EU Explanation of Vote – UN General Assembly 3rd Committee: Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

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16 November 2023, New York – European Union Explanation of Vote after the vote at the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly Third Committee Action on L.60 REV1: A global call for concrete action for the elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union to explain our vote on the draft resolution contained in document L.60 REV 1.

The Candidate Countries Montenegro\*, Serbia\*, Albania\*, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this statement.

The EU remains fully committed to the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance including its contemporary forms, as well as to the promotion and protection of human rights for all without discrimination on any grounds.

Racism is a global scourge. No country or region is free from this phenomenon and we have an obligation to act to eliminate it. Racism in all its forms must be tackled in a comprehensive way by taking effective measures at the national, regional and international level, in particular through the ratification and implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which is the universal foundation for efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate racism.

The EU remains firmly committed to the primary objectives and commitments undertaken at the 2001 Durban World Conference to combat and eradicate all manifestations of racism, xenophobia and related intolerance.

We support the programme of activities of the UN Decade on People of African descent and follow closely the discussions at the Forum of People of African Descent and on the Declaration under preparation.

Chair,

We appreciate that South Africa, on behalf of the G77 and China, organized informal consultations. However, these focused on a small number of paragraphs and changes made compared to last year’s text. We engaged constructively on those and we thank the core group for taking on board some of our proposals.

With regard to the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent, we wish to remind delegations that after four annual sessions, in 2025, the General Assembly has to carry out an evaluation of the modalities based on an evaluation made by the Human Rights Council in the light of the experience gained. For this reason, we do not agree with requesting additional budget at this particular point in time.

We reiterate our position that we would like to see more synergies and efficiencies between the UN mechanisms to combat racism. This would contribute also to a better management of resources and avoid an increase of budgetary implications.

Finally, the EU does not believe that ICERD has gaps and therefore we do not support the negotiation of complementary standards to this Convention. For these reasons, the Member States of the EU continue to be unable to support the resolution.

Thank you.