



**International Convention on
the Elimination of All Forms
of Racial Discrimination**

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Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
Eighty-sixth session

Summary record (partial)* of the 2324th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Monday, 27 April 2015, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Mr. Calí Tzay

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* No summary record was prepared for the rest of the meeting.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Opening of the session

1. **The Chairperson** declared open the eighty-sixth session of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Tribute to the memory of Waliakoye Saidou, former member of the Committee

2. **The Chairperson** invited the Committee to pay homage to the human rights work of Waliakoye Saidou, who had died suddenly on 10 December 2014. Although it was customary to observe a minute of silence, he believed that a round of applause would be a more fitting tribute.

3. *The members of the Committee stood for a minute of applause.*

Statement by the Chief of the Anti-Racial Discrimination Section, Research and Right to Development Division, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

4. **Mr. Boychenko** (Chief of the Anti-Racial Discrimination Section, Research and Right to Development Division, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) said that, although great strides had been made in the elimination of racial discrimination in the 50 years since the adoption of the Convention, such discrimination remained an ongoing national and international challenge and appeared to persist in all regions of the world. Those challenges, and the successes achieved under the Convention, had been discussed at a recent side event held during the twenty-eighth session of the Human Rights Council. Participants had pointed out the many legislative changes made in response to the Committee's concluding observations and had also stressed the importance of cooperation with civil society.

5. A panel discussion to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Convention's adoption had been held during the sixteenth session of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent in April 2015. Mr. Murillo Martínez had participated in that discussion, highlighting the Committee's role as a catalyst for addressing current and potential racial tensions. Participants had provided several examples of ways in which the Committee's work could bring about tangible changes in the field. The Working Group recognized the Committee's important role in protecting the rights of people of African descent and looked forward to closer collaboration with the Committee on issues of mutual concern.

6. The close relationship between the Committee and the Working Group had been crucial in the work to promote the International Decade for People of African Descent, which had begun on 1 January 2015. The many millions of people of African descent living outside the African continent constituted some of the poorest and most marginalized groups in the world and still had limited access to quality education, health services, housing and social security. The Committee had worked tirelessly to combat discrimination against that population group, including through its general recommendation No. 34, and had helped to draw up the programme of activities for the International Decade, which focused on seven priority areas: education and awareness-raising about the history and contributions of people of African descent; their participation and inclusion in all spheres of society; discrimination in the administration of justice; adoption of special measures; promotion of the right to development and other measures to combat poverty; access to quality education, employment, housing and health; and multiple forms of discrimination.

7. The Anti-Racial Discrimination Section would take the lead within the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in organizing activities in those areas. The Office

was also developing a communication strategy for the International Decade with a view to focusing attention on the situation of people of African descent as a group facing discrimination. He encouraged the Committee to ask questions about the situation of such people during its consideration of States parties' reports and to address the topic in its own thematic reports.

8. Among other activities of potential interest to the Committee, the Section carried out bilateral technical cooperation programmes for the development and adoption of national action plans to address racism and discrimination, supported the strengthening of specialized bodies working to promote equality and combat racism and discrimination, and coordinated and carried out a fellowship programme for people of African descent. It also maintained an anti-discrimination database containing information on measures and practices for combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance.

9. **Mr. Diaconu**, commending the Section's efforts to promote the Convention and the standards set out therein, asked whether the Section planned to establish any cooperation programmes with regional human rights organizations, such as the relevant agencies within the Council of Europe or the recently established Arab Court of Human Rights.

10. **Mr. Murillo Martínez** said that, through his collaboration with the Section, he had seen what an active role it played, particularly with regard to the rights of people of African descent. He welcomed the Section's efforts to encourage the adoption of a declaration on the rights of people of African descent, as the Committee had suggested.

11. **Ms. Crickley**, seconding Mr. Diaconu's call for further cooperation with regional organizations, said that the Committee was well placed to help coordinate and support such efforts. She encouraged the Anti-Racial Discrimination Section to focus on the rights of people from Africa who had migrated to other continents, which was currently an important issue, particularly in Europe.

12. **Mr. Boychenko** (Chief of the Anti-Racial Discrimination Section, Research and Right to Development Division, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) said that collaboration with regional organizations was indeed very important and that his Section invited such organizations to participate in its activities whenever possible. Owing to resource limitations, there were currently no plans to set up any specific cooperation programmes. However, the Section did endeavour to draw the attention of regional mechanisms and bodies to the Committee's jurisprudence and recommendations. For example, in comments recently submitted to the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance it had highlighted the Committee's general recommendation No. 35 on combating racist hate speech.

Adoption of the agenda (CERD/C/86/1)

13. *The provisional agenda was adopted.*

The discussion covered in the summary record ended at 10.55 a.m.