

EGYPT



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The Permanent Mission of Egypt
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Intervention
By
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General Assembly
High-Level Meeting

Commemorating the Tenth Anniversary
of adopting

the Durban Declaration and programme
of Action

New York, 22 September, 2011

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Mr. Chairman,

At the outset I would like to express our appreciation to the President of the General Assembly for holding this important meeting under his auspices. Our commemoration of the 10th anniversary of adopting the Durban Declaration and Programme of Actions, reaffirm that the underlying reasons which motivated the international community to gather in Durban during 2001 for the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, still persist today. Today we reaffirm our commitment to the principles and priorities of Durban, and our resolve to combat the negative impacts of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerances regarding of the attempts of some to criticize and derogate from them.

Humanity had undergone various symptoms of social maladies that were regrettably, more often than not, related to colour, race, religion or belief, and which had caused many historical atrocities. Despite the serious steps taken by the international community to implement the International Convention on the Abolition of Slavery and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), and the ongoing efforts in following up on the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Plan of Action, and despite the progress made so far in realising the universality of the International Covenants of Human Rights, we still witness the emergence of new forms of racism in contemporary world. This is particularly so notwithstanding the burgeoning need on the part of the international community to benefit from the civilisational, cultural and religious diversity within societies in promoting understanding and integration.

While some States are exerting keen efforts to confront these alarming trends, the response of others is still lagging behind in confronting the inclusion of agendas that give stamina to these phenomena in the platforms of their political parties, based on an illusion of superiority, be it on the grounds of race, culture, religion or thought. This comes in total disregard to the fact that the enjoyment of the freedom of expression of opinion comes with great responsibilities towards the society, on top of which is the commitment to enhance democratic dialogue and promote tolerance and understanding, not to spread hate and discrimination against migrants in the recipient societies, or against those who belong to certain cultures and religions in order to realise narrow interests and racist ideologies that lead to creating conflict and destabilising the *ordre public*.

North and the South in dealing with these important issues, and combating all forms of discrimination across the globe on the basis of race, sex, language or religion. It is indeed important to complement our efforts in implementing our common commitments according to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and the Outcome Document of the Review Conference, particularly when it comes to discrimination against women, national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, migrants and others who face varying degrees of social marginalisation and discrimination or who are being exposed to systematic attempts to suppress their cultures and are forced to hide their religious affiliations.

Enhancing cooperation at the international level to promote dialogue, mutual understanding and enlightened education is equally of great significance, and should be within a framework of partnership and cooperation with nongovernmental organisations, the private sector and national associations. We should also continue our efforts to promote the freedom of expression according to our commitments under existing international human rights instruments, in a manner that prevents the exacerbation of the sentiments of racism and hatred and encourages the media to perform its lofty message in spreading awareness, educating communities and confronting the trends that promote intolerance and conflict. Our endeavour in this regard should avoid any attached conditionalities that aim at imposing controversial notions that do not take into account the divergent social, cultural and value systems of different societies, or linking these notions to development assistance and programmes.

While the International year of people of African descent draws up to an end, we have to continue to reinforce the international commitment to the lofty principles that we established sixty years ago in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the first of which is that “recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.” It is time for vigorous international action to confront the proliferation of malaise of racism and discrimination in all their forms in every State without exception, within a comprehensive and mature framework that takes into consideration the necessary balance between the rights and responsibilities of all.

Thank you Mr. Chairman