



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

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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**

## **Preparations for marking the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action**

### **Report of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action**

#### *Summary*

The present report, submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 42/29, contains preliminary information on the preparations made for marking the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. The report is based on discussions held by the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action during its seventeenth session, held in Geneva from 16 to 20 December 2019 and on 16 January 2020.



## I. Introduction

1. The Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action held its seventeenth session in Geneva from 16 to 20 December 2019 and on 16 January 2020. One of the meetings during the session was devoted to a preliminary exchange of views on preparations for marking the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. The present report, prepared pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 42/29, contains a summary of those discussions and recommendations arising from the meeting.

## II. Discussions

2. During the meeting devoted to the preliminary exchange of views on the preparations for marking the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran expressed the hope that the anniversary would represent an opportunity for the Working Group to address the wide range of issues mentioned in the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, as well as the new manifestations of discrimination, in particular xenophobia and Islamophobia.

3. The representative of South Africa suggested convening a one-day high-level plenary event to mark the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action during the high-level segment of the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly, in 2021. In that regard, the representative of South Africa proposed that the Assembly adopt a resolution, at its seventy-fifth session, requesting the organization of an event aimed at mobilizing political will in order to reaffirm States' commitment to the full and effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. The Human Rights Council too could convene a similar event, in the form of a meeting or dialogue. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) should invite Member States, international and regional organizations, civil society representatives and other stakeholders to organize various initiatives to mark the twentieth anniversary. These initiatives should have high visibility, celebrate the positive developments of the past two decades and address remaining challenges. That would effectively increase awareness of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, at all levels. OHCHR should also be encouraged to prepare public information materials on the twentieth anniversary that could be disseminated at various events and through United Nations information centres.

4. The representative of the European Union expressed agreement with the proposal of South Africa, noting that it was similar to what had been done to mark the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

5. The representative of Zimbabwe expressed agreement with the proposal of South Africa to convene two events for marking the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action: a thematic event in Geneva and a high-level political event in New York.

6. The representative of Jamaica agreed that the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action should have high visibility and be planned appropriately. Her delegation supported several of the proposals put forward by the representatives of Cuba, South Africa and other States.

7. The representative of the International Youth and Student Movement for the United Nations expressed concern about the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action being the least well-known of all the United Nations declarations and suggested that the United Nations provide relevant promotional material.

## III. Conclusions

8. The Working Group underscored that the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action continued to be reaffirmed and recognized within the United Nations as a comprehensive framework and solid foundation for combating racism, racial discrimination,

xenophobia and related intolerance. As such, the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of that historic instrument needed be celebrated and light needed be shed on it.

#### **IV. Recommendations**

9. **Member States should mobilize political will for the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and convene a one-day high-level plenary event to mark the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action during the high-level segment of the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly, in 2021. In that regard, the Assembly should adopt a resolution, at its seventy-fifth session, requesting the organization of such an event with the aim of reaffirming States' commitment to the full and effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.**

10. **The Human Rights Council should convene an event to mark the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.**

11. **The importance of the involvement of non-governmental organizations in observing the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action should be recognized. In that regard, the Working Group invites Member States, intergovernmental organizations and other stakeholders to consider providing support to enable non-governmental organizations to organize and participate in activities linked to the twentieth anniversary.**

12. **Member States, international and regional organizations, civil society representatives and other stakeholders should be invited to organize various initiatives, with high visibility, to celebrate positive developments and address remaining challenges, which will effectively increase awareness at all levels.**

13. **Public information materials should be prepared on the twentieth anniversary and be disseminated at various events, through United Nations information centres and the websites of OHCHR and other United Nations entities.**