Combating Global Racial Discrimination

Committee: The Human Rights Council

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Introduction

The Human Rights Council is a subsidiary forum established on 15 March 2006 by Resolution 60/251 of the United Nations General Assembly, one of the six key organs of the United Nations, to replace “The Commission on Human Rights,” which has been criticized for its inefficiency and lack of appropriate action on all the issues discussed. It was found to resolve violations of human rights and to implement those recommendations/solutions.

Because one of HRC's major aims is to “strengthen the protection of human rights around the globe,” it is important to strengthen the right to be treated fairly and equally no matter what your ethnicity is, no matter where you go. Daily, racial and ethnic injustice occurs, hampering development for millions of people worldwide. For the international community, the war against racism is a priority.
Racial discrimination is a recurring international concern that occurs within governments, citizens, communities, minorities, etc... One of the most familiar types of Racial discrimination is one that originated from white supremacists; discrimination that is based on one’s skin tone. Although this is a violation of a basic human right, it has various social, political, and economic consequences that affect the whole community. For example, Recent events in countries like the “BLM movement,” in the United States, demonstrate how tensions between armed police officers and communities lead to brutality and society’s instability. Moving on, France’s GDP is expected to increase by 1.5 % if they reduce the racial gaps over the course of 20 years1. Because racial discrimination affects every country in a wide variety of aspects, it’s crucial for such topic to be assessed, addressed, and combated.

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# Key Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term:</th>
<th>Also known as:</th>
<th>Definition:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Racial</td>
<td>Ethnic</td>
<td>“Relating to the major groupings into which humankind is sometimes divided based on physical characteristics or shared ancestry.” ²</td>
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<tr>
<td>Xenophobia</td>
<td>Racism</td>
<td>“Dislike of or prejudice against people from other countries.” ³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Propaganda</td>
<td>Mislead Information</td>
<td>“Information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote a political cause or point of view.” ⁴</td>
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<tr>
<td>White Supremacy</td>
<td></td>
<td>“The belief that white people constitute a superior race and should therefore dominate society, typically to the exclusion or detriment of other racial and ethnic groups, in particular black or Jewish people.” ⁵</td>
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</tbody>
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² [https://www.lexico.com/definition/racial](https://www.lexico.com/definition/racial)
³ [https://www.lexico.com/definition/xenophobia](https://www.lexico.com/definition/xenophobia)
⁴ [https://www.lexico.com/definition/propaganda](https://www.lexico.com/definition/propaganda)
⁵ [https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/white-supremacy](https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/white-supremacy)
History

Although there wasn’t a specific event that ultimately started racial discrimination, light has been shed on it in the 1600s, when enslaved Africans came to North America. Right when the economies’ dependence on black-enslaved people increased, the civil war in the United States was ignited. Although the civil war abolished slavery, it didn’t end the various types of discrimination against black and diverse individuals with different cultural backgrounds. In the past, individuals that faced discrimination were ones with darker skin tones, and in the present time, unfair treatment has also been applied on many minorities with distinctive characteristics. Although racial discrimination isn’t fully abolished, what differs each century from the other is the amount of awareness that increases as time goes by; and with high awareness, comes action.

Timeline

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6 https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/black-history-milestones
Involved Countries

Germany

According to Germany's anti-discrimination agency, the country has an "ongoing problem with racial discrimination." As per an annual survey, since 2015, when 545 cases of racial discrimination were reported, the number has increased, more than double, by almost 10% to 1,176 in 2019. The agency says that Germany's implementation of the EU Anti-Racism Directive is inadequate. In the last ten years, one out of every three people with migrant origins looking for housing claimed they had faced discrimination, as the report cites "no foreigners" advertisements for rental apartments.

South Africa

Even though apartheid, a form of laws that upheld segregationist practices against non-white residents of South Africa, ended 25 years ago and an inclusive constitution was adopted, people with albinism continue to face extreme discrimination based on race and disability. Women and children have been the majority of recent casualties, including Thandizile Mpunzi, a 20-year-old woman killed in 2015, and a 13-year-old girl killed last year. The South African government has partnered with civil society to increase awareness and knowledge of albinistic people in the region, but there are worries that superstitious practices and a lack of understanding will continue to endanger their lives.

Malaysia

A fascination over fair skin can be seen in Asian beauty advertisements, and traditional beauty tips include keeping out of the sun to avoid tanning. It is thought that poverty is linked to darker skin, therefore a hierarchy of White people at the top is created. As the world mourns the deaths of victims of the black community, personal stories of xenophobia and racism have emerged in Malaysia. Police officers and other Malaysians have interrogated black students and staff, using media-promoted racist stereotypes to justify their acts. Though members of Malaysia's black community have faced terror, bigotry, and violence, as well as the loss of loved ones due to police violence, many deny that racism occurs in the "cosmopolitan" country.

The United States of America

George Floyd's death at the hands of Minneapolis cops sparked worldwide outrage. It drew renewed attention to high-profile black American deaths during the last decade. Corporations have made commitments to address institutional injustice within their organizations. Many cities are seeking budget cuts to their police forces. Activists reiterated their demands for Confederate monuments to be removed, with some also toppling statues. The coronavirus pandemic, which has affected and destroyed overwhelmingly black people, has prompted a profound reckoning through American culture.

9 https://www.humanrightspulse.com/mastercontentblog/malaysia-must-face-up-to-its-culture-of-racism
10 https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/06/08/understanding-racism-inequality-america/
Past Attempts

**International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination**

The Convention was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 21 December 1965. It commits its members to the elimination of racial discrimination and the promotion of understanding among all races. It also requires its parties to outlaw hate speech and criminalize membership in racist organizations.

**Durban Declaration and Programme of Action**

Adopted by consensus in 2001 in Durban, at the South African World Conference Against Racism, the DDPA is a comprehensive, action-oriented document. It recommends practical steps to counter racism, discrimination toward ethnicity, xenophobia, and related bigotry. It is not legally binding, but it has a high moral value and functions as a base.

**United Nations General Assembly Resolution (68/151)**

This resolution was a follow-up to the Durban Declaration and program of action and discussed global efforts for the total elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance.

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**Conclusion**

All in all, the racial discrimination issue is one that’s constantly recurring. The violation of such fundamental rights leads to innumerable and unfortunate consequences; from tensions between different communities, individuals, and governments to the spread of insecurity and violence.

For those reasons, it’s the HRC’s duty to try and combat such violations. The HRC presidency strongly urges all members of this year’s HRC to find a constructive solution that would please all sides and put an end to this horrendous problem.

**Useful Links**

1. Introductory video:
   
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NFhPNz_PaZ0&list=PLrE6Pzde0sajeHI50vUgGY1rO95CSLz2C&index=7&ab_channel=EqualityandHumanRightsCommission

2. Detailed topic explanations:
   
   

3. United nations’ past attempts:
   

4. UN’s country visits’ reports:
   
Resources


Racial: Definition of RACIAL by Oxford Dictionary on LEXICO.COM Also Meaning of Racial. www.lexico.com/definition/racial

White Supremacy. www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/white-supremacy#:~:text=%2F%CB%8Cwa%C9%AAt%20su%CB%88prem%C9%99si%2F%2F%CB%8Cwa%C9%AAt%20su%C B%88prem%C9%99si%2F,and%20should%20be%20in%20power


Xenophobia: Definition of Xenophobia by Oxford Dictionary on LEXICO.COM Also Meaning of Xenophobia. www.lexico.com/definition/xenophobia

Human Rights Library- University of Minnesota, hrlibrary.umn.edu/edumat/studyguides/religion.html