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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SECOND DECADE
TO COMBAT RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Annual report on racial discrimination submitted by the United Nations
Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in accordance with
Economic and Social Council resolution 1588 (L) and General Assembly
resolution 2785 (XXVI)

1. The Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1588 (L) of 21 May 1971 invited the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to provide the Commission on Human Rights with reports on the nature and effect of any racial discrimination, especially in southern Africa, of whose existence they had knowledge in their sphere of competence.
2. The General Assembly, in resolution 2785 (XXVI) of 6 December 1971, endorsed the invitation of the Council and requested that such reports be submitted annually.
3. The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit herewith the annual report of UNESCO to the Commission on Human Rights.

Annual report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific
and Cultural Organization

Through its Major Programme XII on "The elimination of prejudice, intolerance, racism and the struggle against apartheid" which is part of its Second Medium Term Plan 1984-1989, UNESCO has continued to undertake research in the social sciences on the causes and manifestations of various forms of racial discrimination, intolerance and prejudice. This research and the mobilization of the scientific community, policy-makers and the general public

is undertaken in co-operation with specialists in the social sciences, research institutions, universities, subregional and regional social sciences institutions, scientific non-governmental organizations and anti-apartheid and anti-racist groups in countries of different regions.

I. Some of the findings of the programmes of research on race and ethnicity

Recent findings of importance in the UNESCO programme of social research on racism and ethnicity are presented in the attached report of the international seminar on theoretical issues of racism and ethnicity organized from 3 to 6 February 1986 in Milan, Italy, */ which underlined the complexity of these issues; the interrelations and articulation of race and ethnicity with factors of class, gender and other social divisions and the need to situate analyses in a historical perspective. This seminar examined studies prepared on the following themes (summarized in the seminar report): functionalism and ethnicity; racial prejudice, racism and theories in anthropology and ethnology; race, ethnicity and social theory; prejudices, power and culture; theories on the relationship between culture and domination; racial and ethnic categories in colonial and post-colonial States; sociological and linguistic perspectives of ideology; Gramsci's relevance to the analysis of racism and ethnicity; race and ethnicity in sociological theory; class consciousness and racism; questioning the Marxist theory; and, races, classes, ethnic groups and bantustans in South Africa.

The Research Committee on Ethnic, Race and Minority Relations also prepared a paper assessing the state of theoretical research on race and ethnicity, which showed that the work of the International Sociological Association had been greatly influenced by the UNESCO programme in this area and the co-operation of individual sociologists with UNESCO.

Following the Milan seminar, UNESCO commissioned a series of studies which examine the historical and social circumstances marking the appearance of so-called "racial" pseudo-classifications. Research was conducted by Michael Banton (United Kingdom) on the historical context of racial classification; he analyses the emergence of white racial consciousness, which came at the same time as the growth of industrial capitalism and the growth in the understanding of the natural world. The study discusses assumptions about the division of Homo sapiens into distinct species and subspecies, the unconscious level at which race consciousness was, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, presumed to operate, the differing and conflicting meaning of words from which "race" emerged as well as the thinking of a number of philosophers or biologists, e.g. Emmanuel Kant (1724-1804), Friedrich Blumenbach (1752-1840) and le Comte de Buffon (1707-1788). Racial doctrines were grafted on to racial classification in order to explain social and historical phenomena.

Colette Guillaumin (France), in a study which complements Banton's, points to the "co-occurrence" of certain social material and ideological phenomena, e.g. the plantation on the one hand and the first somatic

*/ Available for consultation, in English, in the files of the Centre for Human Rights.

taxonomies on the other; the development of territorial colonization and of a theory of the racial determination of behaviour; decolonization and the abandon of race by natural scientists; the intensification of industrial migrations and the reappearance of populisms based on the "other", on "cultures" and on introduction of rationality in the domination and exploitation of nature. Colette Guillaumin argues that social forces have at one and the same time a material face and a mental face. Indeed every material relationship contains an intellectual form more or less "verbalized" and presented as a constant: interpretation comes only afterwards with the professionalization of thought.

In this way the theoreticians of racial classification come after the development of certain social relations and after popular thought on these.

To change mentalities is perhaps important, but to privilege this intervention is to leave social relations untouched, besides the fact that to act on mentalities is, in any case, more difficult than can be imagined. Where the actual material conditions for social relations remain, however, new modes of thinking quickly adapt to ethical principles precisely because ethical principles are, of their nature, ambiguous in presentation. Words like "difference" or "cultures" (enriched in their diversity) can be used to advantage by any tendency of thought whatsoever. Inversely the transformation of social relations, of social facts, always carries with it the disappearance of the supporting ideology. It is to this transformation of social relations that concern must be directed for racism to be eliminated.

There is another study in this series on "ethnic nationalism: social science paradigms" by Anthony H. Richmond (Canada). The writer indicated that, in speaking of research on ethnic nationalism, it was necessary to take into account the varying positions of social scientists. Some write in order to mobilize support for a particular ethnic movement against oppressive conditions. This writing can play an important part in triggering off social change. However it also implies certain rhetorical devices, the exaggeration of differences and the creation of myths. It should therefore in no way be taken as scientific analysis. One major problem was that the terms "race", "nation" and "ethnic group" could be used interchangeably. Another problem was the complexity and diversity of culture seen as one of several variables. Problems of analysis were occurring at a time when there was an increase in ethnic mobilization. Not only could ethnic nationalism be turned into a "liberation movement" threatening the State, it could also receive tacit or overt support from specific countries and could be the catalyst for intra-State conflict. It was therefore particularly important to evolve the theoretical tools for analysis that went beyond short-term social engineering.

Following these three studies, case studies were commissioned on race, ethnicity and classification in Trinidad and Grenada (a comparative study), Central America and Sri Lanka.

The comparative study on Trinidad and Grenada concluded:

"... ethnic groups in Trinidad and Grenada have been classified according to the historical, social and economic factors of association with slavery, indenture, and various agrarian labouring systems which succeeded them. Since the White group was rich and dominant, and the Black group enslaved and kept poor, ethnic groups have sometimes been

perceived and classified along a continuum ranging from Black to White. But colour and race are not the only criteria used in the description of ethnic groups. For Chinese, Lebanese, Syrian and Portuguese are also national minorities living in the larger societies of Trinidad and Grenada. And nationality is an important ingredient in the conception of ethnic groups.

Ethnic groups are socially determined and historically conditioned. In the case of Trinidad and Grenada, they were called forth by the economic requirements of an expanding capitalist system which not only used free, White, Black and Coloured labourers at various intervals, but also demanded free and unfree labour from them, throughout the colonial history of the islands."

The study on Sri Lanka traces the situation back to the sixteenth century. It illustrates the non-homogenous nature of ethnic groups within Sri Lanka, the pattern of settlement, the impact of the plantation and first Dutch and then colonial rule, and the impact of the economic crisis in the 1930s. It concludes:

"Thus, the initial socio-cultural response of the major communities to the overpowering modernization and westernization was to invoke the Sinhalese-Buddhist and the Hindu-Tamil identities with puritanical sharpness. The rediscovery of the respective identities not only did not lead to any inter-ethnic understanding but positively prevented any meeting of the ways, for this path of rediscovery of their basic identities in relation to the British Government led them back to legendary positions of the archetypal Aryan and the Dravidian identities. The Sinhalese considered themselves to be the descendants of the great Aryans (the Aryan-Sinhala tradition) and the Tamils considered themselves the inheritors of the great, and pre-Aryan, Dravidian legacy. Historical renaissance on these lines led to mutual disregard, if not condemnation. The new-found uniformity that English education brought about was not able to withstand the social force of these forms of primordial consciousness and to provide a satisfactory basis for power-sharing at the metropolis. This popular consciousness that united all classes in terms of an ethos also prevented the increasing cleavages of society being expressed in class terms.

Within this context of Sinhala-Buddhist and Hindu-Tamil consciousness, the Muslims were consistent in protecting their identity on the basis of their religion. They resented any effort to bring them together with the Tamils on the basis of their language and reiterated their religious identity."

In the case of Central America, the paper argues that closure was the primary evolving act of classification. But variations in form were influenced by internal and external factors, including: the increase in the number of mestizos (due to new settlements) in proportion to the decrease in the number of the indigenous population and the Hispanic population; the effect of colonial crises and the post-colonial international market; the colonial policy of ethnic isolation and segmentation; political instability, the rupture of the region's political unity and the duality of the national States which were internally oligarchic and externally liberal; the railroad construction projects and the "enclave" plantation concessions granted to entrepreneurs of the United States.

The result of this was the combination of discrimination and the continuation of racial stereotypes and deformed perceptions of certain ethnic groups. Both were made possible by a mixture of material conditions and the stability of a form of thought that unified common sense and pre-evolutionary, classical, scientific knowledge. That is to say, it was a system based on Aristotelian logic, Euclidean geometry and Kantian metaphysics.

UNESCO also sponsored a comparative study in 1984 and 1985, which is now completed, on the effects of national social policies with regard to immigrants in France, Belgium and the Netherlands. The team of researchers outlined four major themes for this study: the structural evolution of immigration in European States where policies were neither able to foresee the evolution nor often to intervene to guide it; the change from work migration to family migration; the rise of the second and third generations, for whom religious and cultural expression, education, professional formation and housing are posed in new terms; the failure of many measures so far undertaken.

Indeed the slight amelioration of housing conditions, the problems of education for children, the unemployment of youth and indeed generalized unemployment tends often to lead to a "subproletariatization" rather than to a harmonious insertion into the community. In addition frontier controls have not prevented clandestine immigration. While measures against clandestine immigrants risk having an effect on the entire immigrant community with an amalgam of immigrant/clandestine/delinquent, the general risk is that repressive measures will be taken rather than real thought and overall policies. At present a complementary study is being undertaken in co-operation with the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) on the insertion of immigrants into society as measured by the municipal level (Belgium, France, the Netherlands). Of particular interest here are the "gatekeepers", i.e. mechanisms and personnel that regulate access to social services, including social security, housing and education.

II. Programme of social sciences research on the social mechanisms of apartheid and the effects of apartheid in the Organization's fields of competence

Particular attention has been given to the struggle against apartheid in work to combat all forms of racism. A UNESCO international meeting of scholars from universities and research institutions from different regions of the world met in Beijing, China, from 1 to 4 September 1986, to elaborate a five-year research plan on apartheid. Among points stressed at the meeting was that the effects of apartheid should be studied in terms of their effects not only on South Africa and Namibia but also on the southern African subregion as a whole. Researchers were also beginning to turn their attention to social and economic problems connected with post-apartheid reconstruction. It was proposed that working groups of scholars be set up to study various themes including: apartheid and education; the political economy of South Africa; the evolution of cultural resistance; and apartheid, the family and the role of women.

Attached likewise is the report of an informal consultation on apartheid organized in March 1985 in Dakar. */ A recent publication entitled Endgame in South Africa?, prepared by the Director of the Centre for Research on Ethnic Relations at the University of Warwick (United Kingdom) analyses the ideology of apartheid and how it affects social institutions and practices. It describes four pillars of apartheid: the white monopoly of political power; the attempt to make race coincide with space; the regulation of the labour supply; and the maintenance of social control (copy of publication attached */).

III. UNESCO Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice

In 1987 UNESCO will be preparing a comprehensive report on the world situation in the fields covered by the Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice adopted by the General Conference at its twentieth session in 1978, to be based on replies of member States to a questionnaire as well as an analysis by the UNESCO secretariat of the results of the Organization's programme of scientific research into the causes and manifestations of racism. This report will be submitted to the UNESCO General Conference at its twenty-fourth session in October 1987.

*/ Available for consultation, in English, in the files of the Centre for Human Rights.