

International Human Rights Law Group

Combating Racism Together

**A Guide to Participating in the
UN World Conference Against Racism**

The **International Human Rights Law Group** is a non-profit organization of human rights and legal professionals engaged in training, technical assistance, advocacy and litigation around the world. Our mission is to empower local advocates and civil society groups to expand the scope of human rights protections for men and women, and to promote broad participation in creating more effective human rights standards and procedures at the national and international levels.

Combating Racism Together: A Guide to Participating in the UN World Conference Against Racism was produced with the support of the **Ford Foundation**.

This guide is based on a handbook produced by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service (UN/NGLS) entitled Putting Gender on the Agenda: A Guide to Participating in UN World Conferences (1995). Permission has been given to the International Human Rights Law Group to modify and supplement the handbook.

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PART 1

OVERVIEW

Purpose of this Guide

The United Nations World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (World Conference Against Racism) will be held in the year 2001 in South Africa. It will be an important opportunity for the global community to focus on the causes and consequences of racism, and on developing practical strategies to combat racism. The purpose of this guide is to build the capacity of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to participate effectively in this global event.

The World Conference Against Racism will provide a forum for international policy-setting and decision-making. In order to participate effectively, NGOs will need to understand the relevant procedures and processes of UN world conferences. This guide seeks to provide concrete and practical information about how UN world conferences are organized, planned and carried out—and how the conference process can contribute to the work of NGOs. In particular, this guide describes what NGOs can do to take advantage of the unique opportunity that the World Conference Against Racism provides.

The term “NGO” is used consistently throughout this guide. It is a United Nations term that refers to any non-governmental organization or group, including voluntary groups, community groups, charities, trade unions, campaigns and virtually any other group that is not a part of the government. The term “NGO” does not, however, include businesses or other profit-making entities. In order to engage in international advocacy within the UN system, including by participating in the World Conference Against Racism, groups will have to be familiar with this terminology—whether or not they define themselves as “NGOs” in the technical sense.

About the World Conference Against Racism

The upcoming World Conference Against Racism is the culmination of actions and decisions taken by the government members of the United Nations over the past three decades. The UN General Assembly designated the year 1971 as the International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. It has since designated three Decades of Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (1973-1983, 1983-1993, 1993-2003). The UN General Assembly has also decided to observe the year 2001 as the International Year of Mobilization Against Racism.

The World Conference Against Racism in 2001 will be the third UN world conference on this issue. The previous conferences were held in Geneva in 1978 and in 1983. They focused mainly on ending apartheid in South Africa, but also highlighted other critical issues, including the rights of minorities, indigenous peoples and migrant workers, and the importance of education in preventing racism and discrimination. The World Conference Against Racism in 2001 will focus on developing practical, action-oriented measures and strategies to combat contemporary forms of racism and intolerance.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE WORLD CONFERENCE
AGAINST RACISM**

The following are the main objectives of the World Conference Against Racism, as stated in UN General Assembly resolution 52/111 (1997):

- To review progress made in the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, particularly since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and to reappraise the obstacles to further progress in the field and ways to overcome them.
- To consider ways and means to better ensure the application of existing standards and the implementation of the existing instruments to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.
- To increase the level of awareness about the scourges of racism and racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.
- To formulate concrete recommendations on ways to increase the effectiveness of activities and mechanisms of the United Nations through programmes aimed at combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.
- To review the political, historical, economic, social, cultural and other factors leading to racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.
- To formulate concrete recommendations to further action-oriented national, regional and international measures to combat all forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.
- To draw up concrete recommendations for ensuring that the United Nations has the financial and other necessary resources for its actions to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related

THEMES OF THE WORLD CONFERENCE AGAINST RACISM

The following are the themes on the agenda of the World Conference Against Racism, as adopted by consensus of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom)* at its first meeting in May 2000:

- ◆ Sources, causes, forms and contemporary manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.
- ◆ Victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.
- ◆ Measures of prevention, education and protection aimed at the eradication of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, at the national, regional and international levels.
- ◆ Provision of effective remedies, recourses, redress, [compensatory]* and other measures, at the national, regional and international levels.
- ◆ Strategies to achieve full and effective equality, including international cooperation and enhancement of the UN and other international mechanisms in combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and follow-up.

The slogan adopted for the World Conference Against Racism is:

“United to Combat Racism: Equality, Justice, Dignity”

* *PrepCom meetings are discussed further in Parts 3 and 4 of this guide.*

* *The implications of text being placed in square brackets is discussed in Part 4 of this guide.*

How to Use this Guide

This guide is intended to assist NGOs to:

- make informed choices about whether and how to participate in the World Conference Against Racism and its preparatory process
- identify World Conference related activities that could be pursued at the international, regional, national or local level
- understand the formal procedures and the practical requirements for access to the World Conference meetings
- make the necessary plans and arrangements to participate effectively in the World Conference

NGOs that engage and involve themselves in UN world conferences are making a decision to participate in international advocacy and global governance. They are staking out a sphere of influence over the setting of international priorities and standards that ultimately affect policy- and decision-making at the national and local levels.

NGOs that are involved in the struggle against racism—whether as advocates, direct service providers, litigators, educators or in other capacities—must frequently make difficult choices about how to use their limited resources. This guide is intended to assist NGOs in that decision-making process.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

NGOs should consider the following questions in determining whether and in what ways to participate in the World Conference Against Racism:

- ▶ *How does the World Conference Against Racism relate to the work of your NGO?*
- ▶ *What are the benefits of participating in the World Conference Against Racism?*
- ▶ *In what ways can your NGO participate in the World Conference Against Racism?*

How does the World Conference Against Racism relate to the work of your NGO?

For many NGOs—whether working locally, nationally, regionally or internationally—the World Conference Against Racism may not appear to be directly relevant to your work. It may be that the mobilizing, training or advocacy work of your NGO takes place mainly at the local or grassroots level. Or it may be that your work does not focus on racism or racial discrimination. Or perhaps your organization or group has not considered the many opportunities that exist for advancing your work through advocacy at international forums.

The World Conference Against Racism may be relevant to your work in several important ways, including:

- Most of the countries of the world are members of the United Nations. These Member States will make decisions and resolutions at the World Conference Against Racism that involve important commitments for follow-up action in their own countries. The reports that your government

prepares for the conference, and the commitments that it makes at the conference, can be used as tools in your advocacy and organizing efforts at the local and national level.

- NGOs can advocate at the local and national level for the implementation of legally binding treaties that your government may commit itself to as a result of the World Conference Against Racism. For example, a central focus of the World Conference Against Racism will be for governments to ratify or improve their implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. NGOs can hold their government responsible for fulfilling its obligations under this Convention (Attachment 1).
- The topics addressed at the World Conference Against Racism will be directly related to a wide range of local and national issues, including issues that may be of concern to your community and to your work. Among the issues that will be considered at the conference are: discrimination on the basis of race, skin colour, ethnicity, descent or other status; discrimination against migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers and displaced persons; the situation of indigenous peoples; multiple bases of identity that compound racial discrimination (such as gender or sexual orientation); bias in the criminal justice system; hate speech; issues of globalization, economic rights and development; redress and recourse procedures; and affirmative action.
- The topics that are debated and the consensus that is reached at the World Conference Against Racism will depend on which issues are put forward and how they are framed. The input of NGOs working at the local and national level on specific issues ensures that the international debate reflects the current realities that communities, groups and individuals are facing. The World Conference Against Racism is an opportunity for NGOs to say to their government and to the broader international

community: “These are the issues that we want you to take to this conference. These are the problems that need to be addressed.”

What are the benefits of participating in the World Conference Against Racism?

NGOs can benefit in a variety of ways from participating in the World Conference Against Racism. The World Conference will attract participants from every region of the world, providing opportunities for your NGO to form multi-national and multi-cultural networks and alliances. This coalition-building and international solidarity can result in powerful sources of support and advocacy for your work, both at home and abroad.

NGOs may wish to participate in the World Conference Against Racism for many reasons, including to:

- influence your government’s policy decisions
- monitor the commitments that your government makes in international forums
- pressure your government to implement its international and national obligations
- contribute to the development of practical strategies to combat racism
- draw international attention to the issues of concern in your community
- publicize the work of your organization or group
- gain access to and interact with high-level governmental officials and representatives
- develop international contacts and networks, both at the government and NGO level

- build coalitions, alliances and joint campaigns with NGOs working on similar issues
- gather and exchange useful information on a variety of issues
- learn more about how to incorporate international advocacy into your domestic activities

In what ways can your NGO participate in the World Conference Against Racism?

As discussed throughout this guide, NGOs can participate in the World Conference Against Racism in many different ways, including:

- ❑ undertaking conference related activities in your home country
- ❑ attending the conference as a representative of your NGO or as part of a larger coalition
- ❑ attending the parallel NGO Forum in addition to (or instead of) the conference itself
- ❑ taking part in preparatory activities preceding the conference, including regional meetings
- ❑ taking part in the implementation of conference outcomes

UN BODIES THAT DEAL WITH RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

The United Nations human rights machinery (Attachment 2) is comprised of various bodies, mechanisms and forums that deal with racial discrimination. In addition to participating in the World Conference process, NGOs should utilize all the relevant UN mechanisms in their advocacy efforts, including, but not limited to the following UN bodies:

Treaty-monitoring committees:

- Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- Human Rights Committee
- Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
- Committee on the Rights of the Child

Inter-governmental bodies:

- General Assembly
- Commission on Human Rights
 - various Working Groups
- Commission on the Status of Women

Independent expert mechanisms:

- Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights
 - various Working Groups
- Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance
- Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance
- Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences

- ❑ Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants
- ❑ Special Representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced persons

PART 2

UN WORLD CONFERENCES: SETTING A GLOBAL AGENDA

Common Characteristics of UN World Conferences

Since the establishment of the United Nations in 1945, several world conferences have taken place on a variety of topics, resulting in a number of concrete outcomes (Annex C). Recent conferences include:

- ❖ World Summit for Children (New York, 1990)
- ❖ Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992)
- ❖ World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna, 1993)
- ❖ International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994)
- ❖ World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995)
- ❖ Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995)
- ❖ Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) (Istanbul, 1996)
- ❖ World Food Summit (Rome, 1996)

While the process of convening and conducting these conferences continues to evolve, there are some characteristics that are common to all UN world conferences:

- They are convened when the international community agrees that an important issue needs to be addressed or given special attention. They serve to mobilize the global community to establish or reaffirm international standards and to take necessary action.
- They require a minimum of two years to prepare, during which the agenda, objectives and expected outcomes of the conference are determined by the Member States of the UN. The preparation process usually involves regional and national meetings, expert consultations, gathering research and data, and drafting

position papers, all of which are fed into the global discussions.

- They vary in purpose but usually result in a final conference document containing a declaration, or statement of principles and standards arrived at through consensus among governments, and a final programme of action with more specific steps for implementation. The programme of action often involves policy changes and commitments by governments, and provides direction for the work of the United Nations. Governments will often develop national plans of action as well.
- NGOs have played increasingly important roles in shaping the agenda and influencing the outcomes of world conferences. They have also been able to use the conference process and the final conference documents to advance their domestic advocacy and activities.

The Format of UN World Conferences

The traditional format for UN world conferences includes two parallel meetings: the governmental conference in which governments are the decision-makers and NGO representatives participate primarily as lobbyists, observers and providers of information; and the parallel “NGO Forum” (held at or near the governmental conference) in which NGOs are the primary actors.

Generally, a broader range of groups will have access to the NGO Forum than to the main government meeting. Requirements for NGO participation in the conference itself and in the parallel NGO Forum are discussed in Part 5 of this guide.

THE NGO FORUM

The NGO Forum at the World Conference Against Racism is organized by NGOs themselves, usually through an NGO Coordinating or Planning Committee, with the assistance of various UN staff structures. Governments do not determine the agenda or activities of the NGO Forum, nor do they determine which NGOs can be accredited to attend the NGO Forum.

The NGO Forum will serve many important purposes, including to:

- facilitate networking, information-exchange and coalition-building among NGO representatives
- give a voice and visibility to groups and to forms of racism that are currently invisible or being denied
- provide a space that is open to broad participation and that is not confined to UN terminology and protocol
- provide a base for NGOs to develop strategies for lobbying government delegates and influencing the outcomes of the main (government) conference
- allow NGOs to pursue an agenda and engage in activities designed from an NGO perspective

Participants of UN World Conferences

Governments:

The Member States of the United Nations determine whether to hold a UN world conference and which issues they will address. Member States are the only voting members at UN world conferences and preparatory meetings. The size and composition of government delegations to world conferences vary greatly, from three or four people to as many as 80 members.

Delegations also vary significantly with respect to the experience, diversity and subject-matter expertise of the members, and the autonomy that they have to make decisions on behalf of the government. Government delegations can include senior government officials, diplomats, technical or subject-matter experts, and “public members” or non-government delegates, including NGO representatives. However, governments are not required to include public members on their delegations.

For the World Conference Against Racism, it is important that governments send or support the participation of municipal authorities, local public officials, law enforcement and immigration officials, members of the judiciary, members of national institutions (including human rights and human relations commissions), and other quasi-state actors whose work has an impact—both positive and negative—on racism and racial discrimination.

UN Bodies:

Various UN bodies, mechanisms and agencies contribute to the preparations of UN world conferences and monitor the implementation of conference outcomes. They may also be responsible for implementing selected recommendations of the conference.

NGOs:

NGOs play a crucial role in determining the impact and effectiveness of UN world conferences. The rules and procedures for NGO participation are determined by the Member States of the United Nations. Although NGOs do not have the right to vote, they do have a variety of opportunities to influence the deliberations and outcomes of the conference. These opportunities are discussed at greater length in Part 5 of this guide.

The contributions of expertise and experience from the NGO community is needed at the World Conference Against Racism in order to:

- identify the contemporary problems of racism and racial discrimination that should be addressed
- develop, implement and monitor effective strategies and plans of action to combat racism and intolerance around the world
- articulate the principles and standards that should be affirmed in the final conference documents

The types of NGOs that should participate in the World Conference Against Racism include, but are not limited to those involved in: racial justice, social justice, economic rights, civil rights, community-based and grassroots organizing, indigenous peoples' rights, the rights of immigrants and migrant workers, the rights of minorities, women's rights and children's rights.

Conference Secretariat:

The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has established a Conference Secretariat to service and administer the World Conference Against Racism. Contact information for the Conference Secretariat is contained in Annex A.

The responsibilities of the Conference Secretariat include:

- preparing background papers and other substantive documents
- compiling a draft programme of action
- collecting national and regional information and data
- convening expert group consultations
- facilitating negotiations between governments
- accrediting NGOs to attend the conference and preparatory meetings
- disseminating official conference documents and conference information
- maintaining and updating the World Conference Against Racism web page

www.unhcr.ch/html/racism/index.htm

PART 3

THE STAGES OF CONVENING A WORLD CONFERENCE

The Stages of Convening a World Conference

Most UN world conferences go through a series of steps over a two- or three-year period. Below is an overview of the often overlapping stages to convening a UN world conference.

The negotiation process mentioned in several of the stages is discussed at greater length in Part 4 of this guide. The information contained in this guide is based on information available as of May 2000 and will be updated as plans for the World Conference progress.

Stage 1:

The UN General Assembly adopts a resolution calling on Member States and the United Nations to hold the conference and outlining the major objectives or goals of the conference. Subsequent resolutions provide further detail on the agenda, preparatory process and other matters relating to the conference.

- A list of recent UN resolutions adopted on the World Conference Against Racism is contained in Annex D.

Stage 2:

The UN designates a Secretary-General for the Conference and establishes a Conference Secretariat.

- The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, has been designated the Secretary-General of the World Conference Against Racism. She has established a Conference Secretariat and a website for the World Conference. Contact information for the Conference Secretariat is provided in Annex A.

Stage 3:

A World Conference Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) is designated within the UN. The PrepCom holds a series of meetings at which governments develop an agenda and a programme of work for the conference and negotiate the content of the major conference documents.

- The UN Commission on Human Rights, which is comprised of 53 government-members, will act as the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference Against Racism. The first PrepCom meeting was held from 1 to 5 May 2000 at the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland. The PrepCom made a number of important decisions relating to the rules of procedure and NGO participation at the World Conference. The PrepCom also considered proposals for the agenda of the World Conference. It was decided at the PrepCom meeting that the World Conference Against Racism will be held from 31 August to 7 September 2001.
- An inter-sessional Working Group was established at the first PrepCom meeting to develop a draft agenda, declaration and programme of action for the World Conference. The inter-sessional Working Group will meet in January 2001, and the second PrepCom meeting will take place in April/May 2001, both in Geneva, Switzerland.
- The Bureau, which will act as the executive committee of the World Conference and PrepCom meetings, will be comprised of representatives from ten governments – two selected from each of the five UN regional groups (African States, Asian States, Eastern European States, Latin American and Caribbean States, and Western European and Other States). The Bureau members are: Senegal, Tunisia, Iran, Malaysia, Georgia, Macedonia, Brazil, Mexico, France and the US. South

Africa will serve as an ex officio member of the Bureau.

Stage 4:

Regional preparatory conferences are convened at which governments develop a regional agenda and a regional programme of work, which can then be fed into the World Conference as well as pursued independently. Regional preparatory conferences can be convened by governments or by inter-governmental organizations, such as the Council of Europe or the Organization for African Unity (OAU).

- Regional preparatory activities for the World Conference Against Racism will be the vehicles by which specific problems of racism can be identified, “best practices” and successful models for combating racism can be examined, concrete strategies can be formulated and consensus can be mobilized.
- The UN General Assembly has requested States and regional organizations to hold regional and national preparatory meetings. The schedule of regional preparatory conferences, as of May 2000, is provided in the “Timeline for the World Conference Against Racism” on page 25 of this guide.
- NGOs should plan to participate in the regional preparatory conferences and should explore the possibilities of working with other groups in the country or region to develop a regional NGO position. NGOs may also organize regional NGO forums as parallel meetings. The Conference Secretariat can be contacted for additional information, as it becomes available, on the scheduling of regional preparatory activities and the opportunities for NGO participation.

Stage 5:

Expert group consultations are held on specific issues relating to the World Conference. Recommendations from the consultations are fed into the regional preparatory conferences, the PrepCom meetings and the World Conference. The consultations can be held at the

international, regional, national and local levels, and can be convened by various bodies, including the World Conference Secretary-General, the Conference Secretariat, national governments, inter-governmental organizations and NGOs.

- Regional expert group meetings on specific racism-related topics will be convened by the regional economic commissions (Annex B). There will be a meeting in Warsaw, Poland (5-7 July 2000); Bangkok, Thailand (5-7 September 2000); Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (27-29 September 2000); and Santiago, Chile (25-27 October 2000).
- Expert group consultations on issues relating to the World Conference Against Racism already have been held by the United Nations, the International Council on Human Rights Policy, the International Human Rights Law Group and other organizations.
- NGOs should consider holding meetings and consultations on issues relating to the World Conference Against Racism. NGOs can consult with and invite the participation of the Conference Secretariat, and can request that the meeting be designated a World Conference “satellite meeting”. Any relevant documents or recommendations that result from the meeting can then be included in the conference documentation. The Conference Secretariat can also be contacted for information on possible funding sources to support the consultations.

Stage 6:

National governments decide on their own policies and positions, collect data and prepare national reports on the subject-matter of the conference, hold meetings or consultations related to specific topics to be discussed at the conference, and select the members of their delegations to the conference. These national-level activities significantly influence the outcomes of a UN world conference. NGO

activities and strategies at the national level are discussed in Part 6 of this guide.

Stage 7:

The UN World Conference and the NGO Forum take place, negotiations initiated at the PrepCom meetings are completed, and final conference documents are adopted, usually by consensus among the Member States of the United Nations.

Stage 8:

Follow-up activities are undertaken at the international, regional, national and local levels to implement, monitor and review the resolutions, decisions and plans of action made by governments at the conference. This long-term process provides the framework for holding governments and the UN accountable for fulfilling their commitments and obligations made at the conference.

**TIMELINE FOR THE
WORLD CONFERENCE AGAINST RACISM**

As of May 2000

1-5 May 2000 Geneva, Switzerland	World Conference Preparatory Committee Meeting (First Session)
5-7 July 2000 Warsaw, Poland	Regional Expert Group Meeting for Europe
28-30 August 2000 Teheran, Iran	Regional Preparatory Conference for Asia
5-7 September 2000 Bangkok, Thailand	Regional Expert Group Meeting for Asia and the Pacific
27-29 September 2000 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia	Regional Expert Group Meeting for Africa
11-13 October 2000 Strasbourg, France	European Conference Against Racism (Preparatory Conference)
25-27 October 2000 Santiago, Chile	Regional Expert Group Meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean
20-25 November 2000 Dakar, Senegal	Regional Preparatory Conference for Africa
TBA TBA	Regional Preparatory Conference for the Americas
January 2001 Geneva, Switzerland	Inter-sessional Preparatory Committee Working Group Meeting
April/May 2001 Geneva, Switzerland	World Conference Preparatory Committee Meeting (Second Session)
31 August–7 September	World Conference Against Racism,

**2001
South Africa**

**Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia
and Related Intolerance**

PART 4

THE GOVERNMENT NEGOTIATION PROCESS

The Government Negotiation Process

The majority of the final outcome of a UN world conference is determined during the preparatory stages of the conference process. By the time the official delegations gather at the site of the conference, the positions have been formulated, the issues debated and agreements reached. Throughout the preparatory process, the Conference Secretariat facilitates the drafting and re-drafting of the working documents for the conference, incorporating changes and agreements as they are decided by governments.

The preparatory process is the stage at which those involved in the conference seek to build consensus around what the specific commitments and outcomes of the conference should be. It is a key time for NGOs to become officially accredited to attend the World Conference and the PrepCom meetings (see Part 5 of this guide for further details on NGO accreditation). It is also the time for NGOs to start building positions, strategies and a consensus of their own. To this end, NGOs should become involved in the regional and national preparatory meetings as well.

PrepCom Negotiations:

The PrepCom meetings for a UN world conference are organized in much the same way as the conference itself. Governments send official delegations and the meetings are serviced by the Conference Secretariat. The major task of the PrepCom meetings is to initiate the negotiations towards the adoption of the final conference documents.

The first PrepCom meeting for the World Conference Against Racism was held from 1 to 5 May 2000 and focused on procedural matters, NGO participation and proposals for the agenda of the World Conference. An inter-sessional Working Group meeting will take place in January 2001. A second PrepCom meeting will be held in April/May 2001.

The PrepCom meeting directly preceding the World Conference Against Racism will be dominated by negotiations between the governments on the substantive issues and the agenda of the World Conference. Delegates will receive draft copies of the conference documents. If any government delegation objects to any item or language, the text will be placed in square brackets [] in the documents. The negotiations at the PrepCom meetings will focus, for the most part, on resolving disagreements over the final text. If consensus is not reached, bracketed text may remain in the document to be further negotiated at subsequent meetings, including at the World Conference itself.

World Conference Negotiations:

The World Conference Against Racism will consist of various segments: a “high-level segment” for heads of State, working group sessions on particular topics, plenary sessions, and varying types of formal and informal sessions. The main purpose underlying all these meetings is for governments to reach consensus (through debate, negotiation and compromise) on the resolutions and decisions that will be contained in the final conference documents.

FINAL CONFERENCE DOCUMENTS

There are different kinds of documents, agreements, commitments, resolutions and decisions that can result from a UN World Conference. The final conference documents are generally composed of:

- A **declaration**, or statement of principles, which serves to set the moral tone and political imperative of the issue.
- A **programme of action**, or platform for action, which serves as a blueprint of steps that governments agree should be taken at the national, regional and international levels.
- The **means of implementation**, which include identifying funding needs and establishing institutional mechanisms to carry out the recommendations in the programme of action. This section is an important part of the document that NGOs can use to monitor the follow-up activities of their government and hold it accountable.

It is important for NGOs to understand the importance of the final conference documents and how to use them after the conference for international and national advocacy. NGOs also can seek to influence the content of the final conference documents by lobbying and educating government delegations.

The Phases of Negotiation

The following is a brief description of the different, overlapping phases of a typical negotiation process for PrepCom meetings and UN world conferences alike:

- Government delegates select a chairperson, vice-chairperson and rapporteur of the meeting, and formally adopt the agenda. A plenary session begins, usually with a general debate consisting of statements (or “interventions”) from governments and UN agencies. Government statements articulate their national positions and priorities and serve to place official policy on record. NGOs also have opportunities to make statements, either individually or in coalitions with other NGOs.
- Draft texts are prepared and sponsored by governments or groupings of governments. The draft texts are then discussed and debated. Specific amendments, or sometimes even new versions of draft texts, are proposed by governments or groupings of governments. Amendments and alternate versions are included in the debate, but may or may not be accepted as the new basis for negotiations.
- Any item or language that does not command agreement from all government negotiators will be placed in square brackets [] and further negotiated. Once consensus has been reached among the governments, the brackets are removed and the text can no longer be changed at any stage of the process.
- On particularly controversial issues, the chairperson might ask disagreeing governments to caucus, settle their differences and report back to the meeting when they have reached agreement.
- Government delegates will frequently and regularly consult with their relevant national ministry (or “capital”) on how to respond, including whether to accept proposed formulations

or offer alternative suggestions. The national ministry decides whether and how much to compromise.

- At various stages during the process, different techniques and types of documents are used to facilitate the negotiations. These include the chairperson's summaries, conference papers, and "non-papers" (which are documents that are not included in the official records). As the pace of negotiations picks up, new draft text can be issued on almost an hourly basis. These drafts will generally be identified by date and time only, and available only in English.
- Negotiations often take place in plenary sessions, in working groups and in "informal" sessions (which are usually closed to the press and to NGOs, and for which there are no official records). In the final phases of the PrepCom or conference, the meetings of government delegates become smaller and more informal, and may include discussions in private offices, in the corridors or over coffee. Such meetings are, of course, not listed in the *UN Journal* which announces the daily meetings.
- Eventually, text is issued incorporating all the agreed-upon items and language, as well as any remaining square bracketed text, which will reveal a great deal about which areas of disagreement are the most contentious.
- Negotiations over resolutions and decisions will continue until consensus is reached or until a vote is taken. A text is rarely defeated by vote, as the sponsors will usually withdraw the text if they are not sure of a majority. Only in the rarest of cases will a major programme of action be put to a vote. Consensus is the rule.
- Finally, the chairperson will hold a press conference to announce the results to the media.

GOVERNMENT NEGOTIATING GROUPS

A number of government negotiating groups have evolved within the United Nations system. Some of these groupings are well-established, such as the Group of 77 (G-77), while others have only recently come into formation. Some groupings, such as the European Union (EU), are formal institutions both within and outside the United Nations system.

The following are some of the government negotiating groups:

- ❖ G-77 (Group of 77): caucus of 133 developing countries
- ❖ G-7 (Group of 7): Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom, USA (plus Russian Federation: G-8)
- ❖ European Union: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom
- ❖ Nordic States: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden
- ❖ Arab League: caucus of 22 Arab countries
- ❖ Arab Maghreb Union: Algeria, Lybia, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia
- ❖ CANZ: Canada, Australia and New Zealand
- ❖ JUSCANZ: above-named countries plus Japan and USA
- ❖ CARICOM (Caribbean Community): caucus of 12 Caribbean countries
- ❖ SADC (Southern African Development Community): caucus of 14 Southern African countries

The following are the traditional UN regional groupings:

- ❖ African States
- ❖ Asian States
- ❖ Eastern European States
- ❖ Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC)
- ❖ Western European and Other States (WEOG)

WEOG includes Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the USA

PART 5

NGO ACTIVITIES AND STRATEGIES TO INFLUENCE THE WORLD CONFERENCE NEGOTIATION PROCESS

Preparing to Attend the PrepCom Meetings and the World Conference Against Racism

NGOs can participate in the World Conference process in several different ways, as noted in Part 1 of this guide. NGOs that actually attend the World Conference Against Racism and its PrepCom meetings will have the most direct influence over the negotiation process. The guidelines and criteria for NGO participation are determined by UN General Assembly resolution 54/154 (1999), which states that interested NGOs can participate in the PrepCom meetings and the World Conference Against Racism as observers, in accordance with UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) resolution 1996/31, which sets out the criteria for NGO participation in UN world conferences.

At its first meeting in May 2000, the PrepCom adopted the provisional rules of procedure for the World Conference Against Racism. Rule 66 provides that representatives of accredited NGOs may participate as observers in the World Conference, and may make statements on questions in which they have special competence. It also states that if the number of requests to make statements is too large, NGOs will be requested to make joint statements in coalition with other NGOs. Guidelines on “making a statement” are provided on page 46 of this guide.

NGO Accreditation Process

In order to attend the meetings, all NGOs must obtain UN accreditation. Once accredited, representatives of NGOs will receive:

- ❑ a UN pass to enter the buildings where the meetings are being held
- ❑ access to the main conference rooms where the governments meet
- ❑ access to official documents
- ❑ opportunities to deliver written and oral statements
- ❑ opportunities to discuss issues and positions with government delegates, UN staff and other NGOs

As detailed below, the process for obtaining accreditation depends on whether your NGO is in consultative status with ECOSOC.

NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC:

NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC that wish to attend the PrepCom meetings and the World Conference Against Racism must send a written request for accreditation to:

Ms. Catherine Brémont
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
United Nations, Room PW 1-051
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Tel: (41-22) 917-9262
Fax: (41-22) 917-0111
Email: cbremont.hchr@unog.ch

NGOs not having consultative status with ECOSOC:

The PrepCom has established an interim accreditation process for reviewing applications from NGOs that do not have consultative status with ECOSOC. Applications first will be reviewed by the World Conference Secretariat to ensure that they meet the requirements of ECOSOC resolution 1996/31. The Secretariat will periodically circulate a list of NGO applicants to all Member States of the UN.

The governments will have 14 days to review the list and comment on an NGO's application. If no comments from governments are received, the NGO will be accredited by the Bureau. If any government raises a question concerning the accreditation of an NGO, the NGO will be given an opportunity to respond. The government's concerns, the NGO's response and the Secretariat's own recommendation will be forwarded to the Bureau, which will decide whether or not to accredit the NGO. If the Bureau does not accredit

the NGO, the final decision on accreditation will be made by the Preparatory Committee.

NGOs that do not have consultative status with ECOSOC must apply for accreditation to the PrepCom meetings and the World Conference Against Racism by providing the following information:

- Purpose of the organization.
- Information on the programmes and activities of the organization in areas relevant to the World Conference and its preparatory process and the country or countries in which they are carried out. NGOs seeking accreditation shall be asked to confirm their interest in the goals and objectives of the World Conference, which are contained in UN General Assembly resolution 52/111.
- Confirmation of the activities of the organization at the national, regional or international level.
- Copies of the annual or other reports of the organization with financial statements and a list of financial sources and contributions, including governmental contributions.
- List of members of the governing body of the organization and their countries of nationality.
- Description of the membership of the organization, indicating the total number of members, the names of organizations that are members and their geographical distribution.
- Copy of the constitution and/or by-laws of the organization.

Applications should be sent to:

Ms. Sandra Aragn-Parriaux
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
United Nations, Room PW-RS181
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Tel: (41-22) 917-9129
Fax: (41-22) 917-9050

Email: saragon.hchr@unog.ch

An alternative method for obtaining accreditation is to affiliate with an NGO that has consultative status and that will include you on its list of representatives when it applies for accreditation. A list of NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC can be found on the “United Nations Office at Geneva” website: www.unog.ch (click on “The UN and the NGOs”), or by contacting:

Ms. Raymonde Martineau
NGO Liaison Office
Room 153
United Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10
Geneva, Switzerland
Tel: (41-22) 917-2127
Fax: (41-22) 917-0583

UN Non-Governmental
Liaison Service (NGLS)
Room 346
United Nations
304 East 45th Street
New York, NY 10017 USA
Tel: (1-212) 963-3125
Fax: (1-212) 963-8712

Organizations Representing Indigenous Peoples:

The PrepCom has decided that indigenous representatives that are accredited to the UN Working Group on the rights of indigenous peoples, pursuant to ECOSOC resolution 1995/32, will be accredited to the World Conference upon submitting an application. Indigenous representatives that are not accredited to the Working Group must follow the accreditation procedures for NGOs that do not have consultative status with ECOSOC.

For general information on NGO participation and the accreditation process, NGOs should consult the World Conference Against Racism website (www.unhchr.ch/html/racism/index.htm), or contact:

Dr. Laurie S. Wiseberg
NGO Liaison for the World Conference Against Racism
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
United Nations, Room 4-025
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

Tel: (41-22) 917-9393
Fax: (41-22) 917-9050
Email: lwiseberg.hchr@unog.ch

NGO PARTICIPATION CHECKLIST

Define your objectives ahead of time.

- ✓ Define what you want to achieve at the meeting.
- ✓ Be well-informed about the agenda and the issues of the meeting.
- ✓ Be aware that many aspects important to you may not be explicitly on the agenda.

Develop your strategy for getting to the meeting.

- ✓ Decide how many representatives your organization would like to send.
- ✓ Decide who has the relevant interests, skills (including language skills) and experience (including lobbying experience) to represent your organization effectively.
- ✓ Start identifying and applying for funding as soon as possible. Sources may include governments, foreign ministries, private institutions, foundations and corporations.
- ✓ Identify other NGOs in your area that are planning to participate in the meeting. Collaborate with them to raise the necessary funds to send representatives.

Obtain the necessary accreditation.

- ✓ Inquire about accreditation procedures and requirements well in advance.
- ✓ Request or apply for accreditation to the meeting as early as possible.
- ✓ Keep current on any changes or updates regarding the accreditation process.

Collect the necessary information.

- ✓ Collect the documentation that is made available through the Conference Secretariat and place your name on their mailing list (see Annex A for contact information).
- ✓ Regularly check the World Conference Against Racism website for updates
(www.unhchr.ch/html/racism/index.htm)
- ✓ Regularly check the International Human Rights Law Group website for updates
(www.hrlawgroup.org)

Start building coalitions with other NGOs.

- ✓ Contact other NGOs in your area, country and region about their priorities and preparations for the meeting.
- ✓ Collaborate with NGOs that are working on similar issues, including NGOs that will not be able to send representatives to the meeting. Joint preparations can help generate political momentum, add impact to your statements and avoid unnecessary duplication of work.
- ✓ Be aware that actually attending the meeting is only one way to influence the outcome of the meeting. The networks and coalitions you build at this stage will be very useful to your work before, during and after the meeting.

Develop your strategy for influencing the meeting.

- ✓ Collect information, data, case studies, research and other materials on the issues that are important to your organization and that you wish to highlight at the meeting.
- ✓ Prepare position papers that clearly state your organization's views and proposals for action by governments and the UN system. The position papers should be brief and well-written.
- ✓ Circulate your position papers to relevant government representatives and to the Conference Secretariat.

- ✓ Circulate your position papers to other NGOs both within and outside your area, country and region. Post the papers on your website and circulate them by e-mail if possible.
- ✓ Use the media to publicize your organization's work, views and preparations for the meeting. Writing press releases, making contacts with journalists and undertaking other media and outreach activities can help mobilize public support and government attention to your positions.

Make appropriate arrangements.

- ✓ Arrive at least one day before the meeting officially starts to take advantage of NGO orientation sessions, to familiarize yourself with the venue and to recover from traveling.
- ✓ Plan to stay at least one day beyond the official end of the meeting, as they often run behind schedule.
- ✓ Bring a portable office with you if possible. On-site office equipment, supplies and computer access may not be available.

What to Bring to the Meeting

- ❑ proof of accreditation
- ❑ a letter from your organization stating that you are its representative
- ❑ a passport or other form of personal identification for the issuing of your UN pass
- ❑ copies of your position papers (in all six UN languages if possible) for distribution
- ❑ brochures, pamphlets or other literature on your organization
- ❑ blank stationery with your organization's letterhead on it
- ❑ business cards

Working with Government Delegates

At all UN meetings and world conferences, the ability of NGOs to influence the outcomes depends on how effectively NGO representatives interact with and lobby government delegates.

The following are pointers for working with government delegates:

- Make an assessment of your level of comfort, and the potential political and personal risks involved with approaching government delegates. Consider what the possible repercussions of your actions and statements might be when you return to your home country.
- Identify government delegates who are sympathetic to your views and issues, and are willing to work collaboratively. Also be sure to identify and interact with delegates whose views vary from yours, primarily because (a) the discussions may help you refine your own arguments, and (b) your efforts to educate and persuade may eventually succeed.
- Keep in mind that some delegates are highly-qualified experts in their fields or skilled negotiators from their country's diplomatic service, while others might be attending their first UN meeting. Also, some delegates are used to working closely with NGOs, while others have little or no experience in doing so.
- The beginning and end of daily sessions are a good time to introduce yourself to and start a discussion with delegates. Social functions, receptions, lunches and coffee breaks are also good opportunities to speak with delegates informally.
- Delegates are often willing to accept NGO proposals, especially if the proposals are presented in UN style. You should review as many UN documents as possible, including resolutions, reports and working papers, to get

a sense of the language and format that is commonly followed.

- Delegates can be identified by the country signs placed in front of their seat and by the badges that they wear.

Working with Other NGOs

Working with other NGOs is one of the most important strategies for influencing UN meetings and world conferences. Even NGOs that disagree about certain approaches or priorities may find areas of common interest and be able to work together to include their concerns on the agenda.

The following are suggestions for working with other NGOs:

- Find out where the NGO meeting room is located and visit it frequently to obtain up-to-date information.
- Schedule regular meetings with NGOs to exchange information. By working with others, you can cover simultaneous meetings, monitor government positions and coordinate lobbying efforts.
- Share official conference documents, which are often in short supply and less readily available to NGOs.
- Circulate your position papers and other written materials widely to the Conference Secretariat, government delegations and other NGOs.
- Identify NGOs from your country and jointly organize a meeting with your government's delegation. You can also arrange briefings open to all NGOs to attend.
- Organize or join a regional and/or thematic caucus or coalition of NGOs. Working through a caucus, you can develop common strategies, prepare joint statements and coordinate lobbying efforts.

- Find other interested NGOs and produce an NGO daily newspaper during the course of the meeting, or contribute articles and position papers to an already existing publication.
- Respect the political and personal constraints of other NGO representatives, some of whom may be working under repressive conditions in their home countries.

WORKING THROUGH A CAUCUS

NGOs form caucuses or coalitions with organizations and individuals interested in similar issues (such as women's rights, children's rights or environmental issues), or working in the same region. Caucuses usually meet daily to exchange information, hold briefings, formulate positions, prepare statements and coordinate lobbying efforts. The caucus can organize meetings with government delegates and with other policy-makers who will be responsible for implementing the programme of action produced by the conference. These meetings can include members of UN treaty-monitoring committees, UN Special Rapporteurs and staff of various UN bodies and agencies.

In previous world conferences, caucuses have worked successfully to ensure that their priority issues were included in the agenda and were part of the negotiations of the conference. The caucuses were instrumental in furthering the dialogue between NGOs and government delegates, between NGOs and UN staff and representatives, and between the NGOs themselves. Many of the networks formed through the caucuses continued long after the conference.

Working with the Conference Secretariat

The Conference Secretariat is a UN staff structure that plays an important role in the conference process. It prepares the background documents, facilitates negotiations and disseminates conference information. The Conference Secretariat is not comprised of government representatives, nor is it the decision-making body for the conference. However, the information on the issues that the Conference Secretariat provides can be a key factor influencing the outcomes of the conference.

The following are pointers for working with the Conference Secretariat:

- Establish contact with the Conference Secretariat staffperson that will act as the liaison with NGOs.
- Identify the staffpersons who are preparing reports on substantive issues and inquire about how to submit useful and relevant information.
- Send your position papers, background papers and other substantive documents to the Conference Secretariat. It is becoming more common for contributions from NGOs to be included in the conference documentation, but there is no established procedure for doing this.
- Tailor your written materials according to the mandate of the conference. The Conference Secretariat usually appreciates substantive contributions and concrete suggestions, especially if brief and in all six of the official UN languages.

Working with the Media

Mass media professionals, including journalists from national and international newspapers, television reporters and radio broadcasters, will be attending the UN World Conference Against Racism.

The following are suggestions for working with the media:

- Integrate media activities (such as press releases and contacts with journalists) into your organization's overall strategy for participating in the conference and mobilizing support for your positions.
- Ask the Conference Secretariat for a list of accredited correspondents and note those from your own country or those working internationally. Introduce yourself to the correspondents and provide them with information and commentary.

MAKING A STATEMENT

NGOs accredited to the PrepCom meeting and the World Conference Against Racism can generally make oral statements (or “interventions”) during the meetings by requesting the Conference Secretariat to place your organization on the list of speakers under a specific agenda item. You should consider any potential negative responses and repercussions that may result from making a statement.

If you are going to make a statement at the meeting:

- Keep it brief and to the point.
- Be relevant to the agenda item under which you are speaking.
- Avoid general statements and aim for concrete proposals for action.
- Stay within the time limit you are allotted or you will be cut off by the chairperson.
- Rehearse reading your statement aloud ahead of time.
- Speak slowly enough for the interpreters to keep up with you.
- Distribute copies of your statement to the Conference Secretariat and the interpreters.
- Have copies of your statement available for government delegates and other NGOs.
- Think strategically about who in your delegation should deliver the statement.
- Consider making joint statements in coalition with other NGOs.

- Never say you are speaking on behalf of all the NGOs at the meeting unless you are sure that every NGO at the meeting supports your statement.

PART 6

NGO ACTIVITIES AND STRATEGIES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

Before the World Conference

There are many ways that NGOs can participate in and utilize the World Conference Against Racism without actually attending the event. The work at the international and UN level counts for very little without corresponding and complementary work at the national and local levels. The following are some suggestions for activities and strategies that NGOs can undertake at the national level:

- Identify the government ministries, departments and staffpersons preparing your government's position. Suggest consultations as they prepare their reports and recommendations. Request that the reports and recommendations be distributed to NGOs for input.
- Encourage your government to allocate substantial resources to the UN Voluntary Trust Fund for the World Conference Against Racism to support the efforts to hold well-represented meetings, including Prep Com and regional preparatory meetings. Find out how much your government contributed to previous world conferences and challenge it to match or increase that contribution.
- Encourage your government to play a leadership role in the World Conference process by hosting and supporting regional preparatory meetings, as well as a series of national consultations with groups and communities in the country on what the government's goals, preparations and input should be with respect to the World Conference.
- Lobby your government to send a high-level delegation to represent your country at conference meetings, comprised of relevant government officials, persons with expertise and experience in the subject-matter of the conference, and quasi-state officials whose work has an impact on racism (including law enforcement

officials, municipal authorities and members of the judiciary).

- Request that your government include public members or NGO representatives on its delegations, and stress the importance of gender balance on the delegation.
- Once the delegation members have been selected, establish contact with them and suggest meetings with them to discuss your views. Highlight the issues of concern to your organization and community. Provide them with your own data, research studies or position papers.
- Prepare and circulate information on the World Conference Against Racism in order to raise public awareness and mobilize support.
- Organize public meetings on important dates, such as Human Rights Day (10 December), International Women's Day (8 March) and International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March).
- Try to convince the press, local radio and other media to cover stories about the World Conference and your government's participation.
- Network with other NGOs in your community to build solidarity and increase your influence as you undertake World Conference activities and monitor your government's preparations for the conference.

Beyond the World Conference

The results and impact of the World Conference Against Racism will extend beyond the final Declaration and Programme of Action that is produced. These documents will specify mechanisms for follow-up, monitoring and accountability—providing a basis upon which longer-term actions and strategies can be formulated and implemented.

Additionally, the political process in which governments have engaged will result in establishing or reaffirming international standards and priorities to combat racism. The work and input of NGOs will be critical to putting these priorities into action and monitoring the commitments made by governments during the conference.

In order to hold governments accountable, NGOs should take the following points into consideration:

- ❖ Most UN resolutions and decisions are not legally binding. Signing or endorsing the Declaration and Programme of Action resulting from the World Conference is not the equivalent of passing national legislation or ratifying an international convention or treaty. A Programme of Action is effective when it is used as a guide for reviewing and adopting national laws and policies.
- ❖ The institutional mechanisms that are pledged as follow-up to the conference may have received insufficient attention during the conference. Governments must be pressured to organize the infrastructure and allocate the financing that will be necessary to establish the mechanisms. Governments must also ensure adequate support for those bodies, mechanisms or institutions that are designated as being responsible for monitoring compliance with the final conference documents.

- ❖ The documents coming out of the World Conference Against Racism will be written in formal, legalistic language and in a UN-specific format. Their content will be the result of protracted negotiation, debate and compromise. Thus, they may not be the most elegant, inspiring and strongly-worded of documents. They can, however, be useful organizing and advocacy tools for NGOs involved in the struggle against racism and intolerance.

The following are suggestions on how to follow-up on the issues raised and commitments made at the World Conference Against Racism:

- Order the complete, official versions of any final conference documents from the Conference Secretariat.
- Identify the appropriate ministries or departments in your government that will be responsible for implementing and reporting on the outcomes of the conference.
- Continue to develop international and national networks and build collaborative relationships with your NGO and government contacts.

ANNEX A

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR WORLD CONFERENCE RESOURCES

World Conference Against Racism Secretariat:

Attention: José L. Gómez Del Prado
Senior Coordinator of the World Conference Against Racism
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
United Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
(41-22) 917-9829 (tel), (41-22) 917-9020 (fax)
gomezdelprado.hchr@unog.ch (email)

www.unhchr.ch/html/racism/index.htm

General Information:

Department of Public Information
Development and Human Rights Section
United Nations, Room S-1040
United Nations, New York, NY 10017, USA
(1-212) 963-3771(tel), (1-212) 963-1186 (fax)
vasic@un.org (email)

NGO Information:

Dr. Laurie S. Wiseberg
NGO Liaison for the World Conference Against Racism
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
United Nations, Room 4-025
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
(41-22) 917-9393 (tel), (41-22) 917-9050 (fax)
lwiseberg.hchr@unog.ch (email)

Ms. Raymonde Martineau
NGO Liaison Office
United Nations, Room 153
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
(41-22) 917-2127 (tel), (41-22) 917-0583 (fax)

United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service
United Nations, Room 346
304 East 45th Street, New York, NY 10017, USA
(1-212) 963-3125 (tel), (1-212) 963-8712 (fax)

NGO Accreditation:

NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC

Ms. Catherine Brémont
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
United Nations, Room PW 1-051
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
(41-22) 917-9262 (tel), (41-22) 917-0111 (fax)
cbremont.hchr@unog.ch (email)

NGOs not having consultative status with ECOSOC

Ms. Sandra Aragon-Parriaux
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
United Nations, Room PW-RS181
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
(41-22) 917-9129 (tel), (41-22) 917-9050 (fax)
saragon.hchr@unog.ch (email)

ANNEX B

THE REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMISSIONS

Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)

Africa Hall
P.O. Box 3001
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel: (251-1) 51-72-00

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

UN Building
Rajadamnern Avenue
Bangkok, Thailand
Tel: (66-2) 282-9161 or (66-2) 282-9200
Fax: (66-2) 282-9602

Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)*

United Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland
Tel: (41-22) 917-2893
Fax: (41-22) 917-0036

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

Avenida Dag Hammarskjöld
P.O. Box 179-D
Santiago, Chile
Tel: (56-2) 208-5051 or (56-2) 208-5061
Fax: (56-2) 208-0252

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Plaza Hotel
P.O. Box 950629
Amman, Jordan
Tel: (962-6) 669-4351
Fax: (962-6) 266-694981 or (962-6) 266-694982

** The ECE includes Canada and the United States*

ANNEX C

SELECTED PREVIOUS WORLD CONFERENCES*

World Summit for Children (Children's Summit)

1990, New York, UNICEF

Central Message: Improving the lives of children by the year 2000

Outcomes: 7 specific and measurable goals (and 20 supporting goals) including: reduction in infant mortality by one-third, reduction in maternal mortality by one-half, reduction in malnutrition rates by one-half, universal access to safe drinking water and education, and increase in adult literacy rates by one-half

Mid-decade review indicated some progress towards goals

Mobilization behind the rights and development of children

“20/20 Initiative”: funding strategy developed for national budgets and donors to ensure basic services for all

National programmes of action prepared by 155 countries

Attendance: 159 governments; 45 NGOs

Final Documents: World Declaration and Plan of Action on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children

Goals for Children and Development in the 1990s
Mechanisms Created: UN Inter-Agency Task Force
UN Joint Committees

Follow-Up Meeting: Special session of UN General Assembly to be held in 2001

Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit) 1992, Rio de Janeiro, UNCED

Central Message: Transforming our attitudes, behaviour, and patterns of production and consumption to ensure a healthy planet

Outcomes: Increased global attention, development assistance and funding (*e.g.* World Bank) directed at environment-related programmes

Over 150 countries established national advisory councils on sustainable development

Over 1,800 cities world-wide developed “Local Agenda 21” plans of action

Called on the UN to convene the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (1994, Barbados)

Agreement on High Seas Fishing and Convention on Desertification initiated

Biodiversity Treaty and Framework Convention on Climate Change opened for signature

Attendance: 172 governments; 2,400 NGO

Representatives

17,000 participants at NGO Forum

- Final Documents: Agenda 21
Rio Declaration on Environment and Development
Statement of Forest Principles
- Mechanisms Created: UN Commission on Sustainable Development
UN Inter-Agency Committee
UN High-Level Advisory Board
- Follow-Up Meeting: Earth Summit+5 (1997)

World Conference on Human Rights
1993, Vienna, Centre for Human Rights

- Central Message: Human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent
- Outcomes: Highlighted crucial links between development, democracy and human rights, including women's human rights
Recommended strengthening and expanding of the UN Special Rapporteurs, Special Representatives, Independent Experts and Working Groups on human rights
- Attendance: 171 governments; 800 NGOs
- Final Documents: Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action
- Mechanisms Created: UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women

Follow-Up Meeting: Vienna+5 (1998)

**International Conference on Population and Development
(Population Conference)**
1994, Cairo, UNFPA

Central Message: Education and empowerment of women and girls is the most effective way to reduce population growth rates and promote sustainable development

Outcomes: Goals to make family planning universally available by the year 2015

Global focus on voluntary family planning, reproductive health care and reproductive rights, including for adolescents

Increased international funding for population-related programmes

National plans of action prepared

Attendance: 179 governments

1,500 NGOs; 4,200 participants at NGO Forum

Final Documents: Programme of Action of the ICPD

Mechanisms Created: UN Commission on Populations and Development

ACC Task Force on Basic Social Services for All

Follow-Up Meeting: Population Conference+5 (1999)

**World Summit for Social Development (Social Summit)
1995, Copenhagen, DPCSD**

- Central Message: Eradicating poverty
- Outcomes: UNDP mandated to prioritize the eradication of poverty and to coordinate the UN's efforts at capacity building
- UN General Assembly proclaimed 1996 the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty
- Focused attention on the negative side of economic globalization
- Attendance: 186 governments; 811 NGOs; 2,315 NGO representatives
- Final Documents: 4,500 participants at NGO Forum
Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action (10 commitments with recommendations for action)
- Mechanisms Created: UN Inter-Agency Task Forces
- Follow-Up Meeting: Special session of UN General Assembly to be held in June 2000

**Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality,
Development and Peace
1995, Beijing, CSW and DAW**

- Central Message: Human rights are women's rights
- Outcomes: Global network of women's rights groups, NGOs and activists

UN mandated to integrate women and gender issues throughout all programs, mechanisms and processes of the United Nations system

Called for greater coordination between UNIFEM, INSTRAW, CSW, DAW and CEDAW

Increased number of ratifications of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

130 countries developed new initiatives to carry out national action plans (for instance, the US established a \$1.6 billion program for violence against women and created the President's Inter-Agency Council on Women)

Attendance: 189 governments; 5,000 NGO representatives; 5,000 media representatives

30,000 participants at NGO Forum

50,000 total participants

Final Documents: Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (12 areas for action, including poverty, violence against women, the girl-child, *et al*)

Mechanisms Created: UN Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Gender Issues

ACC Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality

Follow-Up Meeting: Beijing+5 (2000)

2nd UN Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)
1996, Istanbul, Habitat

Central Message: Sustainable human development in an urbanizing world

Outcomes: Focus on alliance-building and sharing innovative ideas and “best practices” from governments and grassroots groups

Gave a platform to civil society by allowing non-voting participation in conference deliberations: “Partnership Committee” forwarded recommendations to be included in the Habitat Agenda

NGOs organized into Forums (*e.g.* World Business Forum, Foundations Forum, Labour Unions Forms, Parliamentarians Forum, *et al*)

Increased international funding (*e.g.*, World Bank, UNDP and donor countries) for urban programmes

Agreed by consensus to recognize adequate housing as a universal human right

Attendance: 171 governments
8,000 participants at NGO Forum
30,000 total participants

Final Documents: Habitat Agenda (goals and principles; 6 commitments; strategies for implementing plans of action)

Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements

Follow-Up Meeting: Special session of UN General Assembly

to be held in 2001

World Food Summit
1996, Rome, FAO

Central Message: Food security for all

Outcomes: Goal to reduce hunger and malnutrition by one-half by the year 2015

Attendance: 186 governments

Parallel forums included Youth Forum (500 participants)

Final Documents: Rome Declaration and Plan of Action on World Food Security (7 commitments)

* *Information in Annex C taken primarily from UN Briefing Papers,
The World Conferences: Developing Priorities for the 21st Century*

ANNEX D

SELECTED UN RESOLUTIONS ON THE WORLD CONFERENCE

- ◆ General Assembly Resolution 48/91
- ◆ General Assembly Resolution 49/146
- ◆ General Assembly Resolution 50/136
- ◆ General Assembly Resolution 51/81
- ◆ General Assembly Resolution 52/11
- ◆ General Assembly Resolution 53/132
- ◆ General Assembly Resolution 54/154

- ◆ ECOSOC Resolution 1996/31 (Part VII)
- ◆ ECOSOC Resolution 1998/251
- ◆ ECOSOC Resolution 1999/12

- ◆ Commission on Human Rights Resolution 1997/74
- ◆ Commission on Human Rights Resolution 1998/26
- ◆ Commission on Human Rights Resolution 1999/78
- ◆ Commission on Human Rights Resolution 2000/14

- ◆ Sub-Commission Resolution 1997/5
- ◆ Sub-Commission Resolution 1998/6
- ◆ Sub-Commission Resolution 1999/6

- ◆ Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination Resolution on the World Conference Against Racism, CERD/C/55/Misc.38/Rev.4 (26 August 1999)

Official UN documents on the World Conference Against Racism, including resolutions, reports, background papers and Preparatory Committee documents, can be found on the World Conference Against Racism website: www.unhchr.ch/html/racism/index.htm (click on “Documents”).

GLOSSARY

- Accreditation** A formal registration process that enables representatives of non-governmental organizations to attend UN meetings, conferences and their preparatory processes. In order to become accredited to attend the UN World Conference Against Racism and its Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) meetings, an NGO that is not in consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) must submit specific information about the organization and its work.
- Conference Secretariat** Staff of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights who will coordinate the administrative aspects of the World Conference, prepare background documents, facilitate negotiations and disseminate conference information. It is not comprised of government representatives, nor is it the decision-making body for the conference.
- Consensus** The method by which resolutions, decisions and final conference documents are adopted without a vote. It is achieved through debate, negotiation and compromise, and implies agreement among all government delegations.
- Consultative Status** NGOs that regularly work with the UN can apply for special recognition by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) that allows the NGOs access to UN documents, meetings and services.

Convention	A binding international formal agreement among UN Member States. Ratification indicates that the State is legally bound by the instrument, which is also known as a “treaty” or “covenant”.
Delegation	Representatives of a government at a UN conference or meeting. A delegation can include high-level representatives of government ministries or departments, diplomats, technical experts, and increasingly include public members such as NGO representatives.
ECOSOC	The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is one of the principal organs of the UN established by the Charter of the United Nations. It consists of 54 governments elected by the UN Member States for a three-year term. It coordinates the economic and social activities of the UN system.
Expert Group Meeting	Meeting convened by the Conference Secretariat and/or mandated by UN Member States as part of the preparatory process for a UN World Conference to address one of its issues or themes. Experts can include academics, government representatives and NGO representatives.
Member States	National governments that are members of the United Nations. Currently, there are 188 UN Member States.

NGO	A non-governmental organization (NGO) is any group that is not a part of the government, including voluntary groups, community groups, charities, trade unions and campaigns. It does <u>not</u> include commercial organizations. It also does <u>not</u> include groups appointed by the government, such as national institutions on human rights or national commissions on racial equality.
PrepCom	The Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) for a conference is made of up UN Member States. It holds a series of meetings in preparation for the conference to develop an agenda and a programme of work, and undertakes negotiations on the outcomes and final documents of the conference. The Preparatory Committee for the World Conference Against Racism is the UN Commission on Human Rights, comprised of 53 government-members.
Programme of Action	A document finalized at the conclusion of the conference, which contains agreed-upon strategies and measures to achieve the goals of the conference. It is often accompanied by a Declaration, which contains a statement of principles or standards. UN Member States begin drafting the Programme of Action at PrepCom meetings.
Rapporteur	Officer of a meeting or conference specifically charged with keeping the minutes and writing the report of each session of the conference.

Regional Economic Commissions

The standing specialized subsidiary bodies of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) charged with the responsibility for addressing the economic concerns of their regions.

Resolution

A document sponsored by a government or group of governments that contains a set of recommended actions. Resolutions include an introductory section, or preamble, which outlines the purpose of the resolution and lists previous actions taken on the subject.

Special Rapporteur

An independent expert appointed to report to a UN human rights body, usually the Commission on Human Rights or the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, on a particular issue or country.

UN General Assembly

The UN General Assembly consists of all the UN Member States and is the highest principal organ of the United Nations. It governs the work of the UN and formally adopts the documents resulting from UN world conferences.