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**Swedish Presidency
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**Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of
intolerance, follow-up and implementation of the Durban
Declaration and Programme of Action**

Statement by

H.E. Ambassador Hans Dahlgren

Permanent Representative of Sweden to

the United Nations Office in Geneva

on behalf of the European Union

Geneva, 30 September 2009

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**United Nations
Human Rights Council – 12th session
30 September 2009**

**EU Statement
Item 9 - General Debate:**

Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance, follow-up and implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

Mr President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia¹, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Armenia align themselves with this declaration.

Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance are problems facing all societies and all countries throughout the world. The European Union is well aware of the problems facing our own region. Combating racism and discrimination is a priority for the European Union.

We emphasise that there must be no categorisation of more or less dangerous manifestations of the phenomena; all acts of racism and related intolerance are equally unacceptable and bear the inherent danger of escalating into violence or other deplorable acts. In this context we are concerned that some groups do not enjoy the same protection against discrimination as others. We call on all States to take action and to step up their efforts against multiple forms of discrimination based on gender, age, descent, sexual orientation or gender identity.

Mr President,

The EU recognises that positive achievements resulting from implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action have been made. We are, however, well aware of the challenges that remain and reaffirm our determination to address them. The European Union participated actively in the preparations of the Durban Review Conference and we see its outcome as a basis for further work against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

The EU would like to reiterate the importance of full implementation of the main tool the UN has to combat racism; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. We consider it imperative that States take seriously their international obligations and take concrete steps to implement them, including reporting periodically to the Committee. We need to make full

¹ * Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

use of the Convention as the main legal instrument covering all different forms of racism and related intolerance we are confronted with today. We support the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and are grateful for the tireless efforts of the Committee to help us use the Convention in a better way.

Mr President,

The EU would like to recall that national and international NGOs contribute to a great extent to the world-wide struggle against racism and that they are in need of both political and financial support to carry out their important task. We call on all countries to genuinely engage with both national and international NGOs in a joint effort to fight racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

After the end of this session of the Council, two intergovernmental mechanisms, both deriving from the DDPA, will meet here in Geneva, two weeks each. The EU wants to find common ground with delegations from other regions on what to address in the IGWG Durban Follow-up. As to the Ad Hoc Committee on Complimentary Standards, the EU will carefully study the paper drafted by its Chairperson.

Thank you, Mr President
