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TO COMBAT RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATIONStudy on the role of private group action to combat  
racism and racial discriminationReport of the Secretary-General

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## I, INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 41/94 of 4 December 1986, 42/47 of 30 November 1987 and 43/91 of 8 December 1988, in which the Secretary-General was requested to transmit his report on the role of private group action to combat racism and racial discrimination (A/41/550) to Governments, specialised agencies, regional intergovernmental organisations and non-governmental organisations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council in order to obtain their views and an indication from them of further relevant material, and to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session a final report on this topic.

2. In compliance with the requests made by the General Assembly, the Secretary-General transmitted his report three times, through notes verbales dated January 1987, January 1988 and March 1989, to all Governments, specialised agencies, regional intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations, requesting them to submit their comments and such relevant information that they might wish to be taken into account in the preparation of the final report to the General Assembly on this topic.

3. The Secretary-General submitted a report to the General Assembly at its forty-third session (A/43/631), containing information pursuant to the notes verbales of January 1987 and January 1988 from the Governments of Benin, Iraq and the German Democratic Republic and from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation and the Organisation of American States.

4. Since the submission of the Secretary-General's report (A/43/631), and pursuant to the note verbal of March 1989, the Governments of the Bahamas, Chad and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland have provided information; information has also been received from the International Labour Organisation and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Two non-governmental organizations, the International Federation of Free Trade Unions and the World Organisation of the Scout Movement, have also provided information. The information is contained in the present report.

5. Considering the ample opportunity given to Governments, specialised agencies, regional intergovernmental organisations and non-governmental organisations and the positive tone of the few replies received, the General Assembly may wish to consider the report submitted to it at its forty-first session (A/41/550) together with the comments submitted to the Assembly at its forty-third session (A/43/631) and the comments in the present document as definitive.

## II. INFORMATION AND VIEWS RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

### BAHAMAS

1. The Government of the Bahamas states that the Bahamas Committee on South Africa (COSA), the New Providence Human Rights Association and the Grand Bahama Human Rights Association are the principal private organisations in the Commonwealth of The Bahamas concerned with action to combat racism and racial discrimination,
2. The Committee has been particularly vocal in its condemnation of racism and racial discrimination generally and of apartheid in particular. COSA has been instrumental in enhancing public awareness of the plight of persons who suffer from racial persecution, institutionalized and sanctioned by Government. The Committee consistently emphasizes, in all its activities, that apartheid violates the fundamental human rights of the individual, including the right to self-determination. COSA emphatically supports the United Nations call for an end to apartheid, and for mandatory sanctions against the Pretoria régime.
3. During 1988 COSA organised a march to commemorate the seventieth birthday of South African patriot and anti-apartheid leader, Nelson Mandela. In September 1988 it held a public seminar to discuss issues facing blacks in South Africa and Namibia. The Committee has scheduled a march and rally for June 1989 to promote international solidarity with political prisoners.
4. The New Providence Human Rights Association and the Grand Bahama Human Rights Association have galvanised public attention to the problem faced by illegal immigrants in the Bahamas. The associations have been parties to court action and public demonstrations in support of the rights of illegal aliens, and have hosted public meetings to discuss the problem of all forms of discrimination,

### CHAD

1. The Government of Chad states that private groups may participate fully in the fight against racism and racial discrimination by increasing and intensifying their activities to secure the elimination of all forms of racism and racial discrimination in the world.
2. In this regard, it is worth supporting the relevant resolutions adopted by the United Nations on the role and action of private groups, inter alia, General Assembly resolution 43/91, and the implementation of such resolutions by these groups, which are under the auspices of all State Members.
3. Therefore, realising that private groups can play a highly constructive role in this connection, Chad supports all the provisions of resolution 43/91. While there are no private groups carrying out this type of activity in Chad, the Government undertakes to encourage any initiative and activity designed to eliminate racism and racial discrimination in the world.

4. In any case, the Government of Chad is taking every opportunity to encourage the creation of private groups capable of heightening public awareness in Chad regarding racism, which is a crime against humanity.

### UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

The United Kingdom Government notes that the study itself provides a useful résumé of action being taken by certain groups to combat racial discrimination. Regarding the inclusion of further material in this report, there is nothing which the United Kingdom Government wishes to add about any particular organisation. It is, however, worth noting that the United Kingdom Government fully supports the work of organisations in this country that are committed to the elimination of discrimination and the promotion of equality of opportunity, and has productive, regular contact with many of them at national level. There are, in the United Kingdom, many organisations which reflect different ethnic minorities' interests. For example there are over 100 Community Relations Councils which bring together a wide range of local groups. The activities of these groups complement what the Government is doing both through its own efforts and by its support for the Commission for Racial Equality which received £11 million in funding in 1988/89.

### III. INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

#### INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION

1. The annual special report of the Director-General of the International Labour Organisation on the application of the Declaration concerning Action against Apartheid in South Africa and Namibia continues to provide, in its chapter II, information on action undertaken, *inter alia*, by the workers' and employers' organisations against apartheid. The trade unions' activities continue to include pressure on Governments to adopt and apply sanctions; pressure on parent companies with subsidiaries in South Africa to recognise the independent trade unions of black workers; pressure on banks and financial institutions not to provide loans to South Africa; monitoring of codes of conduct; consumer and other boycotts to promote sanctions; provision of financial, material and moral support to the independent black trade union movements; campaigns against emigration to South Africa; withdrawal of trade union funds from companies with interests in South Africa; adoption of other measures to further isolate the South African régime and to support anti-apartheid activities. Efforts continue to be made by the employers' organisations to ensure that their members stop trade, financial and other links with South Africa; disinvest from South Africa; discourage banks and other financial institutions from giving loans or trade credits to South Africa; assist victims of apartheid; and refrain from victimizing workers and their trade unions involved in the defence of workers' rights.

2. The special report of the Director-General of the International Labour Organisation on the Declaration concerning Action against Apartheid in South Africa furnished information on action taken by national employers' and workers' organizations. Reported national trade union action included pressure on

**Governments, pressure on companies active in South Africa, monitoring codes of conduct, withdrawal of trade union funds, material and moral support to the independent black trade unions inside South Africa and campaign for the release of political detainees and imprisoned trade unionists.**

#### **FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

**The Food and Agriculture Organisation states that the coverage of "private groups" in the Secretary-General's report on the role of private group action to combat racism and racial discrimination seems to be considerably inadequate. The coverage privileges the United States of America and a few international non-governmental organisations and does not take account of the rich variety of initiatives undertaken by national non-governmental organisations and local action groups in Europe. In this connection, FAO would like to suggest that the Secretary-General seek the collaboration of the NGO Liaison Committee of the European Economic Community in order to obtain additional pertinent information.**

#### **IV, INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**

##### **WORLD ORGANIZATION OF THE SCOUT MOVEMENT**

**The World Organisation of the Scout Movement states that many of the national Scout organisations that are members of its organisation are involved in the promotion of human rights and in combating all forms of discrimination.**

##### **INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS**

**1. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions states that it is stepping up its campaign for an international embargo of South African coal and has set up a special working party to promote a co-ordinated approach. A poster calling for coal embargo has been distributed in five languages. In addition to efforts at the European Community level, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions decided to approach bilaterally, in conjunction with the affiliates concerned, those Governments whose countries continue to register substantial coal imports.**

**2. Practical and concrete trade union measures to promote co-ordinated international coal boycott of South African coal include the following; pressure on the European Community to adopt mandatory coal embargo; urging the European Community to adopt "positive sanctions" and measures; pressure on Governments importing substantial amounts of coal with specific reference to ASEAN and Pacific countries; vigorous publicity and information campaigns aimed at trade unionists and general public, including educational activities and contacts with South African trade unionists; and organisation of a trade union conference to promote a co-ordinated international boycott of South African coal.**

**3. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions continues its financial, material and moral support to the black independent trade union movement inside South Africa through its Co-ordinating Committee on South Africa. This includes substantial legal and relief assistance. In the cases of major strikes, solidarity action is organised in support of the unions concerned.**

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