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

Study on the role of private group action to combat
racism and racial discrimination

Report 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 and 42/47 of 30 November 1987, 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, specialized agencies, regional intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council in order to obtain their views and an indication from them of further relevant materials, and to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-third session a final report on this topic.

2. It should be recalled that paragraphs 55 and 56 of the Programme of Action adopted by the Second World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination formulated the action by non-governmental organizations as follows:

"55. By virtue of their independent status, non-governmental organizations individually and collectively have an important contribution to make to the achievement of the objectives of the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. Through various activities sponsored by them, non-governmental organizations can be effective in identifying and publicizing areas of racial discrimination which otherwise may not come to light, and in helping to create greater practical understanding among young people of the importance of actively combating all forms of discrimination, in their own countries as well as in the international community.

"56. Non-governmental organizations have the opportunity to create and sustain awareness among their members and in society at large regarding the evils of racism and racial discrimination. Such awareness can be transmitted from a national to an international organization with all the added benefits of the concrete experience of a particular country. Governments should therefore ensure that non-governmental organizations are enabled to function freely and openly within their societies and thereby to make an effective contribution to the elimination of racism and racial discrimination throughout the world." 1/

3. In compliance with the request made by the General Assembly, the Secretary-General transmitted his report twice, through notes verbales dated January 1987 and January 1988, respectively, to all Governments, specialized agencies, regional intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, 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.

4. Since the submission of the Secretary-General's report, the Governments of Iraq and the German Democratic Republic have provided information; information has also been received from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation and the Organisation of American States.

5. Considering the ample opportunity given to Governments, specialized agencies, regional intergovernmental organisations and non-governmental organizations 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 in the present document as definitive.

II. INFORMATION AND VIEWS RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

BENIN

1. The Government states that no officially recognized Beninese private group is conducting a specific activity in the struggle against racism and racial discrimination.
2. However, in view of the fundamental importance which the Party and the State of the People's Republic of Benin attach to any anti-racist movement and to the formation of any justice-loving group struggling against racism and racial discrimination, the mass organizations of the Party of the People's Revolution of Benin, namely, the Benin Revolutionary Youth Organization (OJRB), the Benin Revolutionary Women's Organization (OFRB) and the Benin National Trade Union Federation (UNSTB), have for many years been organizing meetings and debates with a view to heightening awareness of and disseminating information about racism and racial discrimination.
3. The activities of these mass organizations have further increased since apartheid was identified as "a crime against humanity" by the Organization of African Unity.
4. In addition, voluntary financial contributions have been made in order to aid the movements struggling against racism and racial discrimination in South Africa.

IRAQ

1. The Government of Iraq informs the Secretary-General that Iraq took an active part in the implementation of the programme for the First and Second Decades to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, by participating in the First and Second World Conferences to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. It has also acceded to the major conventions against racial discrimination.
2. With reference to paragraphs 5 to 127 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/41/550), Iraq reaffirms its commitment to the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade, and attaches special importance to the role of private groups, especially non-governmental organizations, that play an important part in promoting public awareness of the dangers of racism.
3. The Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities has an important part to play in combating racism through the

preparation of the studies undertaken by the special rapporteurs. The Secretary-General's 1978 report to the Sub-Commission 2/ on the adverse consequences for the enjoyment of human rights of political, military, economic and other forms of assistance given to colonial and racist régimes in southern Africa must be updated to cover the developments that have occurred since that date, with emphasis on the need for private commercial companies, especially transnational corporations, to implement General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on boycotting the racist régime of South Africa.

4. The establishment within the group of non-governmental organizations of specialised sub-committees to combat racism is of particular importance. The organisations that have set up their headquarters in Iraq, such as the Federation of Arab Lawyers, a non-governmental organisation, are active in that sphere.

5. Iraq supports all the recommendations formulated by the United Nations experts and bodies, as set forth in section V of the report. These recommendations must be put into effect at the international and regional levels.

GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

1. The German Democratic Republic fully supports the concern of the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, which was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session in 1983. To implement the respective resolutions and the operational Programme of Action, the German Democratic Republic promotes activities of non-governmental social organizations, private groups and individuals, with the Solidarity Committee of the German Democratic Republic being the co-ordinator of these activities at the non-governmental level.

2. In accordance with the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, social organizations and private groups in their work in this field concentrate on providing support to the world-wide campaign for the elimination of the apartheid régime in South Africa and to the organized assistance for the victims of racist State terrorism.

3. The activities undertaken by social organizations and private groups help a great deal in informing German Democratic Republic citizens about the innumerable crimes of the apartheid régime and in mobilizing them to render active solidarity. Occasions primarily used for this purpose are the various commemorative days or weeks proclaimed by the United Nations. The German Democratic Republic public react with a great deal of commitment to specific events in the south of Africa, e.g., when it comes to campaigning for preventing the execution of the death sentence against the Sharpeville Six.

4. Representatives of social organizations, the Solidarity Committee and also of the churches participate in international conferences and seminars to promote the exchange of experiences in the struggle against racism and racial discrimination and to adopt decisions aimed at further strengthening the international front against the apartheid régime.

5. In all parts of the German Democratic Republic, solidarity meetings take place the year round. They are sponsored by social organizations, private groups or citizens' action groups. Of particular popularity are solidarity bazaars, where the proceeds are used for the benefit of the victims of racism and racial discrimination. Over the last few years, these and other sources have yielded donations of about 200 million marks annually. A large portion of this sum is used for the supply of urgently needed goods to the victims of the South African racist régime, to the African front-line States, to the South West Africa People's Organisation and to the African National Congress.

6. Another priority is the funding of the training of people from the front-line States and national liberation movements in essential trades or at German Democratic Republic colleges and universities. Another significant element of our solidarity is the medical treatment of victims of South African raids. The German Democratic Republic will keep promoting the activities of social organizations, citizens' action groups, private groups and individuals in pursuit of the objectives of the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination.

III. INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

1. Non-governmental organizations concerned with the struggle against racism and apartheid are regularly invited as observers to meetings of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) on this theme.
2. Scientific non-governmental organizations may provide an important contribution to social sciences research conducted on this theme. An example of this co-operation is the working group set up by UNESCO in 1986, under contract with the Research Committee on Ethnic, Race and Minority Relations of the International Sociological Association to study social sciences paradigms and empirical research on ethnicity and racism. The areas examined by the working group are described in the report by the Director-General on the World Situation in the Fields Covered by the Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudices. 3/ This document provides details on other activities of UNESCO's programme of social sciences research on the causes and manifestations of racism.
3. Reference is made to the Joint NGO/UNESCO Secretariat Working Group on Activities related to Education for the Promotion, Application and Defence of Human Rights, Education against Racism and Apartheid established in 1982 under the auspices of the NGO/UNESCO Standing Committee. A report prepared by a team of non-governmental organisations belonging to the Joint NGO/UNESCO Secretariat Working Group sought the following objectives: 4/

(a) Developing co-operation between non-governmental organizations and UNESCO and among the non-governmental organizations themselves, in implementing the plan for the development of human rights teaching;

(b) Furthering exchange of information, reflection and the activities of non-governmental organizations in human rights education directed against racism and apartheid;

(c) Ensuring that this education is a component of all UNESCO programmes, along with education for peace and development and education on the environment and on communication.

3. The Working Group further decided to encourage the launching, development and expansion of field activities by non-governmental organizations, at the local, national and regional level, concerning human rights education directed against racism and apartheid, and to collect reports on these activities for analysis in order to draw conclusions.

IV. INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES

1. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights is committed to the increased observance and respect for human rights and, in particular, to the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination in this hemisphere. Both the American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man and the American Convention on Human Rights maintain the right of every individual to the full exercise of their rights and freedoms entitled to him or her as a human being, regardless of race, colour, sex, language, status, birth, or any other social condition.

2. The Commission is supportive of private organizations whose activities aim at combating racism. We are, however, unable to satisfy your request due to the limited information we have about those groups and their specific activities.

Notes

1/ Report of the Second World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, Geneva, 1-12 August 1983 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.83.XIV.4 and corrigendum), chap. II.

2/ E/CN.4/Sub.2/383.

3/ 24 C/14 UNESCO, 22 September 1987.

4/ NGO/87/EDHRR/Report, UNESCO, 6 April 1987.
