UNHRC POSITION PAPER

Combatting Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related tolerance

**Introduction**  
 1. The present report is submitted pursuant to United Nations Human Rights Council on global efforts for the total elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the comprehensive implementation of Programme of Action for the same.

**Defining Important Terms** 2. Racism - A belief or doctrine that inherent differences among the various human racial groups determine cultural or individual achievement, usually involving the idea that one's own race is superior and has the right to dominate others or that a particular racial group is inferior to the others.  
 3. Discrimination – Making an unjust or prejudicial distinction in the treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, sex, age, or disability.  
 4. Xenophobia- Dislike of or prejudice against people from other countries.

**Need for Action**  
 5. Racial discrimination and other Cultural intolerance issues have been in the roots of this world for a very long time leading to disbalance of peace keeping protocols and the United Nations, has the duty to provide assistance to the State when requested; nevertheless, it also has the obligation to act in cases where the State fails or refuses to protect its population.   
 6. It is believed that if nothing is done to execute such practices then racism may lead to genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, in particular in the context of conflicts, the State’s primary responsibility to protect its population.  
 7. It is essential to quickly establish the rule of law and to establish long-term measures to promote dialogue and improve relations between ethnic groups. It is to be stressed upon that respect for minority rights, the principle of non-discrimination and the rule of law were all key components of long-term stability and conflict prevention.  
 8. Places of worship are an essential element of the manifestation of the right to freedom of religion or belief which is protected by international human rights law and therefore it is the duty of the states to abide by relevant international human rights standards.

**Human Rights Challenges Faced by Migrants, Refugees and Asylum-seekers** 9. People tend to migrate more and more for economic, political or humanitarian reasons, including poverty, conflicts and environmental degradation. Increased migration flows have profoundly affected societies, which are becoming more diverse in all aspects. Whereas in most cases many societies and States used to be anchored in monocultural identities, they are now confronted with the challenge of, and opportunity for, accommodating peoples of different ethnic origins, cultures, religions or languages within the same territory.  
 10. Having departed from their countries of origin, these migrants encounter several obstacles owing to differences in language, customs and culture, a lack of awareness of their rights, and economic and social difficulties. As a result, migrants are particularly exposed to human rights violations and abuse, including racial discrimination and xenophobia.  
 11. While acknowledging the sovereign right of each State to formulate and apply its own legal framework and policies for migration, policies must be consistent with applicable international human rights instruments, norms and standards, and designed in a way to ensure that they are free from racism and xenophobia.  
 12. Civil society organizations at large, international and regional organizations should also take part in the broad efforts to combat negative stereotypes of, and discrimination against, migrants, and to promote understanding and tolerance. It is only through common approaches, coordinated strategies and joint initiatives that migrants will be offered enhanced protection against racism and xenophobia.

**Racism and Sports**  
 13. Fighting racism requires more than the enactment of anti-discrimination laws; overcoming racism also requires addressing public and private attitudes which comfort, justify and perpetuate racism at all levels and in all areas of life. To that effect, approaches which could get the message across in a simple and powerful manner are more than ever necessary to encourage as many people as possible to engage in this fight.  
 14. Sport has the potential to contribute to an atmosphere of tolerance and understanding. While relying on the concepts of competition and rivalry, sport also stands for human values such as respect, justice, universality, cooperation and solidarity. By bringing together individuals from a great variety of horizons, sport is an inspirational means to promote peace, social cohesion, integration, inclusivity, as well as diversity.  
 15. Similarly to schools, which are one of the most efficient tools to create a cohesive and tolerant society, he stated that sport was also an effective means for both youth and adults to learn and experience for themselves how individuals from diverse ethnic, national or religious backgrounds can interact in a harmonious manner.  
 16. Mass sports events offer valuable outreach platforms to mobilize people and convey crucial messages about equality and non-discrimination. As in the charters or statutes of the International Olympic Committee, the Fédération Internationale de football association and the Commonwealth Games Federation, which all include the principle of non-discrimination.

**Conclusions and Recommendations** 17. “Racism is alive and still plagues every society”. Be it the member of an ethnic minority who is attacked or killed in the context of a conflict due to his or her minority status; the individual who is regularly and in a discriminatory manner subjected to stopping and searching, interrogations or arrests, solely because of his or her perceived religious or ethnic background; the migrant, the refugee or the asylum-seeker who faces daily discrimination due to his or her status as non-citizen; or the football player who is insulted because of his skin colour; all such instances unfortunately demonstrate that racism and xenophobia are not yesterday’s problems, but that they remain an immense challenge for today.  
 18. It is urged that states adopt specific legislation on racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. Such legislation clearly demonstrates States’ political commitment in the fight against racism and allows for enhanced visibility and accessibility of the law, thereby enabling individuals to resort to the relevant provisions in an easier and more effective manner.