



Information Note

REGIONAL MEETING FOR AFRICA ON THE INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT

**Organized by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights,
in cooperation with the African Union Commission**

Hosted by the Government of Senegal

King Fahd Hotel, Dakar, 23-24 October 2019

Background

The 2001 World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance was a historic opportunity to acknowledge the burdens faced by people of African descent as a result of the legacies of slavery, the slave trade and colonialism. Despite efforts to mobilize political will at the national, regional and international levels, eighteen years after the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance and the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, people of African Descent continue to face discrimination, exclusion, marginalization and violence as well as infringements to or violations of their human rights.

Following on from the International Year for People of African Descent in 2011, the General Assembly, by its resolution 68/237 of 23 December 2013, proclaimed the International Decade for People of African Descent commencing 1 January 2015 and ending on 31 December 2024, with the theme: "People of African descent: recognition, justice and development". The Programme of Activities of the International Decade for People of African Descent (General Assembly resolution 69/16) requests the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to organize regional meetings in paragraph 69 c).

Two previous meetings have been organized by OHCHR in Brasilia for the region of Latin America and the Caribbean (December 2015) and in Geneva for Europe, Central Asia and North America (November 2017). The Regional Meeting for Africa will follow a similar format anchored around the Decade's themes of "recognition, justice and development", taken from the unique perspective of Africa. The meeting will have a dynamic youth participation and benefit from digital interaction and social media presence, and will incorporate historical and cultural dimensions relevant to Africa and Diaspora.

In Africa, the International Decade for People of African descent was officially launched between the Office of the High Commissioner and the African Union Commission during the first African Union- United Nations High Level Dialogue on Human Rights in Addis Ababa on 24 April 2018. The Dialogue communiqué states that: "During the Dialogue, the Chairperson of the AUC launched the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024) at the African Union. The Decade was proclaimed by the General Assembly in resolution 68/237 and a Programme of Activities was adopted by the General Assembly on 1 December 2014. The

overarching themes of the Decade: “Recognition, Justice and Development” are shared by the AU and the UN. The two institutions agreed to organize further commemorative events on the Decade in the near future and to work together to implement the Programme of Activities for the Decade.”

OHCHR and the African Union have been working together on the Decade, including the “African Union Continental Symposium on the Implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent” in Accra, Ghana (September 2018) which developed an Action Plan for the African Union activities in this regard.

The High Commissioner for Human Rights as Coordinator of the Decade, and her Office, are organizing this regional meeting for Africa, in cooperation with the African Union Commission. The meeting will be hosted by the Government of Senegal.

Objectives

The main objective of the International Decade for People of African Descent are provided in General Assembly resolution 69/16 is to promote respect, protection and fulfilment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by people of African descent, as recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Decade focuses on the following objectives:

- Strengthening national, regional and international action and cooperation in relation to the full enjoyment of economic , social, cultural, civil and political rights by people of African descent, and their full and equal participation in all aspects of society;
- Promoting a greater knowledge of and respect for the diverse heritage, culture and contribution of people of African descent to the development of societies;
- Adopting and strengthening national, regional and international legal frameworks in accordance with the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination, and ensuring their full and effective implementation.

The specific objectives of the regional meeting for Africa include:

- **Enhanced knowledge and awareness of African Governments and stakeholders about the International Decade for People of African Descent and its Programme of Activities (General Assembly resolution 69/16);**
- **Increased engagement and commitment of partners and stakeholders to implement the Decade at the national and regional levels;**
- **Enhanced implementation linkages between the AU Agenda 2063, the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Programme of Activities of the Decade; and,**
- **Adoption of a Declaration for the region of Africa on the International Decade for People of African Descent.**

Programme of the regional meeting

(See draft provisional programme attached).

Participants

The meeting is a public United Nations meeting, organized in cooperation with the African Union Commission, with participation of all African Member States of the United Nations, African Union representatives, other relevant international, regional, sub-regional and non-governmental organizations, including organizations of people of African descent, national human rights institutions and other stakeholders from the region. Relevant human rights bodies, organs and mechanisms of the United Nations and the African Union, specialized agencies, funds and programmes will also be invited. The public meetings of the meeting will be open to representatives of the information media accredited by the United Nations. Representatives of other Member States and civil society from other regions can attend the meeting as observers.

Approximately 200 participants from the region and from outside the continent are expected to attend the meeting.

Venue, Interpretation and Registration

The regional meeting will take place from 23-24 October 2019 at the King Fahd Hotel (Routes des Almadies, Dakar, Senegal, tel. : +221 33 869 69 69; fax : +221 33 869 69 24 and email: informations.dakar@kingfahdpalacehotels.com).

The working languages of the meeting will be English, French, Spanish and Arabic and simultaneous interpretation will be provided.

All participants are invited to REGISTER ONLINE for the meeting at the following link: <http://ohchr-survey.unog.ch/index.php/656629?lang=en>

Accommodation and Visa Requirements

Participants in the Dakar regional meeting are requested to make their own arrangements for accommodation. Accommodation at a preferential rate for meeting participants is available at the following hotels:

King Fahd Hotel	http://www.kingfahdpalacehotels.com/v2/en/
Fleur de Lys Almadies	http://www.hotelfleurdelysdakar.com/
Hotel des Almadies	http://hoteldesalmadies.com/
Yaas Hotel	https://www.yaashotels.com/en/hotels/yaas-hotel-almadies-dakar
Le Lodge des Almadies	https://www.lodgedesalmadies.com/en/home.html

The Government of Senegal, as host country, is facilitating the entry of accredited participants to the regional meeting. Participants are urged to inquire with relevant Senegalese consular offices and government resources with regard to entry requirements and visas to enter Senegal.

<https://www.sec.gouv.sn/entr%C3%A9e-au-s%C3%A9n%C3%A9gal>
https://www.aeroport-dakar.com/visa_on_arrival_senegal.php

Documentation

Background documents and the final version of the programme of the regional meeting will

be made available at the meeting. Various awareness-raising materials on the International Decade for People of African Descent and copies of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and the Outcome Document of the Durban Review Conference, and a number of other relevant documents and materials, will be also be available at the venue.

Further information is available at:

<https://www.un.org/en/events/africandescentdecade/upcoming-events.shtml>

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Racism/InternationalDecade/Pages/RegionalMeetingAfrica2019.aspx>

<https://www.un.org/WCAR/durban.pdf>

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