

WORKING GROUP OF EXPERTS ON PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT

IX Session, 12 – 16 April 2010

WORKING GROUP'S PROPOSALS REGARDING ACTIVITIES FOR THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR FOR PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT

I. Organisational proposals:

1. That the International Year for People of African Descent be observed with the full involvement of all relevant UN bodies, programmes, and specialized agencies, in particular UNESCO, ILO, WHO, UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA.
2. That cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations be ensured in the context of the observance of the International Year at the regional level.
3. That the relevant UN authority establishes a voluntary fund, including an initial contribution from the UN regular budget, for the International Year and invites contributions from Member States and all relevant donors, so as to provide additional funding for the implementation of the activities relating to the International Year, as well as follow-up activities, and to facilitate the participation of NGOs dealing with issues of People of African descent in such activities.
4. That the UN Secretary-General appoints High Commissioner for Human Rights as the Coordinator of the activities related to the International Year for People of African Descent.
5. That the Office of the High Commissioner ensure adequate media coverage of the International Year, including by way of materials such as a logo, posters, brochures, etcetera, and the establishment of a dedicated web space for the International Year.
6. That a linkage between the International Year for People of African Descent and the 10th anniversary of the DDPA be formally established.
7. That national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights be invited, through the International Coordinating Committee (ICC), to actively participate in the Year, including by initiating relevant activities at the national level.
8. That the International Year be opened by way of an Opening Day ceremony to be held at the 65th session of the General Assembly on 10 December 2010.

II. Substantive proposals:

1. That the International Year for People of African Descent be observed formally at the High Level Segment of the 16th session of the Human Rights Council by way of organizing a Panel Discussion.
2. That an International Day for People of African Descent be declared after wide consultation with people of African descent.
3. That the Human Rights Council be invited to launch the process for the formulation of a Declaration on People of African Descent and give a mandate to the Working Group of People of African Descent to develop a draft text in this respect.
4. That a high level international conference on People of African descent be organised, under the auspices of the General Assembly, on the theme “People of African Descent: Recognition, Justice, and Development” with the participation of Member States and all relevant specialized agencies, human rights treaty bodies, special procedures and other stakeholders.
5. That regional conferences be held in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and North America, on topics related to the situation of People of African descent.
6. That OHCHR organizes side events on the situation of People of African Descent during the regular sessions of the Human Rights Council in 2011.
7. That a publication on the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent be produced in the series “Fact sheets” including a compilation of the recommendations by the Working Group.
8. That participation be encouraged by the largest number of civil society in activities organized for the International Year for People of African Descent and that an international network be created which is devoted to exchanging information among the various sections of NGOs representing people of African descent.
9. That arrival point sites of memory be established in all countries where Africans were relocated and in all countries that benefited from the Transatlantic Trade in Africans.
10. That governments be encouraged to include in their education activities awareness-raising events relating to the observance of the International Year for People of African Descent, including, inter alia, through art competitions, cultural events, awards, academic events, films and documentaries with a view to the restoration of the dignity of people of African descent.
11. That States, UN agencies, and regional organizations encourage cultural links between the African Diaspora and the African continent.