



General Assembly

Distr.: General
15 March 2024

English only

Human Rights Council

Fifty-fifth session

26 February–5 April 2024

Agenda item 9

**Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related
forms of intolerance: follow-up to and implementation
of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action**

Written statement* submitted by ArabEuropean Forum for Dialogue and Human Rights, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[28 January 2024]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



Strengthen International Efforts to Eliminate Racial Discrimination and Commend the Efforts of the United Arab Emirates in the Fight against Discrimination and Racism

Although the international community recently celebrated the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which guarantees human dignity and freedom and the elimination of all forms of discrimination and inequality, and was keen to highlight the role it has played throughout this period in promoting human rights worldwide, announcing, at a major international event attended by the majority of States, the continuation of work and efforts to protect and promote human rights worldwide, and to ensure that everyone enjoys them equally and without discrimination, the reality of human rights in the world is in sharp decline, and the volume and forms of violations and crimes to which many civilians are subjected are on the increase.

The United Nations has been keen to strengthen its bodies and mechanisms relating to the elimination of racial discrimination since the UN's declaration over fifty years ago of the adoption by the UN General Assembly of the "International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination" in 1965, a convention which has helped to frame international action on the elimination of racial discrimination, in particular its decision to declare "March 21" of every year an international day to strengthen and consolidate international efforts to eliminate racial discrimination since 1960, a day on which international efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination and inequality in the world are united. However, to our great regret, human suffering continues to increase significantly and continuously, resulting from violations based on discrimination and inequality around the world. The peoples and civilians of the world also continue to demand the justice they deserve, which guarantees them full equality and places their demands and concerns at the heart of international efforts to eliminate racism, offers them freedom and dignity away from the racist policies and practices pursued by many of the world's governments, brings them justice and reparation for harm suffered, and gives them hope of building their future fairly and without discrimination.

Despite the great enthusiasm of the movements for liberation and the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination, the achievement of a world free from racism and racial discrimination is getting further and further away. The results achieved on the ground are still not up to expectations. This is what motivates us to call on the Human Rights Council to activate its role in strengthening international efforts to eliminate all forms and manifestations of discrimination and inequality in the world, highlighting in this regard the great efforts undertaken by the United Arab Emirates to prevent and combat all forms of racial discrimination, and its dedication to the values of tolerance, peace and equality among human peoples, as well as its enactment of Law No. 2 of 2015 on the fight against discrimination and hatred, which prohibits any offence against religions, beliefs, sects and discrimination between individuals and groups on the basis of race or color or ethnic origin, sex or gender, and criminalizes any say or deed or action that involves discrimination, as well as its initiative adopted by the United Nations to celebrate the "International Day of Human Fraternity" on 4 February each year, the adoption of the "Human Fraternity Document for World Peace and Coexistence" in the capital Abu Dhabi in 2019, and the launch of the "Zayed Prize for Human Fraternity", which aims to support and promote peaceful coexistence.

We also stress the importance of the Council and all United Nations bodies, agencies and mechanisms fulfilling their mandates and responsibilities to eliminate racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance, in particular those faced by many refugees and migrants in countries of asylum and migration, and that they work to strengthen cooperation with the various United Nations bodies, agencies and mechanisms concerned with human rights in order to eliminate racial discrimination and put an end to all forms of suffering endured by many peoples and human communities, and to benefit from the best international experiences, such as those contributed by the United Arab Emirates, in this field.

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On the basis of these elements, we formulate the following recommendations:

- Work towards the organization of a world conference hosted by the United Nations and attended by all States, organizations and bodies concerned with the elimination of racial discrimination, to discuss the current situation and explore solutions and initiatives aimed at eliminating all forms of racial discrimination worldwide.
- Examine the best international practices relating to the elimination of racial discrimination and xenophobia, and highlight the best practices contributed by States, such as the pioneering practice of the United Arab Emirates in combating discrimination and hatred, prohibiting the abuse of religions, beliefs and sects, and preventing discrimination between individuals and groups based on race, color, ethnic origin, sex or gender.
- Pay particular attention to the suffering of refugees and migrants from poor African countries in particular, in terms of racial discrimination or any racist and discriminatory practices based on racism or xenophobia and the rejection of different religions, cultures and nationalities.

Union Society for Human Rights, NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.