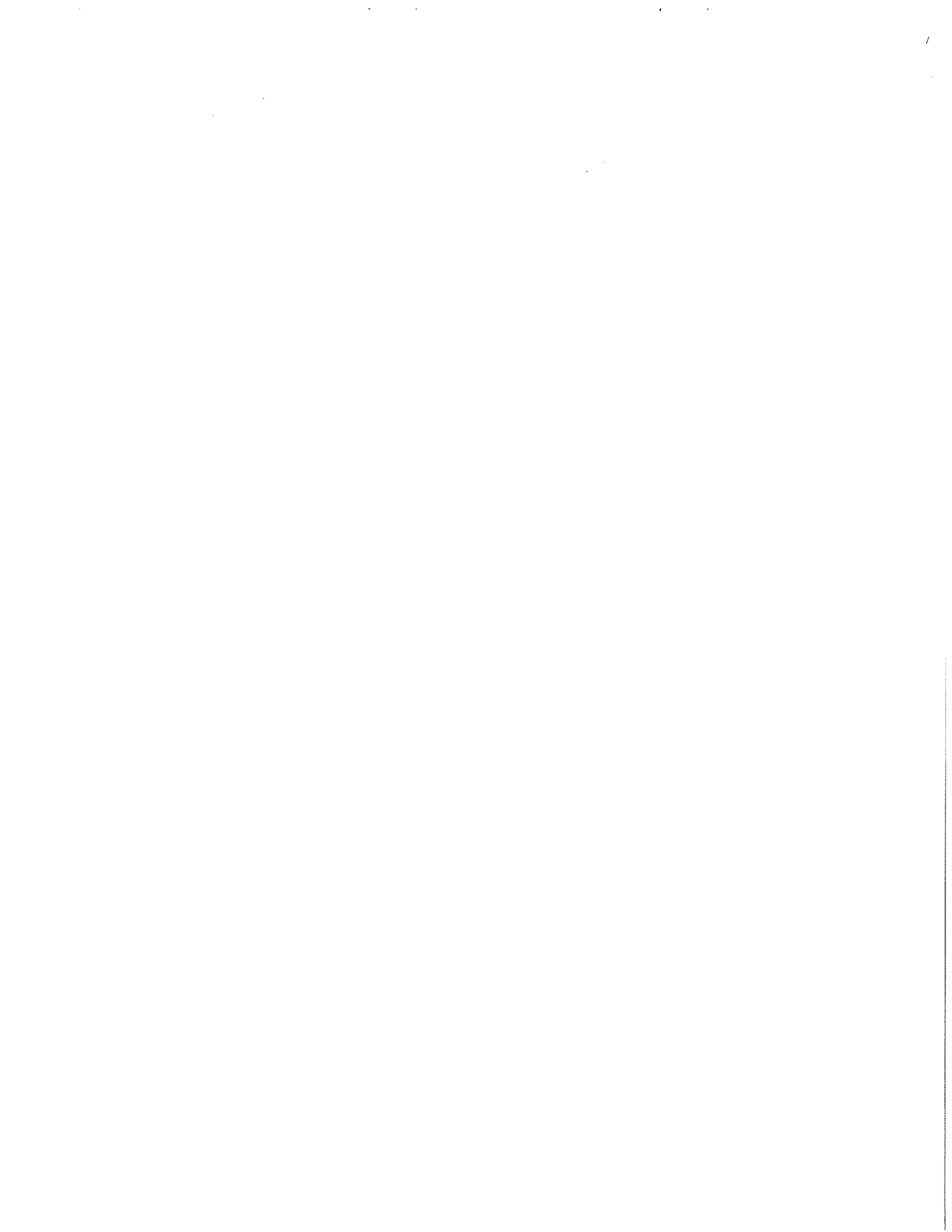
**INDIA**  
**भारत**

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**INDIA'S**  
**Statement**  
**on**  
**High-level Meeting of the UNGA**  
**to commemorate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the**  
**adoption of the Durban Declaration and**  
**Programme of Action**

New York

20 September, 2011



**Mr. Co-Chair,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The Durban Declaration and Programme for Action (DDPA) in 2001 was a reminder to the world that the challenge of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance was far from over. Today, as we commemorate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that historic meeting, we can count our successes, but the journey is not yet over.

**Mr Co-Chair,**

The notion of racial superiority was at the bedrock of colonialism. Millions suffered from it and bore the brunt of inhuman, violent and degrading treatment. The close of era of colonization and imperialism at the end of World War II brought to an end this historic exploitation and injustice of countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Fortuitously, it also marked the advent of the peaceful mass movement pioneered by Mahatma Gandhi, who began his fight against colonialism with the struggle against racial discrimination in South Africa. His humiliating encounter with racial prejudice and discrimination as a young barrister in South Africa, when he was physically thrown out of the first class compartment of a train, merely because of skin colour, inspired him to fight against this abhorrent and intolerable practice.

It is a historic fact that millions joined Mahatma Gandhi in his epic struggle, which not only led to the dismantling of the colonial yoke in India, but also became an inspiration for many more struggles in the rest of the world.

It was, therefore, innate and instinctive for our founding fathers to build in adequate safeguards in our Constitution and the Indian Penal Code against racism and racial discrimination, and to enshrine the basic value of equality.

While Article 14 of the Constitution of India clearly states that the principle of equality cannot be denied, Article 15 expressly prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race. These two articles are reflective of the fundamental principles and values that are an integral part of the fabric that binds together a diverse country like India.

**Mr Co-Chair,**

Though the era of colonialism and imperialism is well behind us, it was unfortunate that people's attitudes and their very deeply ingrained beliefs continued to fuel racial hatred, prejudices and discrimination. This was particularly exacerbated by globalization and the movement of people across borders.

Durban Declaration in 2001 gave us a comprehensive, action-oriented document with concrete proposals and measures to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

It emphasized that there should not be any state-sponsored and institutionalized discrimination against any individual citizen or group of citizens; and that States do not condone or encourage regressive social attitudes which fuel such discriminatory attitudes and practices.

This Declaration was further strengthened by the Durban Review Conference (DRC) of April 2009, which assessed the effectiveness of the existing Durban follow-up mechanisms and other UN mechanisms dealing with racism and racial discrimination.

**Mr Co-Chair,**

At this 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, regrettably, the challenge of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance continues to persist. Racial inequalities are widely evident in socio-economic indicators and patterns.

Moreover, political violence induced by these is on the rise in various parts of the world and has become more brutal and vicious. This has been accentuated by lack of effective social integration and the re-emergence of feeling of xenophobia.

We have to continue our battle. We have to create greater political will and momentum internationally to develop more effective measures to enhance its implementation. International campaign will bear fruits only when, we, in our own countries promulgate stringent national laws, strictly implement them and most importantly, ensure that attitudes of people are changed.

Perhaps the most definitive guarantee against racial prejudice, discrimination and xenophobia is development and nurturing of multi-cultural, democratic and pluralistic traditions with the inculcation of values of tolerance and respect for diversity; and implementation of appropriate educational and legislative strategies.

**Mr. Co-Chair,**

We are happy that today we are adopting a concise outcome document of this commemorative event. It is important that our focus remains on eliminating the abhorrent practice of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and other related intolerance.

**Mr Co-Chair,**

As we work today towards a world free of the racial prejudices of the past, we have yet another opportunity to assess the successes and shortcomings in the implementation of DDPA and DRC. It is, yet another chance, to reaffirm our steadfast commitment to its effective implementation.

Thank you.