

**STATEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE DURBAN REVIEW**

**CONFERENCE**

Geneva, 20 April 2009

Mr. President,  
Mr. Secretary-General,  
Director-General of the UN Office in Geneva,

5 Those who are victims of racism, those who have suffered the indignities of apartheid and the expropriations of colonialism understand, perhaps more than most others, the pains of discrimination. These are historical wrongs and the victims are real people with blood in their veins, just like anyone else. Some of the victims will wear their scars to their graves but they are not bitter. For them, it is sufficient that their plight be duly recognised as the historical truth that it is. For them, the healing phrase "never again" will be enough. This is why part of the healing process which is precisely what we are engaged in at this conference must include something that

the victims. When the world finally overcame slavery, colonialism and apartheid, it sent a strong message that it can overcome divisions in pursuit of high principles. With greater resolve and determination, we can consolidate on these achievements by uprooting all the vestiges of these