**Subject: WGEPAD Call for input: The Urgency of Now: Systemic Racism and opportunities in 2021, deadline 28 June 2021**

Call for Inputs

The Urgency of Now: Systemic Racism and opportunities in 2021 (Deadline: 28 June 2021)

Background

In 2020 the Working Group of experts on people of African descent presented its annual report entitled COVID-19, systemic racism, and global protest (A/HRC/45/44) to the 45th session of the UN Human Rights Council The Working Group emphasized that structural racial discrimination exacerbates inequality in access to health care and treatment, leading to racial disparities in health outcomes and increased mortality and morbidity for people of African descent. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought racial disparity and discrimination to the surface in institutions designed to confer justice, equity and redress. The Working Group analysed the connections between the COVID-19 pandemic, police impunity and global protest, and made recommendations thereon.

The Working Group held its 27th session entitled “The Urgency of Now: Systemic Racism and the Lessons of 2020" from 30 November to 3 December 2020 The session focused on several themes, including COVID-19 as Catastrophe and Catalyst, Systemic racism and police violence, Remedies, Reparations, Accountability and Justice. Finally, it discussed the current situation at the mid-term review of the International Decade for people of African descent and the 20th anniversary of the DDPA. More information about the 27th session including its conclusions and recommendations can be found here. The 27th session was also informed by the Working Group’s 26th virtual session Regional Meetings with civil society held from 23 to 25 November 2020, for more information see here.

In 2021 to mark the midterm review of the international decade for people of African descent and the 20th anniversary of the DDPA the UN General Assembly will take stock of the progress made and decide on further necessary actions. It is critically important to hear from people of African descent and all stakeholders on what has been happening in local contexts, what works, and what should be prioritized. This is an opportunity to strategize on applying the international human rights framework and the momentum of this moment to combat racial discrimination and injustice faced by people of African descent.

The Working Group will present its annual report to the General Assembly 76th session in October 2021 building on discussions held during its 26th and 27th sessions and the current human rights situation of people of African descent globally. They will make recommendations to effectively prevent racial discrimination and address racial injustice faced by people of African descent.

Call for inputs

The Working Group of experts on people of African descent issued two calls for input in 2020 on the impact of COVID-19 and the mid-term review of the International Decade for people of African descent. The Working Group is very grateful for the submissions already received which were used during the sessions and will be reflected in this report.

In addition, the Working Group would appreciate receiving views from all interested stakeholders on the current human rights situation of people of African descent globally (January-June 2021) as we analyse where we are and the urgent next steps to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the DDPA. The Working Group would also welcome any positive measures that have been undertaken by Member States, national human rights institutions and equality bodies, civil society, and UN agencies, funds and programmes. In addition the Working Group would welcome any specific recommendations you would like to make to further the protection of human rights of people of African descent in this context.

This information may be sent to the Working Group of experts on people of African descent Secretariat at the Anti-Racial Discrimination Section of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations Office at Geneva (e-mail: africandescent@ohchr.org ).

Please note that in order for all inputs to be considered during the drafting of the Working Group’s annual report to the UN General Assembly, inputs should be submitted by 28 June 2021.