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**REVIEW OF REPORTS, STUDIES AND OTHER DOCUMENTATION FOR THE
PREPARATORY COMMITTEE AND THE DURBAN REVIEW CONFERENCE
AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS BODIES AND MECHANISMS**

**Response by the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent to
the questionnaire transmitted by the Secretariat (A/CONF.211/PC.2/2)**

Question 1

Kindly assess the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

Response by the Working Group of Experts

1. The Durban Declaration and Programme of Action has a positive role in fiHE D D .80439(a)995(E)-

and in the advancement of the countries in which they live. Unfortunately, six years of participation continues to be thwarted by countless impediments some of which are as follows:

Question 3

Please identify concrete measures and initiatives for combating and eliminating all forms of manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in order to foster the effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

Response by the Working Group of Experts

6. The enactment and faithful implementation of anti-racism laws seem to be the best tools in combating racial discrimination and related practices. Administrative initiatives are also important and must be included in national plans of action to combat racism. The use of statistically racially disaggregated data in order to measure the enjoyment of human rights by racial groups is also of crucial importance. Consideration should also be given to the last report of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent which deals to a large extent with measures and initiatives for combating and eliminating racial discrimination.

Question 4

Kindly assess the effectiveness of the existing Durban follow-up mechanisms and other relevant United Nations mechanisms dealing with the issue of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and make suggestions in order to enhance them.

Response by the Working Group of Experts

7. The Working Group of Experts enjoys strong support from the Member States and civil society. The effectiveness of this mechanism will depend on a number of factors. The first of these has to do with implementation of the Working Group's recommendations by States and other stakeholders. The effectiveness of the mechanism also depends on the cooperation extended by States to the mechanisms, for example, cooperation in extending invitations to the Working Group to make country visits. With regard to the enhancement of the mechanisms, first the United Nations should provide more financial resources to support the activities of the Working Group. Secondly, States should have appropriate mechanisms specifically dealing with issues of racism. Another suggestion would be for the Working Group to identify prominent individuals who can act as champions or good-will ambassadors promoting the work of the Working Group in States with both large and small populations of African descent. Furthermore, in order to render a mechanism more effective, its mandate should be as clear as possible and it should be provided with all the necessary resources. States should assign experts in their countries to engage with mechanisms and facilitate the implementation of their recommendations; such experts should have the relevant necessary competencies.

Question 5

What are the steps that should be taken by governments to ratify and/or implement the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and give proper consideration to the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination?

Response by the Working Group of Experts

8. States should not deny the existence of racial discrimination in their countries. More sustained measures are needed to sensitize and mobilize the public in all countries. Stakeholders should have the political will to follow up on their commitments. Those States that have not done so should ratify the Convention, while those that have made reservations should remove them.

Question 6

Please identify and share good practices achieved in the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

Response by the Working Group of Experts

9. The Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism (CEOOR) in Belgium, a country visited by the Working Group, is a good example of best practices. The Centre has local branches throughout the country. It receives complaints and inquiries from aggrieved parties, makes referrals to other rti