

**SOUTH AFRICAN PERMANENT MISSION
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS**

**STATEMENT ON SYSTEMIC RACISM AT THE 1ST SESSION OF THE
PERMANENT FORUM ON PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT**

Geneva, 6 December 2022

Chairperson,

We thank the panelists for their valuable input

21 years ago the outcomes document of the World conference on racism, in Durban, the DDPA clearly stated that systemic and structural racism is a major impediment to the full enjoyment of all human rights for Africans and people of African descent.

As you are aware considering our tragic history South Africa and the HRC African Group, in particular, have continued to take the issue of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance very seriously and thus run an annual resolution on these issues called from rhetoric to reality, a global call against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance, which inter Alia operationalize all the recommendation from the various Durban follow up mechanisms and mandate holders who lead in the fight against these scourges.

As such, as you may be aware, the African group continues to draft important resolutions for implementation, the most recent ones are internal

HRC Resolution 43/1, the UN High Commissioner was mandated to look at systemic racism and human rights violations by law enforcement agencies against Africans and people of African descent, and to contribute to accountability and redress for victims.

In the follow-up Resolution 47/21 of 13 July 2021,
Recognized that systemic racism needs a systemic response to rapidly reverse denial and alter structures, institutions, and behaviors leading to direct or indirect discrimination against Africans and people of African descent in every part of life,

It also recognized that systemic racism is intersectional by nature as it spreads in a variety of societal sectors, and that in order to tackle systemic racism and discrimination, response measures should also be intersectional,

Most importantly it Decided to establish an international independent expert mechanism, comprising three experts with law enforcement and human rights expertise, to be appointed by the President of the Human Rights Council, with guidance from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in order to further transformative change for racial justice and equality in the context of law enforcement globally, especially where relating to the legacies of colonialism and the Transatlantic slave trade in enslaved Africans, to investigate Governments' responses to peaceful anti-racism protests and all violations of international human rights law and to contribute to accountability and redress for victims; the mechanism should function in close collaboration with relevant special procedure mandate holders, including the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent and the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, also with a view to avoid duplication;

In Resolution 48/18 adopted on 11 October 2021, we requested the Advisory Committee to prepare a study in which it examines patterns, policies, and processes contributing to incidents of racial discrimination and makes proposals to advance racial justice and equality, which should be firmly anchored in the fulfillment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the attainment of its Goals, in consultation where possible with the Office of the High Commissioner and the international independent expert mechanism to advance racial justice and equality in the context of law enforcement established by the Human Rights Council in its resolution 47/21, and to present the study to the Human Rights Council at its fifty-fourth session;

Chairperson, It is thus important that the Forum and civil society encourage states to actively implement the calls in these resolutions, and work closely with the mandate holders in this regard.

Chairperson,

Lastly, we call that the Forum not try and reinvent the wheel, as a recent speaker seems to suggest, by ignoring that which the DDPA has very clearly already done, and was adopted without a vote, all heads of state and governments signed and committed to do.

What the forum needs to do, urgently, is to ensure that all these states are held to the commitments they undertook to do in the Program of Action of the DDPA.

To do so it is very important that states and civil society, especially, have a serious relook at the DDPA, and you will see that it tackles all the issues mentioned here and set out a Program of Action to address them.

Don't reinvent the wheel, rather ensure that it is properly inflated and attached to the vehicles of implementation.

Thank You