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Meeting Summary

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Durban Review Conference
MORNING

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DURBAN REVIEW CONFERENCE CONTINUES HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

Hears Statements by Qatar, IPU, Namibia, Suriname, Palestine, Montenegro, Lesotho, Bolivia, Uganda, Pakistan, Syria, Zimbabwe, Barbados, Bahrain, Honduras, Mauritius and Indonesia

The Durban Review Conference this morning continued its high-level segment, hearing statements from dignitaries from Qatar, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Namibia, Suriname, Palestine, Montenegro, Lesotho, Bolivia, Uganda, Pakistan, Syria, Zimbabwe, Barbados, Bahrain, Honduras, Mauritius and Indonesia.

Said Mugaddam Al Buainain, Assistant Foreign Minister of Qatar, said despite efforts carried out, the aims of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action had not been implemented in the way it had been wished. Rather, forms of racism, racial discrimination and intolerance were continuing to increase, based on unjustified discrimination based on religion, colour, or creed. The people of Palestine had been suffering from discrimination for many decades, suffering catastrophic economic and social consequences due to Israel's actions, including the building of the Separation Wall, carrying out a blockade, and seizing Palestinian land.

Anders Johnsson, Secretary-General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, said that it was only by talking to each other that mutual understanding could take root and that conflicts could be solved in a peaceful manner. It was therefore sad that several countries had chosen to be absent from this Conference and not to contribute to a highly necessary debate. Their absence was a setback for the victims of racism and racial discrimination. Their absence did not help create better understanding and more tolerant societies. And their absence rimed poorly with the renewed optimism which surrounded multilateralism today.

Nahas Angula, Prime Minister of Namibia, said that the effects of colonial genocide and apartheid were still being felt by Namibia's people to this day. Such experiences needed to be acknowledged. This Review Conference was therefore of great interest to Namibia. Poverty in Namibia was racial, gendered and rural. The challenge was to balance modernity with tradition and culture with social justice. Economic redress and redistribution was another intractable challenge. This was particularly so in the case of land redistribution.

Riyad Al-Maliki, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Palestine, said that the continuation of the suffering of the Palestinians who faced the most racist forms of occupation by the occupying force must stop. Combating racism and racial discrimination could not be discussed without due focus on the measures taken by the occupying power in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Everyone must work at all levels to eradicate all forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance, and to enhance cooperation to put an end to such practices in order to ensure dignity and equality for all.

Fuad Nimani, Minister for Human and Minority Rights Protection of Montenegro, said equality, tolerance and dialogue were cornerstones of the Montenegrin society. The diverse cultural and historical heritage was conducive to the creation of a multiethnic, multicultural and multi-religious community. Montenegro had significant experience in fostering dialogue among diverse communities, cultures and civilizations. The Government was fully aware that it had to invest additional efforts to ensure a full integration of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian population into Montenegrin society.

Mpeo Mahase-Moiloa, Minister of Justice, Human Rights and Constitutional Affairs of Lesotho, said Lesotho regretted the fact that some Member States had preferred to stay away from the Conference - this was clear testimony of the long road yet to be travelled towards the ideals of the Durban Declaration and Plan of Action. Humanity should hold hands and courageously address together the abominable practice of racism and racial discrimination. Policies, practices and institutions needed to be modelled around core principles of non-discrimination.

Celima Torrico, Minister of Justice of Bolivia (Estado Plurinacional de), said it was important to acknowledge that in Bolivia racism and racial discrimination towards indigenous groups in the country was rooted in a historical social prejudice due to historical invasion, domination, and exclusion which ran counter to political and ideological thought. Bolivia appealed to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to assist Bolivia in combating racism and racial discrimination. Bolivia rejected the doctrine of racial superiority.

Oryem Henry Okello, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Uganda, said the current text of the outcome document, which was adopted by the Preparatory Committee on 17 April 2009, was well balanced. It granted an opportunity to continue their collective and steadfast efforts in the fight against racism. It was unfortunate that some States had decided to stay away from this Conference while others had walked out yesterday. It was hoped that their absence was temporary and they would soon return to join this noble effort.

Nawabzada Malik Amad Khan, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, said ideological and political resistance to multiculturalism was one of the root causes of the resurgence of racist and xenophobic tendencies. Rejection of diversity had led to the negation of the rights of immigrants, foreigners and minorities. The most serious manifestation of racism was the legitimisation of racism and xenophobia in the guise of defending identity or preference. One of the most insidious forms of contemporary racism was the defamation of religions, in particular Islamophobia.

Faysal Mekdad, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Syria, reaffirmed that racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance were all serious violations and impediments to the enjoyment of human rights. This Conference was not only an opportunity to assess the commitments and transition made since 2001, but to renew the will and desire to translate those goals to affect work on the ground and opportunities going forward. It was an opportunity to draw up new visions. Experience had shown that a large-scale conference such as this one witnessed differences of opinion which in Syria was considered a healthy and constructive exercise.

Patrick Anthony Chinamasa, Minister of Justice and Legal Affairs of Zimbabwe, said the majority of human kind continued to be stalked by racism in many guises everyday. Racist ideology had given rise to acts of genocide in several countries in recent history. No Member State, big or small, should delude itself that simply by belonging to a select group of countries that it could absolve itself of its historical responsibility for crimes and racism and its horrendous derivatives of genocide and other acts of aggression against innocent populations. The unspeakable acts had their roots in racist ideology and in its many manifestations.

Steven d. Blackett, Minister of Community Development and Culture of Barbados, said there should be renewed efforts to confront new scourges of racism and intolerance such as the misuse of the Internet for spreading hateful and racist propaganda, and the legitimisation of far-right extremist and neo-Nazi political parties. Education and culture as conduits to healing and comprehension of history were paramount - at all levels, there was an urgent demand for a comprehensive review of curricula in schools and national cultural policies.

Nizar Sadeq Al Baharna, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Bahrain, said that the Government of Bahrain was committed to Islam and on the basis of its principles, Bahrain pursued a policy of justice and equality and rejected the basis of racism and racial discrimination. Human rights were universal and as such it was essential to strengthen cooperation among all countries of the world in order for the fundamental principles of human rights to be known around the world.

Rezlan Ishar Jenie, Deputy Minister for Multilateral Affairs of Indonesia, said that history was replete with terrible wrongs inflicted through lack of respect for the equality of human beings, manifested through colonialism, wars of conquest, slavery, apartheid, genocide, ethnic cleansing, and other atrocities. The contemporary effects of these past practices and policies had endured consequences

for the peoples of African and Asian descent. This Review Conference was being convened at a time of sweeping global change and transition.

The Review Conference will continue with its high-level segment this afternoon at 3 p.m.

High-Level Segment

SAIF MUGADDAM AL BUAINAIN, Assistant Foreign Minister of Qatar, said the convening of this Review Conference under the theme of "United against Racism: Dignity and Justice for All" reaffirmed the United Nations' commitment, since it was established, to equality and ensuring the rights of all members of the human family, based on freedom, justice and world peace. The Durban Declaration and Programme of Action reaffirmed the principle of human dignity which was inherent in all, and an inalienable principle which should be upheld by all. Despite efforts carried out, the aims of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action had not been implemented in the way it had been wished. Rather, forms of racism, racial discrimination and intolerance were continuing to increase, based on unjustified discrimination based on religion, colour, or creed.

The people of Palestine had been suffering from discrimination for many decades, suffering catastrophic economic and social consequences due to Israel's actions, including the building of the Separation Wall, carrying out a blockade, and seizing Palestinian land. The international community had a responsibility to deal with these violations and work to ensure that the Palestinian people could enjoy their inalienable human rights as stipulated in the United Nations Charter and the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. The Palestinian people had a right to have an independent nation, with East Jerusalem as its capital. There was a need to raise awareness among the public with regards to fighting racism. Qatar attached great importance to protecting and promoting human rights at all levels, nationally, internationally, and regionally.

ANDERS B. JOHANSSON, Secretary General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, said that the declaration to be adopted at the Durban Review Conference reaffirmed that democracy and transparent, responsible, accountable and participatory governance were essential to prevent, combat and eradicate effectively racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. Democratic institutions existed to mediate tensions and maintain equilibrium between competing interests. It was only by talking to each other that mutual understanding could take root and conflicts could be solved in a peaceful manner. It was therefore sad that several countries had chosen to be absent from this Conference and had decided not to contribute to a highly necessary debate. Their absence was a setback for the victims of racism and racial discrimination. Their absence did not help create better understanding and more tolerant societies. And their absence rimed poorly with the renewed optimism which surrounded multilateralism today.

Religion was often erroneously invoked as the cause of divide. Debates among members of parliament at a recent Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly demonstrated a clear consensus that of course all religions had made important contributions to civilization, Mr. Johansson said. Freedom of expression and freedom of the press were twin pillars of democracy. Parliaments must protect these freedoms while enacting legislation which promoted the ethical responsibility that went with those freedoms, particularly not to incite hatred, racism, xenophobia and human rights violations. Debates at the Inter-Parliamentary Union on freedom of expression concluded that the boundaries between the legitimate right to criticize and the abusive incitement to hatred and violence could not be defined uniformly, but that the aim of any law to curb hate speech must be to eliminate hate itself and to promote human dignity and understanding.

NAHAS ANGULA, Prime Minister of Namibia, said that the people of Namibia had been victims of institutional racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance during the most dehumanizing experience of colonialism and apartheid. The effects of colonial genocide and apartheid brutality were still being felt by Namibia's people to this day. Such experiences needed to be acknowledged. This Review meeting of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action was therefore of great interest to Namibia. Namibia's challenges as far as racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance were concerned were historical, cultural, social and economic forms of discrimination.

Racism was ingrained in the social fabric of Namibia's society by centuries of colonial and apartheid domination. Old habits died hard. Many years of institutional discrimination had created social and

economic pauper classes. Poverty in Namibia was racial, gendered and rural. The traditional patriarchal system discriminated against women and Namibia had therefore adopted policy measures to promote gender equality and the advancement of the rights of women. The challenge was to balance modernity with tradition, culture with social justice. Economic redress and redistribution was another intractable challenge. This was particularly so in the case of land redistribution. Government programmes for resettlement and land redistribution were being frustrated by absent landlords and settler land barons.

WILLEM UDENHOUT, Former Prime Minister and Senior Advisor to the President of Suriname, said as new forms and old manifestations of racism and racial hatred continued to plague the world community, this Conference was as relevant as the World Conference in Durban was almost eight years ago. Defamation of religions, repression of minority groups such as migrants, refugees, indigenous and tribal communities still had destructive effects on the dignity of the human being. Intolerance and prejudice could be challenged through continuous awareness-raising - in this regard, education was indispensable at every level as a reliable basis and effective mechanism to expand and intensify inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue. Eight years after the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, while increased attention had been given to activities that addressed racism and discrimination, actions remained inadequate, both in scope and intensity.

This Review Conference should galvanise the political support for increased efforts that effectively addressed the evils of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance. Failure to communicate on the impact of the transatlantic slave trade and related slavery and on current manifestations of slavery and discrimination would perpetuate the inequalities that were a threat to a safe, stable, peaceful and prosperous world. The effects of climate change, and the food, financial and energy crises had created consensus among world leaders on the urgency of global action for an innovative concept of sustainable development. But these global efforts would not be effective if in the process there was not sustainable reparation of the historical damage which still defined relations between and within nations. These reparations should be guided by the resolutions of the Durban Conference - failure to implement these resolutions would dash the hopes of many, and could slow the solutions of the global problems that were so prominent on the agenda of the world.

RIYAD AL-MALIKI, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Palestine, said that for over 60 years the Palestinians had been suffering under occupation. This occupation was the worst violation of human rights. The continuation of the suffering of the Palestinians who faced the most racist forms of occupation by the occupying force must stop. The right to self-determination of the Palestinian people must be channelled towards the construction of a viable and independent State. The occupying power must be held accountable to its international obligations, including the Fourth Geneva Convention which was applicable in the Occupied Palestinian Territories including East Jerusalem. However, there was a total disregard for international law by the occupying power. Despite this the Palestinian people believed that truth would ultimately prevail. The rights of the Palestinians were inalienable and would not decrease over time. The Palestinian people were rooted in their land.

Combating racism and racial discrimination could not be discussed without due focus on the measures taken by the occupying power in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. This was done through the confiscation of lands, changing the historical and religious characteristics of Jerusalem, destroying homes, building the separation wall, refusing to issue the necessary permits for building projects, and by the excavation of the Al-Aqsa Mosque, among other things. Additionally, hundreds of checkpoints and roadblocks remained which hindered mobility of Palestinians and as such their way of life. The most recent actions in Gaza displaced tens of thousands of Palestinians and killed or wounded over 7,000 Palestinians, half of whom were children, women and the elderly; this translated into racism on the ground. The Review Conference was to review and evaluate the progress achieved in what was stipulated in the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. Everyone must work at all levels to eradicate all forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance, and to enhance cooperation to put an end to such practices, to ensure dignity and equality for all.

FUAD NIMANI, Minister for Human and Minority Rights Protection of Montenegro, said recognizing racism as a global phenomenon, the Durban Conference had set a global agenda for the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. Numerous steps had been made by countries individually and also by the international governmental and non-governmental organizations with the aim to efficiently fight and eradicate racism and xenophobia. Montenegro was strongly committed to the promotion and respect for human rights and the dignity of all members of society. Equality, tolerance and dialogue were cornerstones of the Montenegrin society. The diverse cultural

and historical heritage was conducive to the creation of a multiethnic, multicultural and multi-religious community. Montenegro had significant experience in fostering dialogue among diverse communities, cultures and civilizations.

Since the renewal of its independence Montenegro had demonstrated and proved its commitment and capacity to promote and protect human rights and freedoms. The new Constitution of Montenegro enshrined broad prohibition of indirect and direct discrimination on any grounds. The Government of Montenegro was fully aware that it had to invest additional efforts to ensure a full integration of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian population into Montenegrin society. Being aware of the challenges that lay in store for Montenegro, it was going to keep up its efforts in creating an environment in which everyone would be able to enjoy their rights on equal terms. Mr. Nimani concluded by saying that the success of the Durban Review Conference depended not only on the countries represented here but also on every member of the United Nations and every actor in the whole international community.

MPEO MAHASE-MOILOA, Minister of Justice, Human Rights and Constitutional Affairs of Lesotho, said Lesotho regretted the fact that some Member States had preferred to stay away from the Conference - this was clear testimony of the long road yet to be travelled towards the ideals of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. Humanity should hold hands and courageously address together the abominable practice of racism and racial discrimination. The 2001 World Conference had comprehensively documented the problems of racial discrimination, racism, xenophobia and related intolerance experienced by humanity over the past decades. The founding proponents of the philosophy on the fundamental freedoms and respect for human rights subscribed to the inalienable nature of the basic natural rights such as non-discrimination, inherent dignity and equality. These timeless principles should be accorded to every human being regardless of race, gender and religion, at all times.

Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance remained a global reality and continued to be an international concern. It was worth recalling that policies, practices and institutions needed to be modelled around core principles of non-discrimination. These should not be based on race, gender, ethnic language, social, economic, political, religious, cultural and other forms of related intolerances. There was a need for States to incorporate in their domestic jurisdictions all key United Nations international human rights instruments. The life of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action lay in the success of the follow-up mechanisms - their better synergy and complementarities could achieve the noble objectives of their mandates whilst also paving a future without scars that would be indelible in the memory of subsequent generations. The international community should work together to strengthen its ability to prevent and stop racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance.

CELIMA TORRICO, Minister of Justice of Bolivia (Estado Plurinacional de), said it was important to acknowledge that in Bolivia racism and racial discrimination towards indigenous groups in the country was rooted in a historical social prejudice due to historical invasion, domination, and exclusion which ran counter to political and ideological thought. Despite this, acts of racism and discrimination were rejected and brought under control, which gave impetus to constitutional reform in 1999, bringing about the right to association and the right to organize for indigenous people. Thanks to the struggles of social movements there was no longer exclusion in Bolivia.

The National Plan for a Dignified and Sovereign Bolivia for Living Well 2006 aimed to uproot the deep social inequalities and inhumane exclusions undergone by the 36 nations of indigenous groups; and to build a productive Bolivia and a sovereign Bolivia to defend and protect its natural resources and diversity. Bolivia had ratified the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Universal Health Insurance Act intended to benefit indigenous groups in rural areas. This Act ensured the attendance of indigenous groups living in rural areas was met in line with their customs. In addition, the Government promulgated a new constitution on February 7, 2009, which aimed to broaden and protect all human rights. Mrs. Torrico appealed to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to assist Bolivia in combating racism and racial discrimination. Bolivia was characterised by poverty, marginalization and underdevelopment. Bolivia rejected the doctrine of racial superiority, and appealed to countries of the world to continue the work as stipulated in the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

ORYEM HENRY OKELLO, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Uganda, said that this Review Conference provided an opportunity to examine what progress they had individually and collectively made since the 2001 World Conference against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related

intolerance held in Durban in South Africa. This Review Conference also provided them with an excellent opportunity to identify challenges, propose the way forward and continue the fight with the view to eradicating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. The current text of the outcome document, which was adopted by the Preparatory Committee on 17 April 2009, was well balanced. It granted an opportunity to continue their collective and steadfast efforts in the fight against racism.

It was unfortunate that some States had decided to stay away from this conference while others walked out yesterday. It was Uganda's hope that their staying away or walk-out was temporary and they would soon return to join this noble effort. Indeed the very essence of tolerance demanded of us to listen to each other's opinion. It was only through tolerance and dialogue that the world would collectively overcome the scourge of racism. As they reflected on the past and renewed their commitments, they must never forget the victims of these injustices. They must also bear in mind that racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance was not a problem of the past. It was indeed a problem of the present and the future. States had to review their collective will to tackle the scourge of racism. Success would not be easy, it never was.

NAWABZADA MALIK AMAD KHAN, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, said the Durban Review process was another milestone in the collective struggle against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. It had been an intensive, protracted, and at times needlessly controversial process. While significant progress had been made towards evolving normative standards and instruments for providing protection against different forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, these needed to be transformed into concrete action. Ideological and political resistance to multiculturalism was one of the root causes of the resurgence of racist and xenophobic tendencies. Rejection of diversity had led to the negation of the rights of immigrants, foreigners and minorities. The most serious manifestation of racism was the legitimisation of racism and xenophobia in the guise of defending identity or preference.

One of the most insidious forms of contemporary racism was the defamation of religions, in particular Islamophobia. In the common struggle against terrorism and discrimination, there was an urgent need for dialogue and understanding among followers of different religions or beliefs. The outcome document rightly expressed the international community's resolve to prohibit any advocacy of racial or religious hatred, condemnation of racial and religious stereotyping, as well as called upon States to declare illegal and prohibit organizations based on ideas or theories of superiority or promoting socio-religious hatred and discrimination. A consensual and successful outcome of the Conference should have corresponding effect on the lives of all the victims of racism, including those who continued to be marginalised on the basis of descent in the form of social stratification, on the basis of caste or creed, which nullified their equal enjoyment of human rights. Victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance around the globe had high hopes of this gathering, and they should be answered through adoption of an approach that was guided by the sole aim of protection of these victims.

FAYSAL MEKDAD, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Syria, said that everyone was present today, eight years after the Durban Conference in South Africa, to address the issue of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance. Syria wished to reaffirm that racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance were all serious violations and impediments to the enjoyment of human rights. All men and women were born free and with human dignity, which must be upheld. This was not only an opportunity to assess the commitments and transition made since 2001, but to renew the will and desire to translate those goals to affect work on the ground and opportunities going forward. It was an opportunity to draw up new visions. Experience had shown that a large scale conference such as this one witnessed differences of opinion which in Syria was considered a healthy and constructive exercise.

Views regarding the supremacy of one race over another were immoral, stressed Mr. Mekdad. The conscience of humanity was ready to eradicate racism, racial discrimination and its related evils. Syria understood the immense sacrifices made by Africa in this context. Syria had acceded to all United Nations conventions with respect to racism and racial discrimination, and was committed to continue its work to eradicate this scourge. Syria was a peaceful and tolerant society; however, it could not in any manner accept the misrepresentation of religious symbols, including the freedom of expression and religion. It was unacceptable to accept forms of religious incitement of hatred which were recently directed against Muslims around the world. Further, Syria deplored the discriminatory measures taken by Israel towards the Palestinian population, and Israel's rejection to recognize the

applicability of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination in the case of the Golan Heights. Syria urged the international community not to keep their eyes closed with respect to Israel's injustices.

PATRICK ANTHONY CHINAMASA, Minister of Justice and Legal Affairs of Zimbabwe, said that it was imperative that they all reaffirmed the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action of 2001. Today, as then, they must commit themselves to fight and to eradicate racism in all its insidious forms. Those among them who had been, and indeed continued to be, victims of racism could not but be bewildered at the thought that anyone would boycott this essential Review Conference. They needed to hear the views of those who today denied them their company at this hallowed quest. The majority of human kind continued to be stalked by racism in many guises everyday. Racist ideology had given rise to acts of genocide in several countries in recent history. No Member State, big or small, should delude itself that simply by belonging to a select group of countries could it absolve itself of its historical responsibility for crimes and racism and its horrendous derivatives of genocide and other acts of aggression against innocent populations. The unspeakable acts had their roots in racist ideology and in its many manifestations.

African countries had met in Abuja in Nigeria in August 2008 to prepare for this Review Conference. A number of good practices on their continent had been identified. Zimbabwe believed that all countries across the world could learn from one another in this regard. Moreover, a number of follow-up mechanisms were established in Durban which should help them all in the concerted efforts to fight and eradicate racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. Zimbabwe committed itself to work well with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights when, in future, it engaged the Office to ensure that Zimbabwe became appropriately empowered to promote and protect all human rights. It expected the relationship with the Office to be non-adversarial and it should result in their putting into practical effect the promise of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

STEVEN D. BLACKETT, Minister of Community Development and Culture of Barbados, said the subject of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance went to the very heart of the United Nations system for the protection of human rights, the dignity and freedom of the individual, and the equality of all men and women. This Review Conference was an opportunity to further define ways of overcoming the obstacles that prevented the international community from working together, in pursuit of common solutions to its real enemies - including disease, famine, climate change and poverty. Sustained success in this quest would only be realised if there was no division along racial lines, but unity across them. The will of delegations and the agreement of the Conference to effect change should now be bolstered by full implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. There should also be renewed efforts to confront new scourges of racism and intolerance such as the misuse of the Internet for spreading hateful and racist propaganda, and the legitimisation of far-right extremist and neo-Nazi political parties.

Education and culture as conduits to healing and comprehension of history were paramount - at all levels, there was an urgent demand for a comprehensive review of curricula in schools and national cultural policies. There should be provision for financial and technical assistance. Today the entire world was preoccupied with the global financial and economic crisis, which threatened to reverse many of the advances and gains that had been made over the years. It could be argued that this made it challenging to commit financial resources to the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. However, this was an opportunity to utilise the developmental aspects of reparation as a means of supporting historically disadvantaged people and societies through, inter alia, poverty eradication, the improvement of productive capacity and the building of infrastructure. It should be recognised that implementing the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action could be an important international policy instrument to help achieve the Millennium Development Goals and sustain the social and cultural pillars of the world's economies in these difficult times.

NIZAR SADEQ AL BAHARNA, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Bahrain, said that this Review Conference provided an opportunity to look at the progress made since 2001, and to promote the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The World Conference against Racism had set out a number of objectives and commitments which had been laid down in the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. Bahrain reaffirmed its commitment to the goals and objectives set out in the final document. The Government had had the opportunity to assess the efforts made in order to implement the objective to spread ideas of equality

and justice. Bahrain was committed to Islam and on the basis of its principles, Bahrain pursued a policy of justice and equality and rejected the basis of racism and racial discrimination.

Human rights were universal and as such it was essential to strengthen cooperation among all countries of the world in order for the fundamental principles of human rights to be known around the world. These fundamental principles were essential to ensuring equality and justice. Consistent racial practices aggravated this phenomenon further. It was the duty of each country to uphold human rights. The occupying power was spreading its colonies across the Palestinian territories. Bahrain pleaded to the international community to help the Palestinian people to ensure their right to self-determination and to alleviate their suffering. Mr. Al Baharna said that negative stereotypes that intended to defame religion were dangerous practices and this was of great concern. It was the duty of the Human Rights Council to pursue its efforts to strengthen dialogue among its members in this regard. Bahrain hoped that the international community would actively work together to implement the objectives set forth to eradicate racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance.

CESAR ARNULFO SALGADO SAUCEDA, Minister of the Honduras Fund for Social Investment, said that in this new era, there were contemporary forms of discrimination, such as those affecting migrants. Women and persons with disabilities were more vulnerable than others. It was indispensable that countries of destination dealt with the issue of migrants so as to guarantee their full enjoyment of human rights. Honduras was aware of the State's responsibilities towards its people and had adopted several measures to ensure the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. It had set up a several new mechanisms for follow-up which had been developed with the goal to abolish racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. Although Honduras had not officially recognized the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, it had set up clear laws guaranteeing the equality of all persons and discrimination was a punishable act.

One of Honduras' programmes to improve the condition for human development, particularly to alleviate poverty, had as a goal to reach 200,000 families that lived in extreme poverty, most of them in the rural area. This programme, among others, required international cooperation. Mr. Saucedo appealed to the international community to strengthen its support to this programme. Honduras had adopted measures to preserve its cultural and ethnic identity. Any form of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance should be fought and eliminated. Honduras urged the High Commissioner to give greater support to national and regional workshops focused on awareness-raising. There was a need to do away with economic inconsistencies that might reduce the hope of their delegations and give way to a new promising way of respect, humanity, solidarity and equality within societies and States in this century.

JAYARAMA VALAYDEN, Attorney-General of Mauritius, said the World Conference of 2001 was a milestone event as the international community pledged collectively to combat all forms and manifestations of racism and racial discrimination, and to ensure equal rights for all human beings. Now, nearly eight years afterwards, the time had come for the international community to make an assessment of the extent to which the solemn pledges taken then had in fact been fulfilled and had in practice made a difference in the lives of the victims of racism. While some progress had been achieved at the national, regional and international levels, it was a fact that there was still a long way to go for the effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. Racism was a global phenomenon, and the world could not claim to be free from it. The most serious manifestation of racism was the democratic legitimisation of racism and xenophobia under the guise of defending national identity or preference. One of the root causes of the resurgence of racist and xenophobic violence was intellectual and political resistance to multiculturalism.

Moreover, today efforts being made at the national and international levels to fight racism could be seriously challenged by the global financial and economic crises which could contribute to the emergence of racial and xenophobic tensions, particularly against migrants and migrant workers. The mechanisms that had been set up to follow up on the outcome of the Durban Conference had not functioned as effectively as had been wished - it was therefore imperative to adopt measures to improve their effectiveness, and to ensure better synergy and complementarity in their work. Beyond the measure of hope that the Conference aimed to send to the millions of victims of racism across the globe, it should also be able to address the various gaps in the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, and equally provide all stakeholders with concrete strategies to further combat the scourge of racism. The international community needed to keep in mind that its

fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance required that it also promote human rights and fundamental freedoms.

REZLAN ISHAR JENIE, Deputy Minister for Multilateral Affairs of Indonesia, said that history was replete with terrible wrongs inflicted through lack of respect for the equality of human beings, manifested through colonialism, wars of conquest, slavery, apartheid, genocide, ethnic cleansing, and other atrocities. The contemporary effects of these past practices and policies had had enduring consequences for the peoples of African and Asian descent. Poverty, underdevelopment, marginalization and socio-economic exclusion, despite the much-expected merits of globalization, had gotten much worse in developing countries in recent years. As a result, a large fraction of the world's population was denied its human rights, dignity and fundamental freedoms. This Review Conference was being convened at a time of sweeping global change and transition. Although there had been progress since 2001, persistent challenges remained.

During those years, a disturbing trend had emerged, among others in the increase of negative stereotyping, a tendency to associate a certain religion with terrorism, and Islamophobia. This worldwide trend called for stronger concerted action. This included the use of new tools to deal with substantive gaps in the existing international instruments to combat all forms of contemporary racism, including incitement to racial and religious hatred. Indonesia continued to sympathize with the suffering of the Palestinian people. Indonesia accepted the draft outcome document. This text was the fruit of painstaking and intense negotiations involving many compromises and a great deal of flexibility and goodwill from all parties, especially countries of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Indonesia was disappointed that some partners who championed human rights had chosen not to participate in this meeting. It was hoped that this draft would allow all to initiate further concrete steps towards implementing the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.
