|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | A/HRC/53/61 | |
|  | **Advance unedited version** | | Distr.: General  7 July 2023  Original: English |

**Human Rights Council**

**Fifty-third session**

19 June–14 July 2023

Agenda items 2 and 9

**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner**

**for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the**

**High Commissioner and the Secretary-General**

**Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related   
forms of intolerance: follow-up to and implementation  
 of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action**

The progress on the two-year comprehensive communications strategy on racial equality

Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights[[1]](#footnote-2)\*

|  |
| --- |
| *Summary* |
| The present report, submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 48/18 and 51/32, provides an overview of the actions taken by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in the context of the two-year comprehensive communication strategy, inclusive of an outreach programme to raise awareness about and mobilize global public support for racial equality. In line therewith, the Office of the High Commissioner launched the Learn, Speak Up, and Act! Campaign to fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance. This report provides an overview of the activities, products and services developed for the Learn, Speak Up, and Act! Campaign, including publications, videos, a landing page, social media content, partnerships, and more. Based on progress made and lessons learned, the report also provides suggestions for a way forward to raise awareness and garner public support. |
|  |

I. Introduction

1. On 14 October 2021, Human Rights Council resolution 48/18 entitled “From rhetoric to reality: a global call for concrete action against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance” requested the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) “to establish and launch a two-year comprehensive communications strategy, inclusive of an outreach programme to raise awareness about and mobilize global public support for racial equality, including about the content and contribution of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action to the struggle against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.”
2. In line therewith, OHCHR developed a communication strategy in the first half of 2022 and launched the outreach programme for racial equality on 18 July 2022 under the campaign name *Learn, Speak Up, and Act!* (LSA). The LSA Campaign is intended to increase awareness about and mobilize global public support for racial equality by means of engaging communication activities and products, and will run through to the end of 2023.
3. Human Rights Council resolution 51/32 of 12 October 2022, requested OHCHR to submit a report to the Human Rights Council at its fifty-third session on the progress of the two-year comprehensive communications strategy and outreach programme. The present report provides an overview of the LSA Campaign products and activities developed and carried out by OHCHR from 1 January 2022 until 31 March 2023. The report also outlines the plans for the remainder of the campaign and includes suggestions for a way forward beyond the campaign period.
4. Communication products and activities created by OHCHR for the LSA Campaign include publications, videos, web pages, social media content and activities, public information and media products, as well as strategic partnerships to boost the reach and appeal of the campaign.

II. Context

1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights[[2]](#footnote-3). Notwithstanding efforts made for racial equality, as stated in Human Rights Council resolutions 48/18 and 51/32, people around the world continue to be confronted by racism, racial discrimination, hate speech, targeted violence, xenophobia and other related intolerance, including Africans and people of African descent, Asians and people of Asian descent, indigenous peoples, migrants, refugees and persons belonging to national or ethnic, racial, religious, and linguistic minorities. Many people face multiple or aggravated forms of discrimination, including racial discrimination intersecting with other forms of discrimination. It is of high importance to remove legal and/or practical obstacles and eliminate discriminatory practices that hamper individuals from participating fully in political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life. Stereotypes and stigmatization based on race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, social or ethnic origin, property, birth or other status, including when propagated through information and communication technology, need to be addressed effectively.
2. By its mandate, OHCHR is a global player inmobilizing public support, building a global constituency, and raising awareness on the obligation to combat and prevent racism and racial discrimination, aiming to achieve racial equality and justice. OHCHR notably produces thematic research and reports to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly, prepares tools and guidance, fosters partnerships with international, regional and national institutions, and undertakes capacity-building at the country and regional levels as well as through fellowship programmes. OHCHR also provides support to UN human rights anti-racism mechanisms, such as relevant special procedures mandates and treaty bodies. These efforts are highlighted, streamlined and boosted by the LSA Campaign.
3. Eight United Nations human right mechanisms are mandated to work on issues of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, namely the Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Ad Hoc Committee on the Elaboration of Complementary Standards, the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, the Group of Independent Eminent Experts on the Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent, the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, and the International Independent Expert Mechanism to Advance Racial Justice and Equality in Law Enforcement. The campaign digitally streamlines their content and work to create a central place of information and action against racism and racial discrimination.
4. Due to the deeply entrenched and cross-cutting nature of racism, and its far-reaching negative consequences, numerous other United Nations mandates and experts including special procedures mandate holders and human rights treaty bodies also regularly draw attention to, make recommendations, and report on the issue. The LSA Campaign highlights the work done by the United Nations, OHCHR and the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the thematic issues of racial discrimination.
5. Pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 48/18 and 51/32, and in line with General Assembly resolution 75/237, strengthening awareness of the contribution that the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA)[[3]](#footnote-4) made in the struggle against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, is a cornerstone of the LSA Campaign. The DDPA has been catalytic in addressing deep historical roots of contemporary racism, including enslavement and the trade in enslaved Africans. It calls for action for reparatory justice for victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerances, for strengthening education and awareness-raising, and for securing inclusive sustainable development. The campaign highlights the importance of a full and broad implementation of the DDPA and aims to increase public awareness and support for it through engaging means of communication.
6. Raising awareness and support for the content and contribution of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)[[4]](#footnote-5) is another central element of the campaign. ICERD is the key international instrument to combat the scourge of racism and is one of the oldest United Nations conventions on human rights having come into force in 1969. Until today, 182 States have become parties to ICERD, and the LSA Campaign aims to increase advocacy for its universal ratification, implementation, and for the recognition of the complaint procedure of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), the body of independent experts that monitors implementation of the ICERD by its States parties. In addition, the International Decade for People of African Descent 2015-2024 – which is coordinated by the High Commissioner for Human Rights - and its programme of activities[[5]](#footnote-6) promoting equality and non-discrimination around the world, and present a comprehensive framework based on the themes of recognition, justice, and development to address racial discrimination faced by people of African descent in every region. Finally, the High Commissioner’s Agenda[[6]](#footnote-7) towards transformative change for racial justice and equality, anchored in the lived experiences of Africans and people of African descent – launched in 2021 – sets out a vision to end systemic racism through 20 actionable recommendations for States and other stakeholders. The campaign undertakes to widely disseminate the programme of activities of the International Decade for People of African Descent, as well as the DDPA, ICERD and the Agenda towards transformative change, also in easily accessible printed and digital formats, in support of their full and effective implementation.

III. Communications Strategy and Outreach Programme for Racial Equality

1. Learn, Speak up, Act! Campaign
2. Pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 48/18 and 51/32, OHCHR developed and set in motion a two-year comprehensive communications strategy, inclusive of an outreach programme to raise awareness about and mobilize global public support for racial equality, including the content and contribution of ICERD, the DDPA, and the International Decade for People of African Descent and its programme of activities. Lack of public knowledge about the content of these instruments and initiatives for racial equality constitutes an obstacle in generating political will for their full and effective implementation, therefore, an outreach strategy that ignites interest on these documents is key to foster concrete change towards fighting racism, xenophobia, racial discrimination and other intolerances.
3. In line with Human Rights Council resolution 48/18, during the first semester of 2022, OHCHR commenced, organized and carried out the elaboration of a communication strategy and outreach programme on racial equality creating the LSA Campaign. This was done by OHCHR Communication Section with the support of OHCHR Anti-Racial Discrimination Section, OHCHR’s substantive coordinator and liaison for stakeholders. The aim of the LSA Campaign is to raise awareness on and mobilize global public support for the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. To structure this campaign, OHCHR developed three key messages: “Education is a tool to fight racism”, “Actions speak as loud as words” and “We are all agents of change”. These messages extract central objectives towards achieving racial equality, namely the right to learn about the history of racism, xenophobia, racial discrimination and related intolerance, the tools to fight them, the need to speak out against them, and the call to act to eliminate all forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.
4. OHCHR officially launched the LSACampaign on 18 July 2022, Nelson Mandela International Day, coinciding and in cooperation with the International Nelson Mandela Moot Court Competition. In general, many of the key components of the campaign are launched in accordance with relevant commemorative dates and periods. While the LSA Campaign has a set two-year campaign period until 31 December 2023, OHCHR undertakes for its effects to last beyond this timeframe.
5. During the reporting period, OHCHR developed, updated, and disseminated key LSACampaign products, including a landing page, videos, publications, and social media, media and public information products. More campaign products are to be launched after the reporting period, including non-traditional print publications and interactive e-tools.
6. OHCHR integrated the LSA Campaign into its flagship Fight Racism Campaign running since 2019. This was done in an effort to streamline and thereby strengthen OHCHR public information activities and outreach on the fight against racism, xenophobia, racial discrimination and other intolerances. Moreover, the campaign continues to be adapted to current events and initiatives. The High Commissioner for Human Rights, for instance, declared March 2023 to be Racial Justice Month as part of the Human Rights 75 Initiative, the campaign on the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration for Human Rights (UDHR). In effect, the LSA Campaign merged with the Human Rights 75 Initiative for one month to boost both their impacts and reach.
7. Technical assistance
8. Due to the scope and nature of the communication strategy and outreach programme requested by Human Rights Council resolutions 48/18 and 51/32, regular budget resources through two programme budget implications (PBI) were allocated to carry out respective tasks. Accordingly, a Public Information Officer specialized in campaigns was recruited for the duration of the campaign to develop a communication strategy, manage the outreach programme, handle the recruitment of technical experts, and oversee the production and dissemination of campaign products and activities.
9. A graphic design consultant was also hired to develop the visual identity of the LSA Campaign. The visual identity was launched in 2022 and is prominently featured on the web page, social media, videos and various other public information products. A campaign-specific Trello Board[[7]](#footnote-8) containing and providing easy access to the graphic design elements, was set up and shared with all United Nations Information Centres (UNICs), OHCHR field presences, the United Nations Department of Global Communication (DGC), and with staff through OHCHR all staff messaging. OHCHR field presences in South America, South Africa, Bolivia, Honduras, Lebanon, Mexico, Senegal, and the DGC in New York have also shared LSA Campaign content on a regular basis with their regional and local networks.
10. A translation company was hired to translate campaign texts and products into the six official United Nations languages, as well as into Portuguese. Web content and key publications are translated on a systematic basis, while other materials, such as social media content, are translated depending on a necessity basis. The translation company was hired for three months in 2022 and will be hired again in 2023.
11. In addition, a digital development company, audio-visual consultants, a social media research consultant, and print companies were recruited to develop a variety of products, together with a consultant to prepare the present report. Advertisement slots for the campaign on social media platforms were purchased.

IV. Activities and Products of the Outreach Programme

1. Publications
2. In line with Human Rights Council resolutions 48/18 and 51/32 as well as the communication strategy and outreach programme of the LSA Campaign, various publications on racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance were designed, produced and launched. Campaign publications are intended to promote equality, equity, encourage discussions, and publicize ways of promoting and protecting fundamental human rights on all levels of society. Some of these publications are meant to be an entry point for audiences to get to know the United Nations instruments and mechanisms to fight racism, xenophobia, racial discrimination and other intolerances. The demand for OHCHR publications on racism has increased considerably over the years, and under the umbrella of the LSA Campaign OHCHR undertakes to increase the number of on- and offline publications, to diversify their types, to increase their accessibility and to streamline their web display. OHCHR disseminates LSA Campaign publications to all relevant UNICs and OHCHR field presences and distributes them through various additional channels to target specific audiences.
3. A foldable leaflet on the content of the DDPA, ICERD, and the International Decade for People of African Descent and its programme of activities in an easy-to-understand and accessible way was developed and produced. The leaflet will be published in digital format and in print in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish and Portuguese. In addition, OHCHR is working towards publishing an updated version of the publication *United against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance* in 2023. These publications will be sent for wide dissemination to UNICs, OHCHR field presences and other stakeholders, including universities. Print-ready electronic versions will be made available to stakeholders and constituencies to print their own run.
4. OHCHR was also requested to produce promotional material on racism, xenophobia, racial discrimination and other intolerance with a youth-friendly approach and for educational purposes. Therefore, a digital publication in form of a promotional e-tool geared towards young people is being created. The e-tool will function as entry point to the topic by enticing young people through short and relatable videos, by engaging them through an interactive quiz, and by inviting them to delve deeper. Accordingly, the e-tool contains summaries of ICERD, the DDPA and the Decade for People of African Descent, as well as links taking the participants to key documents, mandates, and personal experience stories. It will be hosted on a web-based platform compatible with all mobile phones and tablets and will be accessible in all official United Nations languages. The e-tool will be shared through university networks targeting first-year bachelor’s degree students, but will also be promoted to a wider audience on social media. The launch is planned around Nelson Mandela International Day and in cooperation with the International Nelson Mandela Moot Court Competition 2023. Supporters of the campaign will be invited to disseminate the tool through their social media channels.
5. Videos
6. Since the launch of the campaign, OHCHR produced and branded nine LSA Campaign videos. Six of these videos were already launched and disseminated, with the remainder to be launched in the course of 2023. Depending on target audience, content and style, videos were published on various platforms including YouTube, TikTok, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. OHCHR created a separate sub-page[[8]](#footnote-9) for videos on its LSACampaign landing page.
7. Video projects that were produced by in-house and external audio-visual professionals and published by OHCHR throughout the reporting period include a series of interview-based videos featuring Hollywood actor and anti-racism activist Tenoch Huerta. OHCHR also published a 2022 video on racialized women from across the world battling stereotypes, as well as a video on the fight against xenophobia through cooperation between migrants and nationals in South Africa, produced in collaboration with OHCHR Regional Office for South Africa and OHCHR Migration Unit, and with a focus on explaining the significance and content of the DDPA in an accessible manner. Other videos produced and to be launched in 2023 cover topics such as the invisibility of indigenous peoples in Costa Rica and how that invisibility could amount to racial discrimination, the first and second sessions of the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent, the journeys undertaken by multiple former fellows and the impact that participating in the Fellowship Programme for People of African Descent has had on them and their work, and a TEDx Talk on OHCHR’s mechanisms to fight racism in Brussels, supported by OHCHR Regional Office for Europe and with the participation of OHCHR Anti-Racial Discrimination Section.
8. In addition, social media videos are being produced and published on a continuous basis to announce and publicize campaign messages, activities, products and key dates. Substantive social media videos are shared on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook, including messages by the High Commissioner and other key actors. Engagement-based social media videos are created for TikTok and are also shared on other social media platforms to target the youth, including LSA Campaign launch videos produced in cooperation with Nelson Mandela Moot Court Competition participants, a video on the International Day for People of African Descent, as well as call to action videos by campaign champions.
9. OHCHR also produced an educational video project in cooperation with a theatre director specialized in human rights and arts who applies an immersive “Train the Trainer” methodology. The hired consultant and theatre expert led a series of workshops on racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in Cali and Bogota, Colombia, and subsequently, the attendees (artists, most of them of African descent) produced a series of 12 videos. The workshops included a session on the DDPA, ICERD and the International Decade for People of African Descent and its programme of activities. This project zooms in on micro aggressions and is instructional in incorporating the fight against racism and racial discrimination into arts, ranging from recruitment over script to staging. The aim of the train the trainer videos is to increase the sensitization of individuals and local communities towards racism through art. The videos will be disseminated through local UNICs and OHCHR field presences, with a particular focus in Latin America, in the framework of the LSA Campaign.
10. In addition, videos have also been produced for the promotional e-tool publication mentioned above. For this project, OHCHR developed six video storyboards to spotlight racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance at home, in policies and institutions, in an educational context, and in policing. Video post-production is in progress, and the final product is expected to be launched and widely disseminated in July 2023.
11. Lastly, OHCHR also undertook to co-organize movie screenings. For Racial Justice Month, OHCHR promoted and sponsored a movie screening during the Human Rights Film Festival of Geneva, Switzerland, which also included a panel discussion on colonialism and welcoming remarks by OHCHR’s head of the Rule of Law, Equality and Non-Discrimination Branch. In 2022, OHCHR in cooperation with the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG) organized a movie screening at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, of the documentary “Becoming a Black Woman” portraying the life of and prejudices faced by a Swiss woman of mixed origin.
12. Landing page
13. OHCHR created a dedicated landing page for the LSA Campaign[[9]](#footnote-10) in its *Get Involved* section of the web page[[10]](#footnote-11). With all OHCHR web pages having been migrated to a new hosting platform in 2022, the *Get Involved* section, dedicated to OHCHR human rights campaigns, has been developed with a more flexible template allowing space for innovative features such as an up-to-date social media wall. Among the *Get Involved* landing pages and for the duration of the campaign, the landing page on the LSA Campaign has received the most prominent place. By focusing on accessibility and user-friendliness, the landing page increased the visibility of core anti-racism and discrimination instruments, mechanisms and follow-up activities, and also provides a more general overview of the fight against racism and discrimination by OHCHR and the United Nations at large. In order to streamline content of the *Get Involved* pages, previous pages on the flagship OHCHR Fight Racism Campaign and on the United Nations Hate Speech Campaign have been integrated into the LSA Campaign landing page.
14. The LSA Campaign landing page features a front-page and five sub-pages. The LSA Resource sub-page, for instance, constitutes a hub for all OHCHR mandates and instruments focused on racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. It prominently features the relevant experts and mechanisms, provides links to activities and agendas, as well as a list of participatory fellowship programs. The LSATake Action sub-page promotes engagement of the audience, from suggesting ways to speak up to taking concrete action on local, national and international levels. Other sub-pages of the campaign are the pages on Hate Speech, an initiative launched by the United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech in 2019, and the Radio Shows page, featuring all radio shows and podcasts produced in cooperation with OHCHR on the occasion of International Day for People of African Descent 2022.
15. Since the launch of the LSA Campaign and its landing page on 18 July 2022, until the end of the reporting period on 31 March 2023, an additional 20,600 page visits were registered on the landing page with well over half of the visitors navigating further onto the sub-pages of the campaign. Among the sub-pages the Hate Speech page is the most sought out, followed by the Take Action page. Overall, the English front-page is the most visited, closely followed by the Spanish sub-page on Hate Speech. With the growing reach and output of the LSA campaign, the number of views of the LSA Campaign landing page are expected to continue to rise.
16. All web content created for the LSA Campaign is systematically translated into Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Translations and content implementation are organized and carried out by OHCHR Web Team in coordination with the Public Information Officer in charge of the LSA Campaign.
17. Social media
18. Social media and digital communication technologies offer new opportunities in the global campaign against all forms of racism, xenophobia, racial discrimination and other intolerances, but can also exacerbate and compound existing inequalities. Careful consideration is taken with regard to the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly and the use of social media to incite hatred and discrimination.
19. Between 18 July 2022 and 31 March 2023, OHCHR posted over two hundred LSA Campaign social media items on its Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and LinkedIn global, regional, and local accounts. All posts were accompanied by graphic design or audio-visual content. Overall, social media posts on the LSA Campaign attained over two million impressions on the global OHCHR social media accounts.
20. On Twitter, OHCHR posted a total of thirty-three LSA Campaign posts on its global account, twenty-two on its regional accounts, and twelve on its local accounts in Arabic, English, French and Spanish respectively. High levels of engagement were attained by posts featuring Hollywood actor and campaign champion Tenoch Huerta, with over 300,000 impressions on its global account, with content ranging from personal experience narration to an educational call to action. Campaign messaging posts and a post on the first session of the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent also performed well. The dedicated LSA Campaign hashtag #LearnSpeakUpAct was actively used close to one hundred times on Twitter.
21. On Instagram, OHCHR posted close to thirty posts on its English and Spanish global accounts. OHCHR Regional Offices for Central America, Central Asia, Europe, South America, South-East Asia, the Pacific, West Africa, and the Middle East and North Africa, as well as local offices for Colombia, Guatemala. Honduras, and Mexico, actively posted LSA Campaign content onto their Instagram accounts. On the English global account reels featuring interviews with Tenoch Huerta performed best, with close to 600,000 impressions and over 30,000 engagements with the posts. In comparison, English OHCHR Instagram reels attain 45,000 impressions on average. Other posts with good audience views included the campaign launch video message by the High Commissioner, the video on the Day for People of African Descent, the video on racialized women, as well as content published during Racial Justice Month. The dedicated hashtag has been used over fifty times on Instagram.
22. On its English, Arabic, French and Spanish global Facebook accounts, OHCHR published close to 60 LSA Campaign posts. Best performing English Facebook post was a teaser post for the launch of the campaign with over 20,000 impressions. The LSA Campaign hashtag has been used in over sixty posts on Facebook. It is important to note, that high figures were attained disregarding unfavourable algorithms handled on Meta platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram, namely algorithms that suppress content on racism and anti-racism.
23. On TikTok, OHCHR posted on average at least once a month about the campaign. Ads created by OHCHR in collaboration with social media influencers will run in April 2023 on TikTok, and will be shared to Instagram and Twitter, as well.
24. On LinkedIn, OHCHR posted close to fifteen LSA Campaign posts, with the content on actor Tenoch Huerta reaching close to 20,000 impressions, closely followed by content on personal experience stories, including by former fellows, and general messaging posts.
25. As part of Racial Justice Month, OHCHR regional and local presences in the Americas, particularly in Brazil also produced their own audio-visual social media content featuring anti-racism activists and actors, using the LSA Campaign visual identity and relevant hashtags. This content was broadcasted in Spanish and Portuguese. Many other United Nations and OHCHR offices created their own posts using the LSA Campaign visuals and content, including the United Nations Office in Geneva, regional and local offices from all five United Nations regions, as well as the High Commissioner for Human Rights.
26. OHCHR specifically crafted the #LearnSpeakUpAct hashtag for its LSA Campaign social media messaging, allowing for content and accounts to connect via an indexed search term. In addition, OHCHR also used the hashtags it traditionally uses for its anti-racism campaigns and activism, namely #FightRacism and #StopRacismo. The hashtags were widely used and shared on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and TikTok.
27. Lastly, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 48/18, OHCHR also recruited a social media research consultant to conduct a study on social media and racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. The outcome report of the study, entitled *Social media racism: How social networks challenge the global fight against racism*, explores the challenges that individuals and groups face online in relation to racism. It examines the context, manifestations and key trends of social media racism, their impact on individuals, groups and societies, and the crucial role of civil society in non-regulatory responses. The *Social media racism* report is being evaluated and will inform the social media strategy of the LSA Campaign in 2023.
28. Partnerships
29. The High Commissioner for Human Rights continues to stress the importance of increasing awareness on racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance among the general public. A total of five High Commissioner video statements were delivered in the context of the LSA Campaign: one on the occasion of the LSA Campaign launch (July 2022), one for the International Day for People of African Descent (August 2022), and three during Racial Justice Months (March 2023), namely on the International Day to Combat Islamophobia, on the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, and in commemoration of the International Day on the Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transnational Slave Trade.
30. OHCHR works in close cooperation with DGC, UNICs and OHCHR field presences to disseminate widely and publicly information on the LSACampaign, including its core messages and goals, key dates and activities, as well as communication and audio-visual materials.
31. There is a longstanding history of cooperation between OHCHR and DGC carrying through to the LSA Campaign. OHCHR and DGC meet on a weekly basis with the aim to harmonize and fine-tune outreach efforts, partnerships, content and design of products, and to bolster reach through mutual support and representation. DGC has actively contributed to the LSA Campaign through media activities such as UN News podcasts, and through sharing of LSA Campaign content on its web pages and social media channels. In return, OHCHR worked closely with DGC to amplify their activities and messaging on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on 21 March 2023, for instance.
32. OHCHR collaborates with UNICs and OHCHR field presences to develop and widely disseminate LSA Campaign content and messaging. For instance, OHCHR shared its 2022 calendar on podcasts and radio shows and related DDPA-based discussion pointers with relevant UNICs and OHCHR field presences, including OHCHR Regional Offices for the Middle East and North Africa, South America (Chile), and West Africa, as well as local offices for Barbados, Bolivia, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico and Panama. Radio segments were also produced in the UK and Switzerland. OHCHR also advocates and disseminates region- and country-specific content and information developed by UNICs and OHCHR field presences for the LSA Campaign, as was done with the launch of the Regional Network for Development and Anti-Racism in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, which brings together civil society activists of African descent, an activity supported by OHCHR’s Anti-Racial Discrimination Section, its MENA Section and OHCHR’s MENA regional office.
33. Among the LSA Campaign items shared globally by OHCHR through DGC, UNICs and OHCHR field presences was information on the launch of the campaign, on the launch of Racial Justice Month, content developed in collaboration with campaign champions, as well as the LSA Campaign Trello Board. The Trello Board contains ready-to-use graphic design elements and key messages in all official United Nations languages plus Portuguese, for easy and quick application in relevant local, national and regional contexts.
34. In the framework of the campaign, OHCHR also supports United Nations human rights experts and mechanisms. It partnered with the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent for its first session, for instance, by producing promotional materials such as tote bags, as well as by organizing side events. One side event focused on the representation of people of African descent in media, movies and TV series, and another focused on the depiction of people of African descent in education and the curriculum. OHCHR will partner with the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent for its upcoming second session, as well.
35. OHCHR also engages with universities, schools and other educational entities for the LSA Campaign. The Jesuit universities, for instance, have joined the campaign and OHCHR is developing a global collaboration plan on the activations and activities under this partnership. OHCHR has also reached out to Howard University and Harvard University and is reviewing other possible partnerships with universities and schools, as well as with international student associations, to further bolster awareness on racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in higher education, as well as to increase reach of the campaign through student networks.
36. OHCHR also actively pursues and enters partnerships with human rights champions for its LSA Campaign. Partnerships with campaign champions tangibly help propel the reach of the campaign into public knowledge, particularly through social media. LSA Campaign champion and actor Tenoch Huerta has joined the campaign as human rights champion, actively using his voice to unmask racism and advocate for racial equity and the end of discrimination based on the colour of the skin. He undertook a visit to Geneva, Switzerland and his agenda included an in-person and live-streamed side event to the fifty-second session of the Human Rights Council, entitled “#FightRacism: A Conversation with Tenoch Huerta”. Future content featuring Huerta include TikTok ads, as well as an audio-visual product featuring his visit and possible participation in activities in Vienna and Geneva related to the fight against racism and the seventy-fifth anniversary of the UDHR. While numerous partnerships have been established and launched, and are about to be launched, OHCHR continues to identify and seek partnerships with additional campaign champions from all five United Nations regions.
37. As part of the programme of activities of the International Decade for People of African Descent, the Fellowship programme for People of African Descent has proven to be a useful gateway to identifying local partners for the LSA Campaign. OHCHR collaborated with multiple former fellows to narrate their personal stories and experiences to enable the reader to empathize and better understand the multiple negative consequences individuals face due to racism. Their stories also offer hope through applied tools of empowerment. Some of these former fellows also collaborated with OHCHR on the production of radio shows and podcasts to mark the International Day of People of African Descent. OHCHR continues this partnership and has developed and set in motion a promotion strategy to advertise the Fellowship programme and its application deadline in April 2023.
38. Other initiatives

Radio shows

1. On the occasion of the International Day for People of African Descent on 31 August 2022, OHCHR organized worldwide radio shows and podcasts to highlight the heritage of people of African descent and the challenges that they still face today due to racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia. The broadcasts featured the DDPA in their discussions and aimed to improve understanding of deeply rooted racism, provide insights into the reasons and manifestations of continued and systemic racism, and propagated tools to fight it on a local, national and international level.
2. The radio shows and podcasts covered around 30 countries in four continents, taking place in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Honduras, Jamaica, Lebanon, Mexico, Senegal (including a radio show broadcasted in 14 West African countries), Switzerland, the United States of America (UN News in English and Spanish), the United Kingdom of Great Britain, and Uruguay. The radio shows and podcasts were conducted in Arabic, French, English and Spanish.

Stories

1. OHCHR publicized numerous positive examples of the implementation of ICERD, the DDPA and the Decade for People of African Descent through stories. OHCHR stories are public information products aiming to make human rights topics more relatable to the general public, for instance through highlighting achievements or through personal experience stories. During the reporting period, OHCHR issued eleven stories in the framework of the LSACampaign, including on the launch of the LSA Campaign, on the personal experiences of five former fellows of the Fellowship programme for People of African Descent, on the personal experience from the lead person of Swiss documentary “Becoming a Black Woman”, on “Advancing racial justice” by looking closely at OHCHR mechanisms and instruments as well as lived experiences as key to achieve racial justice and equality, on “Poverty and race” on the occasion of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, a story on the radio shows and podcasts, as well as a story on a champion of the LSA Campaign. Stories cover issues from the five United Nations regions, are often launched in combination with videos, are published on OHCHR web page, the LSA Campaign landing page, on OHCHR social media channels, and are translated into all official United Nations languages. UN News also shared these stories on their digital platforms.
2. OHCHR continues to produce and publish stories on the occasion of special events, as well as on the stories and insights of activists from the five United Nations regions, United Nations mandate holders and other human rights experts, to further boost public information and media outreach of the LSA Campaign.

V. Conclusions

A. Achievements and challenges

1. During the reporting period, OHCHR has successfully launched and set in motion the LSA Campaign to raise awareness and gain support for global concrete action on racism, xenophobia, racial discrimination and related intolerance. The LSA Campaign communication content is designed specifically to serve as entry points to the topics through enticing means, thereby inviting the audience to delve deeper, and ultimately direct them to the full content of United Nations anti-discrimination instruments and mandates, and mechanisms. Reproducing complex and full contents of core documents and mechanisms for public information purposes would disengage relevant and new audiences. The LSA strategy has proven to be a successful approach when advertising campaign products and activities, as measured by the high numbers of digital interactions with campaign content.
2. Overall, OHCHR social media posts on the LSA Campaign have attained over two million impressions. Disregarding this success, it should be noted that OHCHR along with other content creators, is facing an algorithmic challenge particularly on Meta platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. Meta algorithms do not favour content on human rights issues, particularly on xenophobia, discrimination, racism and anti-racism, presumably in an effort to police content that may constitute an incitement to hatred or violence. Inadvertently, however, they also suppress positive and educational content on the topic. As a result, OHCHR continues to test different kinds of content, evaluate their performance, reorient, and try again. As it has done for the past years, OHCHR also continues to engage with Meta to find a positive and workable solution.
3. The call to combat racism, xenophobia, racial discrimination and other related intolerance under OHCHR LSA Campaign is successfully integrated into the 2023 commemorations of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the UDHR, including through the merge of the campaign with the Human Rights 75 Initiative of the High Commissioner under Racial Justice Month throughout March 2023. Moreover, combining the commemoration of dates and other relevant initiatives with the LSA Campaign has proven to be highly successful and mutually beneficial.

B. Way forward

1. Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance have deep negative impact on the enjoyment of human rights, wherefore OHCHR and UN human rights mechanisms will continue to play a central role in calling for action for racial justice and equality. OHCHR’s communication efforts will continue to be guided by international human rights norms and standards, as well as recommendations made by the Secretary-General, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations human rights mechanisms, the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council, and draw inspiration from current research and public conversations carried out by academia, social movements, civil society organizations, the private sector, youths, NGOs and other stakeholders who continue to fight against racism, xenophobia, and racial discrimination in creative and innovative ways.
2. OHCHR is well positioned to continue to carry out the LSA Campaign and related communications activities until 31 December 2023. Dedicated resources from the regular budget through two PBIs allowed OHCHR to develop focused action s and creative thinking on outreach geared towards a younger audience. It also allowed other parts of the Office, particularly the Anti-Racial Discrimination Section, to benefit from having a dedicated Public Information Officer to work with on a regular basis and develop and promote activities, events, and outreach materials. Given the success of the LSA Campaign communication work and considering that despite some progress made racism and racial discrimination continues to exist across all regions of the world, continued and sustained outreach on key messages, products and activities is essential. Having a dedicated person managing the overall outreach efforts on this topic, closely working with OHCHR’s Anti-Racial Discrimination Section and other office departments, as well as with field presences, and integrating them into the broader work done by the Office, has proven to be valuable. In order to build on work done and success achieved by the LSA Campaign, consideration of continued and increasing budgetary support for this task should be explored to maintain and enhance this heightened visibility and focus.
3. OHCHR will continue to bolster its LSA Campaign social media activities on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, LinkedIn and YouTube by incorporating some of the recommendations made in the *Social Media Racism* research report. OHCHR will boost its efforts to provide empathy-based and educational counter-narratives to online racism, xenophobia, racial discrimination and other intolerances. It will also continue to identify and seek out meaningful social media partnerships with relevant civil society organizations, movements and influencers to enhance networking, reach and engagement, and will continue to engage with relevant influencers, civil society networks and social media companies.
4. Moreover, OHCHR reaffirmed the important role strategic partnerships play in human rights communication and outreach, itself an integral part of the effective protection and promotion of human rights. Strategic partnerships provide a much greater reach to audiences that are not traditionally interested in human rights mechanisms and instruments. For the LSA Campaign numerous partnerships were established, and have and will be announced during the campaign period. Moreover, OHCHR also aims to intensify its collaboration with field presences and United Nations country teams to adapt LSA Campaign activities to national and local contexts. In line therewith, it would be beneficial if funds were made available to have a dedicated staff providing support to communication partnerships with human rights champions, influencers, networks, enterprises, and regional and local offices and stakeholders on a permanent basis.
5. In terms of publications, OHCHR will continue to create, produce, and publish digital and print communication and audio-visual products, with a particular focus on disseminating the DDPA, ICERD and the programme of activities of the International Decade for People of African Descent. New ways of disseminating communication products will be tested, including through a public information media compound, web-based hosting platforms and mobile applications. The landing page will continue to be developed and take a prominent place among OHCHR human rights campaign pages, and will be updated also beyond the campaign period. Judging by the demand for LSA Campaign communications products and the need for audiences to delve deeper, it would be beneficial if long-term assessed funds were made available to support the production of more substantial publications, such as studies, books, documentaries or educational e-tools.

1. \* The present document was submitted after the deadline owing to an oversight in the registration process. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/human-rights/universal-declaration/translations/english>. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. <https://www.un.org/en/durbanreview2009/pdf/DDPA_full_text.pdf>. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-convention-elimination-all-forms-racial>. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/racism/international-decade-african-descent>. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/racism/agenda-towards-transformative-change-racial-justice-and-equality>. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. <https://trello.com/b/aDvl6KBw/learn-speak-up-act-campaign>. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/get-involved/campaign/fight-racism/videos>. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/get-involved/campaign/fight-racism>. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/ohchr_homepage>. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)