



PERMANENT MISSION OF CUBA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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**STATEMENT BY H.E. Mr. ABELARDO MORENO, DEPUTY MINISTER OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA, AT THE HIGH-LEVEL
MEETING TO COMMEMORATE THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
ADOPTION OF THE DURBAN DECLARATION AND PROGRAMME OF
ACTION**

New York, 22 September 2011

Mr. President,

Ten years ago, the Third World Conference against Racism held in Durban, South Africa, was a milestone in the struggle for equal rights for all human beings, as it critically assessed slavery and colonialism, identified the root causes and origin of racism, condemned their contemporary manifestations, and adopted a platform for action against these scourges.

Its Declaration and Programme of Action constitute the most momentous international agreement against racism and racial discrimination in the history of our Organization. By calling for the eradication of all forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance, Durban paid off a debt to the millions of historical victims of those abominable practices.

However, there is still a need to recognize slavery and transatlantic slave trade as crimes against humanity, and to agree that the descendants of the victims of those criminal practices, colonialism, and the genocidal exploitation of indigenous peoples should receive the reparation and compensation they deserve, as a pending historic measure of justice.

Regrettably, little progress has been made in these years on implementing the Durban Programme of Action. On the contrary, racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia continue to worsen and become perpetual, with greater incidence and impunity in the industrialized world.

In Europe and North America, violent acts of racism are on the rise, and theories promoting race and culture superiority and neo-Fascism proliferate and are institutionalized, with great electoral successes of nationalist and extreme right parties amidst the galloping economic crisis.

There, the discrimination against racial and ethnic minorities become more intense, and clearly discriminatory immigration policies and laws, which deprive children of healthcare and education services, proliferate. Counter-terrorist laws that give free rein to arbitrariness and the exercise of public authority based on stereotypes, racism and xenophobia are enacted and implemented.

Internet is ever more used to disseminate ideas based on superiority and racial and religious hatred. Freedom of expression cannot mean freedom to encourage hatred, discrimination and violence. That is illegal and punishable.

Palestine remains subjugated to a cruel and illegal occupation. We reiterate our solidarity and support to the Palestinian people and the full exercise of their right to self-determination.

The increase in racism and racial discrimination is related to the widening gap between rich and poor nations, as a result of neoliberal globalization and centuries of slavery, colonization and domination.

It is imperative to establish a new international economic order based on equality, solidarity and social justice to face these root causes of racism.

In the meantime, the Cuban Revolution, since its inception, set the struggle against racism and any form of discrimination as a priority. Deep social, economic and political transformations enabled the eradication of structural injustices like institutionalized racism and discrimination.

Cuba's contribution against racism and discrimination has gone beyond our borders. Over 350 thousand Cubans fought together with their African brothers and sisters to eradicate Apartheid and colonialism, and more than 2 thousand died in African soil.

Cuba, subjected for 50 years to an unjust and cruel blockade, has shared in solidarity what it has with other Third World countries, including on healthcare and education, which has benefitted very underprivileged groups like Afro-descendants and natives.

I reiterate the firm commitment of Cuba to cooperating with the efforts to eradicate the opprobrious scourges of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance. If a genuine international cooperation is not achieved, the efforts of many developing countries to meet the objectives of Durban will have been in vain.

Thank you