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**Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and
related intolerance: comprehensive implementation of and
follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action**

Programme of activities for the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution [69/16](#), the present report provides a final assessment of progress made in implementing the programme of activities of the International Decade for People of African Descent (2015–2024). It concludes with guidance on ways forward to strengthen the promotion and protection of the human rights of people of African descent beyond 2024, including through the proclamation of a Second International Decade for People of African Descent.

* [A/79/150](#).



I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 69/16. In view of the fact that 2024 marks the final year of the International Decade for People of African Descent, the report provides a final assessment of progress and guidance on ways forward to strengthen the promotion and protection of the human rights of people of African descent, including through the proclamation of a Second International Decade for People of African Descent.

2. The report draws on 49 submissions received from States and other stakeholders further to a call for inputs issued by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR),¹ as well as on information and analysis from previous United Nations reports.

II. Implementation of the programme of activities of the Decade

3. This section presents a final assessment of progress made in achieving the themes of the Decade and implementing its programme of activities² since its launch in 2015.

A. Recognition

1. Right to equality and non-discrimination

4. In line with the programme of activities, some States have modified their constitutions and adopted laws to formally recognize people of African descent as a distinct component of their populations. In 2019, in Chile, a law was adopted recognizing Afrodescendants of the Arica region as a Tribal People.³ In 2022, in Costa Rica, a decree was issued recognizing Afro-Costa Ricans as a tribal people.⁴ In 2019, Mexico amended its Constitution to recognize the Afro-Mexican peoples and communities as part of the multicultural composition of the nation.⁵ The Constitutions of the Plurinational State of Bolivia,⁶ Brazil,⁷ Colombia⁸ and Ecuador⁹ already included such recognition prior to 2015.

5. Most States have legislation in place to tackle racial discrimination, and, since 2015, 20 States have reported that they have adopted or revised such laws.¹⁰ For example, in 2022, Spain enacted a law on equal treatment and non-discrimination,

¹ Responses were received from 13 States (Burkina Faso, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Iraq, Luxembourg, Mexico, Mozambique, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Peru, Spain, and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)) *inter alia*; available at: www.ohchr.org/en/calls-for-input/2024/call-inputs-2024-report-united-nations-secretary-general-implementation.

² General Assembly resolution 69/16, annex.

³ https://www.camara.cl/camara/doc/leyes_normas/constitucion.pdf.

⁴ https://adsdatabase.ohchr.org/IssueLibrary/COSTA%20RICA_Constataci%C3%B3n%20del%20autoreconocimiento%20de%20la%20poblaci%C3%B3n%20afrocostarricense%20como%20pueblo%20tribal.pdf.

⁵ Submission of Mexico.

⁶ www.minedu.gob.bo/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1525:constitucion-politica-del-estado&catid=233&Itemid=933.

⁷ https://www.stf.jus.br/arquivo/cms/legislacaoConstituicao/anexo/CF_espanhol_web.pdf.

⁸ <https://www.corteconstitucional.gov.co/inicio/Constitucion%20politica%20de%20Colombia%20-%202015.pdf>.

⁹ <https://www.cosede.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/CONSTITUCION-DE-LA-REPUBLICA-DEL-ECUADOR.pdf>.

¹⁰ <https://adsdatabase.ohchr.org/>; A/78/197; submissions of Luxembourg, Spain and the National Institution of Human Rights and Ombudsman of Uruguay.

combining a preventive approach with measures to ensure access to justice and remedies for victims.¹¹ A few States adopted legislative measures specifically focused on people of African descent, such as Paraguay and Peru.¹² In many States, criminal codes prohibit and sanction acts of discrimination based on race and ethnic origin, among other grounds.¹³

6. Since 2015, more than 20 States worldwide have adopted and implemented policies and national plans for combating racism and racial discrimination, some of which include specific references to people of African descent.¹⁴ In Latin America, several States have adopted policies and national plans targeting people of African descent, including Argentina, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.¹⁵ Peru adopted a national policy for the Afro-Peruvian people in 2022 and the “Peru without Racism” strategy in 2023.¹⁶ The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reported on the implementation of the Programmatic Agenda for People of African Descent, as part of its Economic and Social Development plan 2019–2025.¹⁷

7. Many States have national human rights institutions, equality bodies and similar structures with a mandate to tackle racial discrimination. In some instances, they are mandated to receive complaints and provide assistance to victims.¹⁸ The Independent Authority for Equal Treatment and Non-Discrimination was created in Spain in 2022.¹⁹ However, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights noted the need to establish and strengthen these institutions with adequate resources, a robust mandate and greater representation of people of African descent.²⁰

8. Since 2015, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay and Uruguay have reported on the creation of new institutions to lead, coordinate or contribute to efforts to promote the human rights of people of African descent.²¹ Some States have created new institutions to develop and coordinate programmes to combat racism and racial discrimination, including Brazil, Canada, Cuba, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the United States of America.²²

9. In Benin, a law granting nationality to people of African descent was adopted in May 2024.²³ In Ghana, 2019 was proclaimed the “Year of Return” for Africans in the diaspora in Ghana.²⁴

¹¹ Submission of Spain.

¹² A/78/197; submission of Peru.

¹³ <https://adsdatabase.ohchr.org/>; submissions of El Salvador and Costa Rica; A/78/197; A/76/287; A/75/561; A/74/312; A/72/234.

¹⁴ Submissions of Cuba and Mexico; A/HRC/42/59/Add.2; A/74/30.

¹⁵ <https://adsdatabase.ohchr.org/>; A/75/363; A/76/322.

¹⁶ Submission of Peru.

¹⁷ Submission of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

¹⁸ Submission of Peru; <https://adsdatabase.ohchr.org/>; A/71/290; A/76/322.

¹⁹ Submission of Spain; <https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2022/07/13/pdfs/BOE-A-2022-11589.pdf>.

²⁰ A/HRC/47/CRP.1.

²¹ Submission of the National Institution of Human Rights and Ombudsman of Uruguay; <https://adsdatabase.ohchr.org/>; www.oas.org/ext/en/human-rights/riafro; A/71/290; A/76/322; A/78/197; and A/78/317.

²² A/78/197; www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/federal-anti-racism-secretariat/about.html; submissions of Cuba and the Kingdom of the Netherlands; www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-civilian-security-democracy-and-human-rights/bureau-of-democracy-human-rights-and-labor/office-of-the-special-representative-for-racial-equity-and-justice/.

²³ <https://sgg.gouv.bj/cm/2024-05-08/#i-transmission-assemblee-nationale-examen-vote-projet-relative-reconnaissance-nationalite-beninoise-afro-descendants-republique-benin>.

²⁴ www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/september-2020/beyond-year-return-africa-and-diaspora-must-forge-closer-ties.

10. The lack of political will and of financial and human resources often constitute the main challenges for the realization of laws, policies and plans against racial discrimination and for the good functioning of the institutions created or designated to lead this work.²⁵ In addition, in some countries, far right and racist rhetoric have undermined progress, sometimes leading to setbacks.²⁶

2. Education on equality and awareness-raising

11. Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Germany, Guatemala, Jamaica, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines officially launched the Decade.²⁷ In Ireland, the Government supported the non-governmental steering committee for the International Decade for People of African Descent to launch the Decade in 2023.²⁸

12. Several States have dedicated specific days or months to recognize people of African descent and their culture, history and heritage, such as Argentina, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mauritius, Panama, Peru, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States and Uruguay.²⁹ Since 2021, the International Day for People of African Descent has been celebrated in several countries.³⁰ Some States have led public campaigns and cultural activities to promote the visibility of people of African descent and their diverse heritage, culture and contributions, as well as to raise public awareness about the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, including through media campaigns, national conferences and other events.³¹

13. Cuba, the Dominican Republic, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Panama, Sweden and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reported on educational initiatives, such as the revision of educational curricula to accurately reflect the histories of people of African descent, enslavement and colonialism.³² The Dominican Republic and Peru reported on training for public servants on cultural diversity, equality and non-discrimination.³³

14. Some States have supported research projects on people of African descent and the legacies of enslavement and colonialism, such as those under the National Commission for Afro-Costa Rican Studies in Costa Rica, the Sebastián Lemba Institute of African Studies in the Dominican Republic, the Ministry of Education in El Salvador, the Slavery Past Fund in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Afro-Peruvian culture researchers' meeting in Peru and the Observatory on Racism and Xenophobia in Spain.³⁴

²⁵ A/76/322.

²⁶ Submission of the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent; www.ohchr.org/en/statements-and-speeches/2024/03/turks-global-update-human-rights-council; https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT/CERD/SWA/9854&Lang=en.

²⁷ A/76/322.

²⁸ Submission of International Decade for People of African Descent Ireland.

²⁹ <https://adatabase.ohchr.org/>; A/76/322; A/78/317; submissions of Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic.

³⁰ www.un.org/en/observances/african-descent-day.

³¹ Submissions of Cuba, El Salvador, Mexico, Spain and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of); <https://adatabase.ohchr.org/>; A/71/290; A/76/322; A/78/317; A/78/197.

³² Submissions of Cuba, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador and the Kingdom of the Netherlands; A/78/317.

³³ Submissions of the Dominican Republic and Peru.

³⁴ Submissions of Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Peru and Spain.

15. Many grass-roots and civil society groups, coalitions, networks and movements of people of African descent around the world have promoted the themes of the Decade through meetings, seminars, competitions, conferences, panels, blogs, consultations, concerts and “emancipation events”³⁵ – in some cases with State support.³⁶

3. Information-gathering

16. Under the programme of activities, States should collect, compile, analyse, disseminate and publish reliable statistical data and take all other related measures necessary to assess regularly the situation of people of African descent. The Secretary-General, the High Commissioner and United Nations and regional human rights mechanisms have called upon States to collect and disseminate data disaggregated by race or ethnic origin and other factors, in accordance with international human rights law, to document the situation of people of African descent and to analyse the impact of laws, policies and programmes.³⁷

17. Some States have begun to collect and compile information about people of African descent through censuses and statistical exercises. Since 2015, Chile, Guatemala, Mexico and Peru have included questions on self-identification for people of African descent in population and housing censuses.³⁸ Several States have generated data highlighting attitudes and perceptions of people of African descent.³⁹ In countries that have included self-identification for people of African descent in census and surveys, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination has sometimes expressed concerns, including about methodological shortcomings, a lack of consultative and sensitization processes, inadequate consideration of intersectional forms of discrimination and a lack of adequate resources and training for national statistics institutions.⁴⁰

18. Other recent initiatives in relation to data include: the adoption of the Anti-Racism Data Act in the Province of British Columbia, Canada, in 2022; the development of methodological guidelines for a disaggregated and intersectional approach to statistical data in Colombia; the development of indicators to assess the situation of people of African descent in Peru; and the creation of an Equitable Data Working Group in the United States federal government in 2021.⁴¹ The United Kingdom has a long-standing tradition of collecting and publishing disaggregated

³⁵ Submissions of Association of Mixed Race Irish, Delmore Buddy Daye Learning Institute, Elsie Gayle Mothers and Midwives across the Diaspora, International Decade for People of African Descent Assembly-Guyana, International Decade for People of African Descent Ireland, International Decade for People of African Descent-Spain, Ishola Empire, Buddy Larrier, Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference; www.un.org/en/observances/decade-people-african-descent/past-events.

³⁶ Submissions of El Salvador, Luxembourg and the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

³⁷ Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, general recommendation No. 34 (2011); Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, general comment No. 1 (1989); [A/77/333](#); [A/HRC/51/53](#); [A/HRC/42/59](#); [A/70/335](#); [A/65/295](#); <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52014DC0002>; https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/afro-descendants/docs/pdf/afros_2011_eng.pdf.

³⁸ Law No. 21.151 of Chile; [A/77/333](#); [A/76/322](#); [A/71/290](#); other countries with self-identification categories for people of African descent in censuses include Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, United Kingdom, United States and Uruguay.

³⁹ Submissions of Luxembourg; [A/77/333](#).

⁴⁰ [CERD/C/BOL/CO/21-24](#); [CERD/C/URY/CO/24-26](#); [CERD/C/ARG/CO/24-26](#); [CERD/C/JAM/CO/21-24](#); [CERD/C/BRA/CO/18-20](#); [CERD/C/COL/CO/17-19](#); [CERD/C/MEX/CO/18-21](#); and [CERD/C/GTM/CO/16-17](#); see also: submission of the Permanent Forum.

⁴¹ Submissions of Colombia and Peru; [A/HRC/51/55](#); [A/76/322](#); www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/20/executive-order-advancing-racial-equity-and-support-for-underserved-communities-through-the-federal-government/.

data, including for example through the 2016 Race Disparity Audit.⁴² Some States have also reported on integrating a participatory approach into data-related processes, including Argentina, Canada, Chile and the United Kingdom,⁴³ in line with a human rights-based approach to data.⁴⁴

19. While there are some efforts to generate disaggregated data, these efforts “fail to comprehensively document the situation of people of African descent worldwide”.⁴⁵ Most States continue to be reluctant to collect and publish data disaggregated by race and ethnic origin.⁴⁶ Concerns have also been raised regarding the risks of the discriminatory effects of artificial intelligence, misuse of data and violation of the right to privacy.⁴⁷ The absence of data disaggregated by race or ethnic origin and other factors remains an obstacle to the development of adequate policies and measures to effectively address the structural discrimination and inequalities faced by people of African descent.⁴⁸ In the absence of such official data, some civil society organizations, including those led by people of African descent, have sought to gather data to fill the gap.⁴⁹

4. Participation and inclusion

20. In the programme of activities, States are encouraged to adopt measures to enable the full, equal and effective participation of people of African descent in public and political affairs without discrimination. The importance of ensuring responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making was affirmed under Sustainable development Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.⁵⁰ Meaningful participation in political life and decision-making is a prerequisite to promote racial justice and equality.⁵¹

21. Several States have taken steps to enhance participation in the context of actions to promote racial justice and equality.⁵² For example, actions have been undertaken in some States to remove barriers to participation in electoral processes for people of African descent⁵³ and to enhance their representation in leadership and senior positions in government and public administration.⁵⁴ In Brazil, under a presidential decree, adopted in 2023, a minimum of 30 per cent of commission positions and functions of trust in the federal administration are reserved for people of African descent.⁵⁵

⁴² A/HRC/47/CRP.1.

⁴³ A/77/333, A/HRC/54/66; A/70/335.

⁴⁴ <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/HRIndicators/GuidanceNoteonApproachtoData.pdf>.

⁴⁵ A/77/333.

⁴⁶ Submissions of Association of Mixed Race Irish, Center for African and Development Studies and International Decade for People of African Descent-Spain; A/77/333.

⁴⁷ Submission of the Permanent Forum; International Decade for People of African Descent-Spain; A/77/333.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Submissions of International Decade for People of African Descent Ireland, International Decade for People of African Descent-Spain and Ilex Acción Jurídica; www.ohchr.org/en/events/meetings/2023/disaggregated-data-advance-human-rights-people-african-descent.

⁵⁰ General Assembly resolution 70/1; https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Racism/WGEAPD/Guidelines_inclusion_2030_Agenda.pdf.

⁵¹ A/HRC/54/66, annex.

⁵² Submissions of Mexico, Peru, Costa Rica and Spain; A/76/322; A/HRC/54/66.

⁵³ A/HRC/54/66.

⁵⁴ A/76/322; www.whitehouse.gov/administration/vice-president-harris/; www.vicpresidencia.gov.co/; www.ohchr.org/en/stories/2024/03/reflecting-journey-towards-equality.

⁵⁵ www.in.gov.br/en/web/dou/-/decreto-n-11.443-de-21-de-marco-de-2023-471873644.

22. However, levels of representation and participation of people of African descent in political and public life remain low, with women particularly affected.⁵⁶ Their meaningful, inclusive and safe participation continues to be hindered by multiple intersectional and interconnected experiences of systemic racism, marginalization and exclusion, as well as by the lack of a safe and enabling environment.⁵⁷

B. Justice

1. Access to justice

23. Under the programme of activities, States are required to take measures to ensure equality before the law for people of African descent. Most States have constitutional and legal measures to guarantee the right to equality before the law.⁵⁸ Since 2015, several States have reported on measures to remove barriers and efforts to guarantee access to justice and remedies for victims of racism and racial discrimination, including Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Peru and Spain.⁵⁹ In many States, criminal codes racist and xenophobic motives are acknowledged as an aggravating circumstance.⁶⁰

24. In the programme of activities, States are called upon to eliminate racial profiling and institutionalized stereotypes in law enforcement, to ensure full access to effective protection and remedies and the right to a fair trial and to facilitate access to justice for victims of racism. Several States noted legal norms and codes of conduct aimed at preventing racial profiling by law enforcement officers.⁶¹ Some States reported on initiatives to enhance external accountability of law enforcement through oversight bodies and civilian and community oversight.⁶²

25. Some States highlighted measures to combat institutional racism in law enforcement and the criminal justice system, including protocols and training for law enforcement and judicial staff;⁶³ internal evaluations and audits⁶⁴ and measures to increase racial and ethnic diversity in police forces.⁶⁵

26. Several States have criminal laws prohibiting incitement to discrimination, hate or violence on the grounds of race and ethnic origin and acknowledging racist and xenophobic motives as an aggravating circumstance in criminal offences.⁶⁶ In addition, some States have reported on the adoption of legal, policy and educational measures to combat racially motivated hate speech and hate crimes.⁶⁷

27. The High Commissioner and United Nations human rights mechanisms have noted persisting concerns regarding the disproportionate impact on people of African descent of the use-of-force violations by law enforcement officials, racial profiling and racial disparities in the criminal justice system, as well as bias in artificial

⁵⁶ A/HRC/54/66; A/75/363; A/72/323.

⁵⁷ A/HRC/54/66.

⁵⁸ Submission of Iraq; <https://adsdatabase.ohchr.org/>.

⁵⁹ Submissions of Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Peru and Spain; A/74/308; www.justice.gc.ca/eng/cj-jp/cbjs-scjn/index.html.

⁶⁰ <https://adsdatabase.ohchr.org/>; A/78/197; A/76/287; A/75/561; A/72/324; A/71/290.

⁶¹ A/73/354; A/HRC/54/66.

⁶² A/73/354; A/HRC/51/53; A/HRC/51/55; A/HRC/54/66.

⁶³ A/74/308; A/HRC/54/66.

⁶⁴ A/73/354; A/HRC/54/69.

⁶⁵ A/73/354.

⁶⁶ Submission of Luxembourg; <https://adsdatabase.ohchr.org/>; A/78/197; A/77/294; A/76/287; A/75/561; A/74/412; A/72/324; A/71/399; A/70/367.

⁶⁷ <https://adsdatabase.ohchr.org/>; A/78/197; A/77/294; A/76/287; A/75/561; A/74/312; A/73/354; A/71/399; A/72/324; A/HRC/54/69; A/HRC/54/CRP.1; A/HRC/54/CRP. 7; A/HRC/51/53.

intelligence-based algorithms used for predictive policing.⁶⁸ Deaths of people of African descent during or after interactions with law enforcement officials continued to be reported.⁶⁹

28. Reports indicated that, in many countries, racially motivated violence and hatred continued to be an everyday reality for people of African descent.⁷⁰ Victims of racism and racial discrimination continue to face barriers in access to justice and remedies, and lack of accountability remains a major concern in many countries.⁷¹

29. In the programme of activities States are also called upon to acknowledge and regret the untold suffering resulting from slavery, the slave trade, the transatlantic slave trade, colonialism, apartheid and genocide and past tragedies; to present apologies, honour the memory of the victims and contribute to restoring their dignity; as well as to take appropriate and effective measures to halt and reverse the lasting consequences of those practices.

30. The Secretary-General and the High Commissioner have noted an increasing willingness and emerging practice to acknowledge the need to repair the continuing impacts of enslavement and colonialism, including through reparatory justice, at the local, national, regional and international levels.⁷² These include measures and initiatives to preserve and commemorate the memory of these past tragedies; steps in expressing apologies, regrets and acknowledgement for past harms; and the initiation of truth-seeking processes; and other types of reparations measures.⁷³

31. However, a lack of meaningful participation of people of African descent in the development and implementation of initiatives has been raised in several countries.⁷⁴ Overall, no State has fully reckoned with the past, or comprehensively accounted for harms suffered owing to enslavement, colonialism and successive racially discriminatory policies and systems, nor their impacts on the lives of people of African descent today, or eradicated the root causes, drivers and incentives.⁷⁵

2. Special measures

32. Under the programme of activities, and in line with the recommendation of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination,⁷⁶ States are encouraged to adopt special measures for people of African descent. Such measures have been put in place by some States – including Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Peru, the United States and Uruguay – in the areas of education, employment and

⁶⁸ Submissions of Centre of African and Development Studies, International Decade for People of African Descent Ireland and International Decade for People of African Descent-Spain; [A/HRC/54/66](#); [A/HRC/51/53](#); [A/HRC/51/54/Add.1](#); [A/HRC/51/54/Add.2](#); [A/HRC/47/CRP.1](#); [A/HRC/54/67/Add.1](#); [A/HRC/54/67/Add.2](#); [A/73/354](#); [A/HRC/54/CRP.7](#).

⁶⁹ Submissions of Centre of African and Development Studies, International Decade for People of African Descent Ireland and Nossos Coletivos Negros; [A/HRC/54/66](#); [A/HRC/54/67/Add.1](#); [A/HRC/51/53](#); [A/HRC/47/CRP.1](#); [A/HRC/54/CRP.7](#).

⁷⁰ [A/HRC/54/CRP.1](#).

⁷¹ [A/HRC/54/66](#); [A/HRC/51/53](#); [A/HRC/51/54/Add.1](#); [A/HRC/47/CRP.1](#); [A/HRC/54/CRP.7](#).

⁷² [A/78/317](#); [A/HRC/54/66](#); [A/HRC/51/53](#); [A/HRC/47/53](#).

⁷³ Submissions of Colombia and the Kingdom of the Netherlands; [A/78/317](#); [A/HRC/54/66](#); [A/HRC/51/53](#); [A/HRC/47/53](#).

⁷⁴ [A/78/317](#); <https://rezonodwes.com/?p=332430>.

⁷⁵ Submission of the Permanent Forum; [A/78/317](#); [A/HRC/54/66](#); [A/HRC/57/67](#).

⁷⁶ Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, general recommendation No. 32 (2009).

political representation.⁷⁷ In India, Siddi communities are eligible for the reservation policies as “Scheduled Tribes” or “Other Backward Classes” in some states.⁷⁸ However, concerns have been raised about the lack and termination of temporary special measures in countries with disparities between people of African descent and the rest of the population, and, where they exist, about their ineffective implementation.⁷⁹

C. Development

1. Right to development and measures against poverty

33. In the programme of activities, poverty is recognized as both a cause and a consequence of discrimination, and States are called upon to remove all obstacles that prevent the equal enjoyment of all human rights, including the right to development of people of African descent. Also called for is their active, free and meaningful participation in development-related processes. In 2019, the Secretary-General made recommendations for the inclusion of people of African descent in relation to the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals.⁸⁰ In 2020, the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent issued operational guidelines to this effect.⁸¹

34. Since 2015, many States have adopted national development policies and programmes for eradicating poverty and reducing social exclusion notably as part of efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda and in response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.⁸² Colombia and Peru were among the few States that have taken into account the specific needs and experiences of people of African descent.⁸³

35. However, in many regions, people of African descent reportedly continue to suffer discrimination, marginalization and exclusion, and have been disproportionately affected by the socioeconomic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.⁸⁴

2. Education

36. In the programme of activities, States are called upon to ensure that children of African descent have access to free primary education and to quality public education,

⁷⁷ Submissions of Colombia, Costa Rica, Peru and the National Institution of Human Rights and Ombudsman of Uruguay; A/75/561; CERD/C/BRA/18-20; A/76/322; A/HRC/27/68/Add.1; https://adsdatabase.ohchr.org/IssueLibrary/COSTA%20RICA_Ley%20de%20Acciones%20afirmativas%20a%20favor%20de%20las%20personas%20afrodescendientes.pdf; https://www.pgrweb.go.cr/scij/Busqueda/Normativa/Normas/nrm_texto_completo.aspx?param1=NRTC&nValor1=1&nValor2=95068; A/78/317; CERD/C/USA/10-12; <https://www.gub.uy/ministerio-desarrollo-social/sites/ministerio-desarrollo-social/files/documentos/publicaciones/ley-de-acciones-afirmativas-para-afrodescendientes.pdf>.

⁷⁸ <https://cmn.admissions.nic.in/document/central-list-of-scheduled-tribes-st-in-india/>; https://dopt.gov.in/sites/default/files/FAQ_SCST.pdf.

⁷⁹ A/HRC/57/68; A/HRC/47/CRP.1; https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/22pdf/600us1r53_4g15.pdf; CERD/C/USA/CO/7-9; <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/a3b5c6a3-6b2d-52ad-a560-7f4817b235ca>, p. 43; https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/44387/1/S1800725_en.pdf, p. 32; submission of Nosso Coletivo Negro. A/74/308.

⁸¹ https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Racism/WGEAPD/Guidelines_inclusion_2030_Agenda.pdf.

⁸² Submissions of El Salvador, Iraq and the Kingdom of the Netherlands; <https://hlpf.un.org/countries>.

⁸³ Submission of Peru; https://adsdatabase.ohchr.org/IssueLibrary/COLOMBIA_Bases%20del%20Plan%20Nacional%20de%20Desarrollo%202018-2022.pdf.

⁸⁴ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/36-28-0001/2023008/article/00002-eng.htm>; <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2023/being-black-eu>; <https://home.treasury.gov/news/featured-stories/racial-inequality-in-the-united-states>; www.cepal.org/en/publications/46621-people-african-descent-and-covid-19-unveiling-structural-inequalities-latin; submission of the National Institution of Human Rights and Ombudsman of Uruguay.

without discrimination. The Secretary-General has highlighted the importance of inclusive and equitable quality education for people of African descent, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 4.⁸⁵

37. Several States have adopted affirmative action policies to address barriers in access to secondary and tertiary education for people of African descent, mainly in the Americas;⁸⁶ although there has been pushback in recent years.⁸⁷ Several States noted efforts towards inclusive and intercultural education.⁸⁸ In 2016, Costa Rica took measures to remove discriminatory school regulations.⁸⁹ In Colombia, the national development plan 2018–2020 included measures to ensure access to educational services in areas populated mostly by Afro-Colombians.⁹⁰

38. Since 2015, reports suggest some progress towards the fulfilment of the right to education by people of African descent.⁹¹ However, there are reportedly still significant gaps between students of African descent and other students in terms of early school leaving and the secondary and tertiary education completion in most countries where data is available.⁹² The Secretary-General has highlighted that racism and racial stereotypes continue to influence attitudes towards the scholastic ability of students of African descent and their success.⁹³

3. Employment

39. In the programme of activities, States are called upon to take concrete measures to eliminate racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in the workplace, ensure equality before the law and eliminate barriers in access to employment.

40. Many States have ratified the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111);⁹⁴ and have enshrined the principle of equal treatment in labour relations in constitutions, labour laws or penal codes.⁹⁵ Several States have taken measures to remove barriers in access to employment and promote entrepreneurship for people of African descent.⁹⁶ Canada launched the Black Entrepreneurship Program (2021–2025).⁹⁷ Spain reported on the establishment of a State Office for the Fight against Discrimination within the Spanish State Labour and

⁸⁵ A/74/308; A/75/363.

⁸⁶ Submissions of Peru and Mexico; A/74/308; www.cepal.org/en/publications/46871-afrodescendants-and-matrix-social-inequality-latin-america-challenges-inclusion.

⁸⁷ https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT/CERD/SWA/9854&Lang=en (advance unedited version).

⁸⁸ Submissions of the Dominican Republic, Luxembourg and Spain; A/75/363; A/71/290.

⁸⁹ A/76/322.

⁹⁰ A/75/363.

⁹¹ www.cepal.org/en/publications/46871-afrodescendants-and-matrix-social-inequality-latin-america-challenges-inclusion.

⁹² www.cepal.org/en/publications/46871-afrodescendants-and-matrix-social-inequality-latin-america-challenges-inclusion; <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2023/being-black-eu>; US Census: Educational Attainment Data (2023); A/HRC/41/54/Add.2.

⁹³ A/75/363; A/HRC/51/54.

⁹⁴ https://normlex.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C111.

⁹⁵ <https://adsdatabase.ohchr.org/>; submissions of Costa Rica, El Salvador and Luxembourg; www.cepal.org/en/publications/46871-afrodescendants-and-matrix-social-inequality-latin-america-challenges-inclusion.

⁹⁶ Submissions of Peru, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

⁹⁷ <https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/black-entrepreneurship-program/en>.

Social Security Inspection Office in 2023.⁹⁸ A law for the promotion of employment of, inter alia, people of African descent was adopted in Uruguay in 2023.⁹⁹

41. Despite some progress, reports indicate that most people of African descent continue to experience higher unemployment rates, earn lower wages, occupy less-skilled positions and work in jobs requiring qualifications below their educational level compared with the rest of the population.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, in many countries, racial inequalities in employment worsened during the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁰¹

4. Health

42. Under the programme of activities, States are required to take measures to improve access to quality health services for people of African descent.

43. Several States highlighted measures to increase access to health insurance coverage and to strengthen the health sector as a whole.¹⁰² Some States noted measures targeting people of African descent. Costa Rica adopted a national plan for health for people of African Descent for 2018–2021.¹⁰³ Nicaragua mentioned models of intercultural health care whereby traditional medicine complements conventional health-care services.¹⁰⁴ In 2022, the Kingdom of the Netherlands committed 1.7 million euros to address intergenerational trauma experienced by people of African descent.¹⁰⁵ Peru noted efforts to address the specific health needs of the Afro-Peruvian population through mental health prevention, care measures and family support services.¹⁰⁶ Some countries have collected information on the health situation of people of African descent and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁰⁷

44. Where data is available, it indicates that people of African descent continue to experience obstacles in access to health care, higher incidence of poor health, lower life expectancy and higher infant and maternal mortality, compared with other parts of the population.¹⁰⁸ Studies have shown that the intergenerational trauma caused by racism can have negative health consequences on people of African descent.¹⁰⁹ Studies in the United States have highlighted the negative impact of racial prejudices and stereotypes by health-care providers on the quality of health care provided to people of African descent.¹¹⁰

⁹⁸ Submission of Spain.

⁹⁹ www.gub.uy/ministerio-trabajo-seguridad-social/politicas-y-gestion/ley-promocion-del-empleo-n-19973.

¹⁰⁰ A/75/363; A/HRC/47/53; submission of International Decade for People of African Descent Ireland. www.cepal.org/en/publications/46871-afrodescendants-and-matrix-social-inequality-latin-america-challenges-inclusion; <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2023/being-black-eu>; www.bls.gov/opub/reports/race-and-ethnicity/2021/home.htm#_edn1.

¹⁰¹ www.cepal.org/en/publications/46871-afrodescendants-and-matrix-social-inequality-latin-america-challenges-inclusion; www.bls.gov/opub/reports/race-and-ethnicity/2021/home.htm#_edn1.

¹⁰² Submissions of El Salvador, Iraq and Peru.

¹⁰³ Submission of Costa Rica.

¹⁰⁴ A/76/322.

¹⁰⁵ Submission of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

¹⁰⁶ Submission of Peru.

¹⁰⁷ A/76/322; A/77/333; www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/black-health.htm

¹⁰⁸ A/HRC/47/CRP.1; A/76/302; www.cepal.org/en/publications/46871-afrodescendants-and-matrix-social-inequality-latin-america-challenges-inclusion; <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2023/being-black-eu>; https://iris.paho.org/bitstream/handle/10665.2/55856/9789275124895_eng.pdf; <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/vsrr/vsrr023.pdf>; www.gov.uk/government/news/government-working-with-midwives-medical-experts-and-academics-to-investigate-bame-maternal-mortality; submission of International Decade for People of African Descent Ireland.

¹⁰⁹ A/HRC/47/CRP.1; submission of All for Reparations and Emancipation.

¹¹⁰ A/HRC/47/CRP.1; A/76/302.

5. Housing

45. Under the programme of activities, States are required to develop and implement policies and projects to ensure a safe and secure home and community. Costa Rica and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela noted the realization of studies of landownership of people of African descent.¹¹¹ The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela also reported on initiatives seeking to address housing needs of Afro-Venezuelans.¹¹²

46. Reports indicate that people of African descent continue to be more likely to lack access to adequate housing and to live in segregated, disadvantaged and hazardous neighbourhoods.¹¹³ In several countries, they reportedly suffer disproportionately from lack of access to basic services, including clean water, and from environmental degradation.¹¹⁴

D. Multiple or aggravated discrimination

47. Under the programme of activities, States should take measures to provide effective protection for people of African descent facing multiple, aggravated or intersecting forms of discrimination based on race or ethnic origin and other related grounds, such as sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, social origin, property, birth, disability or other status. The programme of activities also underlined the necessity of mainstreaming a gender perspective when designing and monitoring public policies. The Secretary-General, the High Commissioner and United Nations human rights mechanisms have provided recommendations to mainstream an intersectional approach and gender perspective when designing, implementing and monitoring public policies, including for people of African descent.¹¹⁵

48. Some States noted the adoption of legislative and other measures seeking to incorporate an intersectional analysis or approach, including Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Norway, Spain and the United States.¹¹⁶ In Latin America and the Caribbean, many States have taken initiatives to promote the visibility and contributions of women of African descent, including the celebration of the international day for Afro-Latina, Afro-Caribbean and Diaspora Women¹¹⁷ and the Afro-Latin American Women's Network.¹¹⁸ Colombia and Mexico highlighted policies and programmes specifically for women of African descent.¹¹⁹ Some States also reported on initiatives to promote gender and culturally

¹¹¹ Submissions of Costa Rica and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

¹¹² Submission of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

¹¹³ A/HRC/47/CRP.1; <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2023/being-black-eu>; www.cepal.org/es/publicaciones/46620-personas-afrodescendientes-covid-19-develando-desigualdades-estructurales; submission of International Decade for People of African Descent Ireland.

¹¹⁴ Submission of Mouvement International pour les Réparations; A/HRC/47/CRP.1; www.cepal.org/es/publicaciones/46620-personas-afrodescendientes-covid-19-develando-desigualdades-estructurales.

¹¹⁵ A/HRC/57/67; A/HRC/54/66; A/72/323; A/75/363; A/HRC/51/53; A/HRC/51/54; CERD/C/BOL/CO/21-24; CERD/C/ZAF/CO/9-11; CERD/C/NIC/CO/15-21; CERD/C/URY/CO/21-23; CERD/C/ARG/CO/24-26; CERD/C/CHL/CO/22-23; CERD/C/COL/CO/17-19; CERD/C/MEX/CO/18-21; CERD/C/SLV/CO/18-19; CERD/C/HND/CO/6-8; CERD/C/CUB/CO/19-21.

¹¹⁶ Submissions of Costa Rica, El Salvador and Spain; A/HRC/57/67; A/HRC/35/10; CERD/C/GTM/CO/16-17; www.dof.gob.mx/nota_detalle.php?codigo=5639419&fecha=27/12/2021#gsc.tab=0.

¹¹⁷ www.ipdhd.mercosur.int/25-de-julio-dia-internacional-de-las-mujeres-afrolatinas-afrocaribenasy-de-la-diaspora-es-prioritario-visibilizar-a-las-mujeres-afrodescendientes-en-el-mercosur-y-garantizar-sus-derechos/.

¹¹⁸ Submissions of Costa Rica and Peru; A/76/322; A/72/323; <http://www.mujeresafro.org/>.

¹¹⁹ A/HRC/35/10; A/72/323.

sensitive approaches to address discrimination and violence against women and girls of African descent.¹²⁰

49. Despite these efforts, intersecting forms of discrimination against women of African descent continued to prevail in many countries, including with regard to: access to education, employment and health care; gender-based violence; intergenerational poverty and exclusion; access to land, resources and a clean, healthy and sustainable environment; a heightened risk of sex trafficking; and barriers in access to justice.¹²¹ Systemic racism, discrimination and intergenerational poverty continue to hamper the realization of the human rights of children and youth of African descent in all areas of life, in particular in educational, childcare, criminal justice and health-care systems.¹²² While concerns regarding the intersection of race and other discriminatory grounds, such as age, disability, migration status, religion and sexual orientation and gender identity, have also been raised with regard to people of African descent,¹²³ further research is needed to better understand the intersecting forms of discrimination that they face.

E. Developments at the international and regional levels

1. Developments relating to systemic racism and reparatory justice

50. In 2020, the murder of George Floyd and the ensuing global anti-racism protests marked a watershed in the fight against racism, highlighting the urgent need to address systemic racism faced by people of African descent worldwide.¹²⁴ Further to Human Rights Council resolution 43/1, the High Commissioner presented a report setting out a Four-point Agenda Towards Transformative Change for Racial Justice and Equality.¹²⁵ The Agenda offers a holistic vision for reversing cultures of denial, dismantling systemic racism, ending impunity and confronting the legacies of enslavement and colonialism and delivering reparatory justice. It also stresses that the voices of people of African descent and those who stand up against racism should be heard and their concerns acted upon.

51. Further to this, in 2021, the Human Rights Council acknowledged “that there is an increasing willingness and emerging practice to acknowledge the need to repair the continuing impact of enslavement, the transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans and colonialism” and “deplore[d] all forms of racial discrimination, including systemic and structural racism, and its effects on Africans and on people of African descent and their families, and communities around the world”. It also called on the High Commissioner to enhance and broaden monitoring and to continue to report on these issues and established the Expert Mechanism to Advance Racial Justice and Equality in Law Enforcement.¹²⁶ In his 2023 report, the Secretary-General recommended that

¹²⁰ A/HRC/35/10; A/76/322.

¹²¹ A/HRC/57/67; A/HRC/54/66; A/72/323; A/HRC/51/53; www.unfpa.org/publications/maternal-health-analysis-women-and-girls-african-descent-americas.

¹²² Submission of International Decade for People of African Descent Ireland; A/HRC/51/54; A/75/363.

¹²³ A/HRC/53/38/ADD.1; A/HRC/51/54/ADD.2; A/HRC/45/44/ADD.1; A/HRC/45/44/ADD.2; A/HRC/42/59/ADD.1; CEDAW/C/CRI/CO/8; CERD/C/RUS/CO/25-26; CERD/C/BRA/CO/18-20; CERD/C/BOL/CO/21-24; CRPD/C/ECU/CO/2-3.

¹²⁴ A/76/322; A/HRC/47/53; A/HRC/47/CRP.1; A/HRC/45/44; A/76/302; www.cepal.org/en/publications/46621-people-african-descent-and-covid-19-unveiling-structural-inequalities-latin.

¹²⁵ A/HRC/47/53; A/HRC/47/CRP.1.

¹²⁶ Human Rights Council resolution 47/21.

States take a comprehensive approach to reparatory justice that seeks to address past legacies in order to build societies that are free from systemic racism.¹²⁷

52. Despite these important steps, greater political commitment is needed to accelerate action for transformative change by addressing systemic racism and confronting the legacies of enslavement and colonialism.¹²⁸

2. Steps taken at the international and regional levels

53. Under the programme of activities, the international community and international and regional organizations were requested to give high priority to programmes and projects specifically tailored for combating racism and racial discrimination against people of African descent.

International organizations

54. The Decade was launched during a special General Assembly event on 10 December 2014.¹²⁹ The midterm review of the Decade was held during an informal meeting of the General Assembly in July 2021.¹³⁰

55. In line with the programme of activities, in 2021, the General Assembly formally operationalized the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent as a consultative mechanism for people of African descent and other relevant stakeholders, a platform for improving the safety and quality of life and livelihoods of people of African descent and an advisory body to the Human Rights Council.¹³¹ It was fully constituted in March 2022.

56. The 10-member Permanent Forum has rapidly become a driving force for the consolidation of an international agenda for, and led by, people of African descent.¹³² Each of its first three sessions, held in Geneva and New York in 2022, 2023 and 2024, was attended by between 700 and 1,000 participants. In its reports to the fifty-fourth and fifty-seventh sessions of the Human Rights Council, the Permanent Forum laid out recommendations on key issues pertaining to addressing systemic racism against people of African descent, including regarding a draft United Nations declaration, a Second International Decade, reparatory justice, climate justice, economic justice and Pan-Africanism.¹³³

57. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 76/226, the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action has made substantive progress in the drafting of a United Nations declaration on respect for and protection and fulfilment of the human rights of people of African descent since its twentieth session, in 2022. States, United Nations mechanisms – including the Permanent Forum and the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, inter alia – have contributed to this process. The Intergovernmental Working Group will present a status report on the elaboration of the draft declaration to the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session.¹³⁴

58. In 2020, the General Assembly proclaimed 31 August as the International Day for People of African Descent.¹³⁵ Celebrated for the first time in 2021, it has

¹²⁷ A/78/317.

¹²⁸ A/HRC/57/68.

¹²⁹ <https://libraryresources.unog.ch/c.php?g=462676&p=3163275>.

¹³⁰ <https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1g/k1g4a0fbhe>.

¹³¹ General Assembly resolution 75/314.

¹³² Submission of the Permanent Forum.

¹³³ A/HRC/54/68; A/HRC/57/68.

¹³⁴ www.ohchr.org/en/hrc-subsidaries/iwg-on-durban.

¹³⁵ General Assembly resolution 75/170.

contributed to promoting the contributions of the African diaspora around the world and is aimed at combating discrimination against people of African descent.¹³⁶

59. In view of the role of the High Commissioner as coordinator of the Decade, OHCHR has worked in close cooperation with States, national human rights institutions, civil society organizations, people of African descent, international and regional organizations and United Nations agencies, to raise awareness about its themes. OHCHR also worked to strengthen a global constituency seeking to promote and protect the rights of people of African descent; and to enhance the capacities of people of African descent and other relevant stakeholders to combat racial discrimination against this group. OHCHR has supported the development of anti-racial discrimination laws, national action plans and other measures.¹³⁷ It has also continued to raise awareness about the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and follow-up documents and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination – through training, workshops and other events and promotional material.¹³⁸

60. OHCHR organized five regional meetings for Latin America and the Caribbean in 2015, Europe, Central Asia and North America in 2017, Africa in 2019, the Middle East in 2022 and Asia-Pacific in 2024.¹³⁹ These meetings contributed to raising awareness about the Decade through a regional lens and fostered engagement of States, international and regional stakeholders and people of African descent, including women and youth. Representatives of the participating States adopted outcome documents at the meetings for Latin America and the Caribbean¹⁴⁰ and Europe, Central Asia and North America.¹⁴¹ Civil society-led regional networks were established following the regional meetings for the Middle East and Asia-Pacific.¹⁴²

61. In addition, OHCHR has contributed to empowering 150 activists of African descent (70 per cent of whom are women) from 46 countries through the fellowship programme for people of African descent¹⁴³ and supported 14 projects by civil society organizations of African descent through grants and partnership schemes. It has also contributed to enhancing understanding of the human rights challenges faced by people of African descent through research, awareness-raising events and initiatives and the anti-discrimination database.¹⁴⁴

62. Since 2020, OHCHR has strengthened its work on people of African descent through in-depth research, analysis and development of the High Commissioner's Agenda and subsequent work to advance its implementation, including producing

¹³⁶ www.un.org/en/observances/african-descent-day.

¹³⁷ For more information, see the <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/aboutus/evaluation/evaluation-ohchr-programmeactivities-idpad-2015-2024.pdf> and A/HRC/45/47.

¹³⁸ A/HRC/53/61; www.ohchr.org/en/racism/fighting-racism-20-years-adoption-durban-declaration-and-programme-action; <https://www.ohchr.org/en/get-involved/campaign/fight-racism>; www.ohchr.org/en/treaty-bodies/cerd.

¹³⁹ www.ohchr.org/en/racism/international-decade-african-descent.

¹⁴⁰ https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2019/12/2015-12-03_declaration_of_the_regional_conference_on_the_international_decade_of_people_of_african_descent.pdf.

¹⁴¹ https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Racism/WGEAPD/Agenda_RegionalMeeting.docx.

¹⁴² <https://www.ohchr.org/en/stories/2023/04/it-my-obligation-stand-against-injustice>; <https://www.asiapacificnetwork-pad.com>.

¹⁴³ www.ohchr.org/en/about-us/fellowship-programmes/fellowship-programme-people-african-descent; <https://indd.adobe.com/view/bf50ec08-225d-4b79-b3e9-cad6c861523d>.

¹⁴⁴ A/71/290; www.un.org/en/observances/decade-people-african-descent/past-events; www.ohchr.org/en/racism/international-decade-african-descent; <https://adsdatabase.ohchr.org/SitePages/Anti-discrimination%20database.aspx>.

guidance for States, *inter alia*.¹⁴⁵ In addition, OHCHR deployed five advisers on combating racial discrimination and the protection of minorities, including people of African descent, to its regional offices and provided support to newly established United Nations anti-racism mechanisms in addition to existing ones. Furthermore, people of African descent have been given special attention in OHCHR management plans 2022–2023 and 2024–2027.¹⁴⁶

63. The United Nations Department of Global Communications, in collaboration with OHCHR, has created and managed the website for the Decade and produced awareness-raising material, including an exhibition on the Decade, a booklet, thematic reports, radio programmes and the UNifeed packages.¹⁴⁷

64. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has contributed to promoting knowledge of the history and consequences of enslavement and the trade in enslaved Africans, as well as recognition of the culture, history and heritage of people of African descent, notably through the UNESCO Routes of Enslaved Peoples programme,¹⁴⁸ the places of history and memory linked to enslavement and the slave trade,¹⁴⁹ the celebration of the World Day for African and Afrodescendant Culture and the development of books and guidance.¹⁵⁰ Since 2021, UNESCO has scaled up its efforts in tackling racism, for example through its Master Class Series against Racism and Discriminations.¹⁵¹

65. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have taken into account the specific challenges faced by people of African descent in criminal justice systems and health, respectively.¹⁵² The United Nations network on racial discrimination and protection of minorities, permanently co-chaired by OHCHR, has contributed to enhancing inter-agency cooperation and fostered joint initiatives addressing issues faced by people of African descent.¹⁵³

66. At the regional level, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) regional office for Latin America and the Caribbean adopted a programme for the advancement of the rights of people of African descent in the region in 2020, focusing on statistical visibility, sexual and reproductive health rights and gender equality and gender violence and on promoting their voices and visibility.¹⁵⁴ UNFPA also advocated for the rights of people of African descent within the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR).¹⁵⁵

67. UNFPA and UNESCO, in collaboration with the Montevideo Intendancy and civil society organizations, supported the agenda of the Coalition of Latin American and Caribbean Cities against Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia. The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)/WHO Regional Office for the Americas led a joint

¹⁴⁵ www.ohchr.org/en/racism/agenda-towards-transformative-change-racial-justice-and-equality; https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/racism/EN-2023_08-Guidance_Note_Public_Participation.pdf.

¹⁴⁶ <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/OMP-2022-2023.pdf>; <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/aboutus/OHCHR-OMP-2024-2027.pdf>.

¹⁴⁷ A/71/290; A/74/308; A/71/290.

¹⁴⁸ www.unesco.org/en/routes-enslaved-peoples.

¹⁴⁹ <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000387045/PDF/387045eng.pdf.multi>.

¹⁵⁰ <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000265488/PDF/265488eng.pdf.multi>.

¹⁵¹ Submission of UNESCO; www.unesco.org/en/no-racism-no-discrimination.

¹⁵² Submissions of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC); www.unodc.org/unodc/frontpage/2022/March/voices-for-action-against-racism_-improving-access-to-justice-for-people-experiencing-racial-injustice-and-discrimination.html.

¹⁵³ www.ohchr.org/en/minorities/un-network-racial-discrimination-and-protection-minorities.

¹⁵⁴ Submission of the United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA); A/76/322; A/77/333.

¹⁵⁵ Submission of UNFPA.

initiative to promote the health of people of African descent.¹⁵⁶ In 2019, PAHO member States adopted the Strategy and Plan of Action on Ethnicity and Health 2019–2025.¹⁵⁷

68. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, jointly with UNFPA, OHCHR and other stakeholders, conducted several studies and developed indicators to document the situation of people of African descent in the region.¹⁵⁸

69. United Nations agencies and international organizations have also supported national efforts towards the implementation of the programme of activities in several countries, including the United Nations country teams in Uruguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.¹⁵⁹

70. The Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, the Permanent Forum and the Expert Mechanism to Advance Racial Justice and Equality in Law Enforcement have contributed to assessing the situation of people of African descent, recommending action to address human rights concerns and centring the voices of people of African descent in United Nations processes.¹⁶⁰ The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination has encouraged the implementation of the programme of activities when monitoring the implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination by States parties and addressed issues faced by people of African descent through its general comments.¹⁶¹ Recognizing the programme of activities as an integral part of the full and effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, the Group of Independent Eminent Experts on the Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action has reflected and addressed the experiences and perspectives of people of African descent throughout its work.¹⁶²

Regional organizations

71. The African Union officially launched the Decade in Addis Ababa in 2018 and developed an action plan during its Continental Symposium on the Implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent, held in Accra the same year.¹⁶³ In December 2022, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights adopted its first resolution on Africa's reparations agenda and the human rights of Africans in the diaspora and people of African descent worldwide.¹⁶⁴

72. The European Parliament hosted the first People of African Descent Week in 2018.¹⁶⁵ It adopted a resolution on the fundamental rights of people of African descent in Europe in 2019¹⁶⁶ and a resolution on intersectional discrimination and the

¹⁵⁶ Submission of WHO.

¹⁵⁷ Submission of WHO; A/76/322.

¹⁵⁸ A/76/322; www.cepal.org/en/publications/45202-people-african-descent-latin-america-and-caribbean-developing-indicators-measure; <https://repositorio.cepal.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/08425072-595a-43ba-94d6-91ee1d67d60e/content>.

¹⁵⁹ A/77/333; A/76/322; A/75/363; A/74/308; A/HRC/45/47; submissions of the International Organization for Migration Uruguay, the United Nations country team, Uruguay and the United Nations country team, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

¹⁶⁰ A/HRC/54/71; A/HRC/54/68; A/HRC/57/68; A/HRC/54/69; A/HRC/51/55.

¹⁶¹ Submission of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination; Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination general comments 36 (2020); 35 (2013); 34 (2011); and 33 (2009).

¹⁶² Submission of the Group of Independent Eminent Experts on the Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

¹⁶³ A/HRC/45/47.

¹⁶⁴ African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, resolution ACHPR/Res.543 (LXXIII) 2022.

¹⁶⁵ https://migrant-integration.ec.europa.eu/news/europe-first-eu-week-dedicated-people-african-descent_en.

¹⁶⁶ www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2019-0239_EN.html.

socioeconomic situation of women of African descent and others in 2022.¹⁶⁷ In 2020, the European Union adopted its first anti-racism action plan for 2020–2025, encouraging European Union member States to adopt such plans nationally.¹⁶⁸ In follow-up, the European Commission established an Anti-Racism Coordinator, a sub-group of member State experts and a Permanent Anti-Racism Civil Society Forum in 2021.¹⁶⁹ The Council of Europe held public discussions on Afrophobia in 2020 and released its first report on combating racism and racial discrimination against people of African descent in Europe in 2021.¹⁷⁰

73. The Organization of American States adopted a regional Plan of Action for the Decade for Persons of African Descent in the Americas (2016–2025).¹⁷¹ In 2017, it adopted the Inter-American Convention against Racism, Racial Discrimination and Related Forms of Intolerance.¹⁷² In 2018, the Inter-American Week for People of African Descent in the Americas and the Inter-American Network of High Authorities on Policies for Afrodescendent Populations were established to coordinate policy initiatives regarding people of African descent in the Americas.¹⁷³ In 2019, nine Latin American and Caribbean countries endorsed the “San José commitment” to accelerate the fulfilment of the rights of people of African descent in the region.¹⁷⁴

74. Since the adoption of its 10-point plan for reparatory justice in 2014, aimed at achieving reconciliation, truth and justice for victims of slavery, genocide and racial apartheid and their descendants, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) has undertaken various initiatives to advocate for these issues.¹⁷⁵

III. Towards a Second International Decade

75. The illustrative overview of measures taken by States and other stakeholders to promote and protect the human rights of people of African descent shows that some progress has been made over the past 10 years, often in response to long-standing activism by people of African descent. However, the final assessment also reveals that the commitment of States to ensuring recognition, justice and development remains unfulfilled. Implementation of the programme of activities has been uneven between regions and countries, and no country has implemented it fully. In many countries, people of African descent continue to suffer from systemic racism, rooted in the legacies of enslavement and colonialism, preventing the realization of their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.¹⁷⁶

76. Recognizing that “there is much more work to be done and the momentum gained must be sustained”, United Nations anti-racism mechanisms, the High Commissioner, civil society organizations, including those led by people of African descent, and others, have expressed support for the proclamation of a Second

¹⁶⁷ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2022-0289_EN.pdf.

¹⁶⁸ Submission of the European Union; see also: https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/beb25da4-e6b9-459e-89f7-bcd3a8f0c8_en?filename=a_union_of_equality_eu_action_plan_against_racism_2020_-2025_en.pdf.

¹⁶⁹ Submission of the European Union.

¹⁷⁰ www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/-/european-countries-should-lift-the-taboo-on-afrophobia-and-start-addressing-this-phenomenon.

¹⁷¹ <https://www.oas.org/en/sare/documents/res-2891-16-en.pdf>.

¹⁷² www.oas.org/en/sla/dil/inter_american_treaties_a-68_racism.asp.

¹⁷³ www.somosafro.org/gobiernos/riafro/.

¹⁷⁴ A/76/322.

¹⁷⁵ <https://caricom.org/caricom-ten-point-plan-for-reparatory-justice/>.

¹⁷⁶ A/HRC/47/53; A/HRC/47/CRP.1; A/HRC/51/53; A/HRC/54/66.

International Decade.¹⁷⁷ In 2023, the General Assembly requested “the President of the General Assembly to take into consideration the programme of activities for the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent [...] with a view to proclaiming the decade starting in 2025 the Second International Decade for People of African Descent”.¹⁷⁸ As at June 2024, more than 70 States had expressed their support for this proposal.¹⁷⁹

77. Intensified efforts by all stakeholders are urgently needed to tackle not only the long-standing issues that remain unaddressed but also the growing challenges – such as rising inequalities, climate injustice and digital technologies. Submissions for the present report and recommendations contained in other United Nations reports provide critical guidance for the drafting of the programme of activities of the Second International Decade, highlighting a number of issues that should be considered as a complement to the programme of activities for the Decade 2015–2024.¹⁸⁰ These include issues that have emerged or gained visibility over the past 10 years, as well as long-standing ones requiring increased attention. The most recurrent issues are highlighted below.

78. Calls have been made for multipronged, comprehensive and evidence-based approaches that encompass legal, policy and institutional measures to dismantle systemic racism. These must be evidence-based, anchored in the lived experiences of people of African descent and developed with the meaningful participation of people of African descent.¹⁸¹

79. The collection, analysis and dissemination of data disaggregated by race or ethnic origin and other factors, with strict safeguards and in accordance with the human rights-based approach to data, is necessary to improve understanding of the challenges faced by people of African descent, inform the design of sound policies and objectively monitor their effectiveness.¹⁸²

80. Much more needs to be done to ensure meaningful, inclusive and safe participation of all people of African descent, including women and youth, to protect

¹⁷⁷ Submissions of Curating Tomorrow, International Decade for People of African Descent-Spain, International Decade for People of African Descent Assembly-Guyana; joint statement by United Nations former fellows for people of African descent in Asia and the Pacific Region; North-South Development Roots and Culture Canada; www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/08/international-day-people-african-descent-un-experts-urge-general-assembly; www.ohchr.org/en/statements-and-speeches/2024/06/we-must-urgently-find-our-way-back-peace-says-high-commissioner; www.ohchr.org/en/events/sessions/2024/third-session-permanent-forum-people-african-descent.

¹⁷⁸ General Assembly resolution 78/234.

¹⁷⁹ www.ohchr.org/en/events/sessions/2024/third-session-permanent-forum-people-african-descent; www.gov.uk/government/news/un-human-rights-council-55-uk-statement-for-implementation-of-the-international-decade-for-people-of-african-descent.

¹⁸⁰ A/78/317; A/77/333; A/75/363; A/74/308; A/73/354; A/HRC/54/66; A/HRC/51/53; A/HRC/47/53; A/HRC/54/68; A/HRC/54/67; <https://bangkok.ohchr.org/human-rights-situation-of-people-of-african-descents/>.

¹⁸¹ A/HRC/47/53; A/HRC/54/66; submission of the Permanent Forum.

¹⁸² Submissions of Luxembourg, the Permanent Forum, the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, United Nations country team Uruguay, United Nations country team Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Center for African and Development Studies, International Decade for People of African Descent Ireland, International Decade for People of African Descent-Spain, Ilex-Acción Jurídica and Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference Inc.; A/77/333; A/HRC/51/55.

civic space and to eliminate violence and harassment against human rights defenders of African descent and anti-racism protests.¹⁸³

81. Addressing the enduring legacies of enslavement and colonialism, including through a comprehensive approach to reparatory justice grounded in international human rights law and with the meaningful participation of people of African descent, is also paramount to dismantling systemic racism and ensuring that people of African descent can fully benefit from sustainable development and enjoy all their human rights, including the right to development.¹⁸⁴

82. Greater efforts are required to bring about the full recognition of people of African descent.¹⁸⁵ This includes taking further action towards the institutional recognition of people of African descent – including as “peoples” where appropriate,¹⁸⁶ as well as enhancing understanding and visibility of their history, culture, spirituality and contributions to the development of societies, through educational and awareness-raising measures.¹⁸⁷

83. Greater efforts are needed to deploy the intersectionality framework in the development and implementation of legislation, policies and programmes to effectively address the multiple, aggravated and intersecting forms of discrimination faced by people of African descent, including women, children, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ persons and migrants, among others.¹⁸⁸

84. The integration of the racial equality perspective into international sustainable development frameworks and policies and their implementation – including the 2030 Agenda, climate and biodiversity governance frameworks and the international financial architecture – should be prioritized and the active and meaningful participation of people of African descent in these processes ensured.¹⁸⁹

85. Additional efforts are required to address the disproportionate impact of climate change and environmental injustice on people and communities of African descent, including by integrating participatory and intersectional approaches in environmental

¹⁸³ Submissions of NGO Ascendances Afro Océan-Indien, International Decade for People of African Descent Ireland, International Decade for People of African Descent-Spain and United Nations former fellows for People of African Descent from Asia and the Pacific region; [A/HRC/47/53](#); [A/HRC/54/66](#); [www.ohchr.org/en/documents/tools-and-resources/how-effectively-implement-right-participate-public-affairs-spotlight](#).

¹⁸⁴ Submissions of the Permanent Forum, CERD, All for Reparations and Emancipation, Curating Tomorrow, International Decade for People of African Descent-Spain, NGO Ascendances Afro Océan-Indien and the Serment du Tampon; [A/78/317](#); [A/HRC/47/53](#); annex; [www.ohchr.org/en/events/sessions/2024/third-session-permanent-forum-people-african-descent](#).

¹⁸⁵ Submission of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent; [A/HRC/54/68](#).

¹⁸⁶ [A/HRC/54/68](#).

¹⁸⁷ Submissions of the United Nations country team Uruguay, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Embajadora Yesury Nurse, Center for African and Development Studies, Curating Tomorrow, Embajada Cultural Rastafari De La Música Reggae de Panamá, Hunter Adams, International Decade for People of African Descent Assembly-Guyana, Maria Savari, North-South Development Roots and Culture Canada, NGO Ascendances Afro Océan-Indien; see also [A/HRC/54/68](#).

¹⁸⁸ Submissions of the Permanent Forum, the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, Association of Mixed Race Irish, International Decade for People of African Descent Ireland, Joint statement of United Nations former fellows for people of African descent from Asia and the Pacific region; see also [A/HRC/57/67](#).

¹⁸⁹ Submissions of the Permanent Forum and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

and climate policy responses and by ensuring their right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.¹⁹⁰

86. There is a need to adopt and implement effective measures to prevent racial bias and discrimination in new technologies, including artificial intelligence, and to ensure open, free and secured access to digital technologies for all.¹⁹¹

87. Measures to protect ancestral groups of people of African descent and ensure the collective rights of peoples of African descent to their lands, territories and resources are required.¹⁹²

88. Policies are needed at the international and national levels to address the physical and mental health needs of people of African descent, including intergenerational trauma and the underlying social determinants of health, including by tackling systemic racism and discrimination in health care and adopting culturally sensitive approaches.¹⁹³

89. Calls have also been made for the programme of activities for the Second International Decade to integrate accountability mechanisms to monitor its effective implementation and for its implementation to be supported by increased financial allocations at the national, regional and international levels.¹⁹⁴ Capacities of the United Nations system to support the implementation of the programme of activities should also be enhanced, including through additional resources and inter-agency coordination.¹⁹⁵

90. To realize transformative change for people of African descent, States, international and regional organizations, as well as other stakeholders, including the private sector,¹⁹⁶ the media and civil society should accelerate action in support of the implementation of the programme of activities of a possible Second International Decade, backed by increased financial resources, including in regions that have received less attention during the first decade.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁰ Submissions of the Permanent Forum, the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, Mouvement International pour les Réparations, NGO Ascendances Afro Océan-Indien, Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference Inc; A/HRC/48/78; A/HRC/54/68; A/HRC/57/30.

¹⁹¹ Submissions of the Permanent Forum, the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, International Decade for People of African Descent-Spain, NGO Ascendances Afro Océan-Indien, Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference Inc.; Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, general recommendation No. 36 (2020); A/HRC/47/CRP.1; <https://indonesia.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-07/our-common-agenda-policy-brief-gobal-digi-compact-en.pdf>.

¹⁹² A/HRC/54/68.

¹⁹³ Submission of All for Reparations and Emancipation; A/HRC/54/68.

¹⁹⁴ Submissions of the Permanent Forum, the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, United Nations country team Uruguay, United Nations country team Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Association of Mixed Race Irish, Curating Tomorrow, Center for African and Development Studies, International Decade for People of African Descent Assembly - Guyana, North-South Development Roots and Culture Canada.

¹⁹⁵ Submissions of United Nations country team Uruguay and United Nations country team Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

¹⁹⁶ www.ohchr.org/en/publications/reference-publications/guiding-principles-business-and-human-rights.

¹⁹⁷ Submissions of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, United Nations former fellows for people of African descent from Asia and the Pacific region and NGO Ascendances Afro Océan-Indien.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

91. The Decade has provided a framework that fostered action by States, international and regional organizations, civil society, people of African descent and other stakeholders and contributed to the progressive consolidation of an international agenda for people of African descent. However, much remains to be done to ensure that all people of African descent can fully and effectively enjoy the benefits of sustainable development and all their human rights.

92. States are encouraged to proclaim a Second International Decade starting in 2025, with a programme of activities that is an integral part of the full and effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

93. It is critical that the Second International Decade be informed by the lived experiences, knowledge and expertise of people of African descent and that its programme of activities address their expectations and needs. States are therefore encouraged to elaborate it in consultation with people of African descent and civil society representatives from all regions, taking into consideration the elements identified in the present report, the High Commissioner's Agenda and recommendations by United Nations anti-racism human rights mechanisms.

94. The elaboration and adoption of a draft United Nations declaration on the respect, protection and fulfilment of the human rights of people of African descent, through the meaningful, inclusive and safe participation of people of African descent, should be a priority of the Second International Decade, and States are encouraged to actively engage in this process in view of the urgency to tackle long-standing and emerging issues.

95. Strong leadership, greater political will, and increased financial and human resources, are required to ensure that the Second International Decade delivers prompt and consequential results in the lives of people of African descent in all regions.
