

DECLARATION OF THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE INTERNATIONAL DECADE OF PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT

The Latin American and Caribbean States gathered in Brasilia, on December 3 and 4, 2015, under the auspices of the United Nations,

Considering the principles of inherent dignity of the person and of equality among human beings enshrined in international instruments for the promotion and protection of human rights,

Considering that the right to equality and non-discrimination is the basis for the enjoyment of other human rights,

Recalling the Communiqué on the Decade of People of African Descent adopted by the Foreign Ministers of CELAC on September 27, 2013, which proclaimed the Decade of Latin American and Caribbean People of African Descent, which began on January 1, 2014,

Recalling the Plan of Action for the Decade of Latin American and Caribbean People of African Descent, adopted on January 29, 2015,

Recalling the resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly AG 68/237 of 23 December 2013, in which the Assembly proclaimed the International Decade of People of African Descent, which began on January 1, 2015, and ends on December 31, 2024, under the theme "People of African Descent: recognition, justice and development", and AG 69/16 of 18 November, 2014, in which the program of activities for the International Decade of People of African Descent was adopted,

Recalling also the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and other relevant international documents,

Recalling the commitment made in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action on the elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance,

Recalling furthermore the Durban Declaration and Program of Action, adopted in September 2001 at the Third World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance,

Recognizing that, despite the progress achieved, racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance persist and impact the enjoyment of human rights of Latin American and Caribbean People of African Descent.

Recognizing the importance of the historical and current contribution of persons, communities, populations and peoples of African Descent to the social, cultural, religious, political and economic formation of the countries and the region, and the need to preserve, promote and spread the rich heritage of People of African Descent to the development of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean,

Recognizing the importance of exchange, cooperation and dialogue between the countries of the region and the African countries,

Recognizing that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and have the ability to contribute constructively to the development and welfare of society, and that all doctrines of racial superiority are scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous and must be rejected, together with theories which attempt to determine the existence of separate human races,

Agreed:

1. To reaffirm the commitment to the full implementation of the Durban Declaration and Plan of Action at national, regional and global levels.

2. To reaffirm support for the creation of the Forum on People of African Descent, in the framework of the Human Rights Council, in accordance with paragraph 29, section i) of the annex to resolution 69/16 of the United Nations General Assembly.

3. To reaffirm also that the mandate of the Forum on People of African Descent will consist of a consultation mechanism for all People of African Descent and of an advisory body to the Human Rights Council about the difficulties and needs of People of African Descent in order to:

a. Achieve full political, economic, social and cultural inclusion of People of African Descent in the societies in which they live as equal citizens who enjoy substantive equality of rights;

b. To provide expert advice to the countries and make recommendations in order to address the challenges associated with all the problems of racism faced by People of African Descent, and which prevent the full enjoyment of all their human rights and fundamental freedoms;

c. To identify and analyze best practices, challenges, opportunities and initiatives to further implement the clauses of the Durban Declaration and Program of Action which are relevant to People of African Descent;

d. To monitor and review the progress in the implementation of the program of activities of the International Decade of People of African Descent and, to this end, gather relevant information from Governments, organs and entities of the United Nations, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations and other relevant sources;

e. To promote integration and coordination of activities related to People of African Descent within the United Nations system;

f. To facilitate the human resources, technical, technological and financial management for the countries to implement programs on the human development of People of African Descent communities with indicators that are directly relevant to their development needs.

4. To support the initiative of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) on reparations.

5. To support the adoption of measures to further promote and protect all the human rights of People of African Descent enshrined in international human rights instruments.

6. To support, in particular, the elaboration of a draft United Nations declaration on the promotion of and full respect to the human rights of People of African Descent, stressing the

importance of starting the work as soon as possible and to offer substantive contributions to its drafting.

7. To urge the United Nations General Assembly to, in the framework of the International Decade, convene the Fourth World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance.

8. To pay special attention among People of African Descent to the particular situation of children, adolescents, women, the elderly and people with disabilities and victims of aggravated or multiple discrimination based on gender, language, religion, political opinion or other, social origin, national origin, economical position, birth among others.

9. To promote the specific perspective of People of African Descent in the work of specialized agencies on international cooperation as a recognition of asymmetries experienced by this population in the economic, social and cultural fields.

10. To promote an Hour Against Racism in the framework of the World Diversity Day which is celebrated on May 21 in order to enhance the recognition of People of African Descent and promote social mobilization against racism and all forms of racial discrimination.

11. To contribute to the development and research of the IX Volume of the General History of Africa led by UNESCO with the African Union, as well as UNESCO's "The Slave Route" project.

12. To foster the creation or the strengthening of national mechanisms for the promotion of racial equality, elimination of discrimination based on ethnic diversity and mainstreaming of human rights for People of African Descent.

13. To adopt affirmative actions to reduce and remedy disparities and inequalities, even to accelerate social inclusion and to close gaps in access to education and employment, resulting from historical and current injustices according to particularities of each country.

14. To promote the access to justice and the effective enjoyment of the rights of people of African descent in the judicial systems.

15. To promote initiatives aimed at implementing policies of historical reparation to strengthen the visibility and value denied to People of African Descent collectively.

16. To promote, within their respective jurisdictions, the recognition of the rights of communities of people of African descent.

17. To urge the States, in accordance with international human rights standards and their respective legal systems, to solve the problems of ownership in respect to lands inhabited by people of African descent since ancestral times and to promote the productive use of the land and the comprehensive development of these communities, respecting their culture.

18. To promote the inclusion of the ethnic variable in national statistical systems in order to ensure the statistical visibility of this population and the generation of disaggregated data, including on their socioeconomic evolution and the enforcement of their rights, in States that have not done so.

19. To promote and implement measures to combat and punish the practice of racial profiling and promote training and awareness-raising programs for the police and judicial officers in the identification, investigation and punishment of that practice.

20. To urge the States to sign and ratify international instruments against racism, racial discrimination and related intolerance of international organizations the Latin American and Caribbean States are members of.

21. To promote the exchange of training, education and cultural programs on the contribution of African culture in building our societies.

22. To urge the countries of the region to include and develop, as appropriate, the ethnic-racial education and the value of the heritage of people of African descent in their educational systems.

23. To urge the creation of a Centre of Historical Memory in the region and to seek the means to that end, including with regard to funding.

24. To express our gratitude to the Government of Brazil for hosting this Regional Conference of Latin America and the Caribbean of the International Decade of the People of African Descent.