

10th Anniversary of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

Statement presented during the roundtable of the
High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly by
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in cooperation with
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Founded in 1993 with headquarters in Johannesburg, South Africa, CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, is committed to nurturing the foundation, growth and protection of citizen action throughout the world, especially in areas where participatory democracy and citizens' freedom of association are threatened. Building upon the legacy of Nelson Mandela and the other members of the Council of Elders, CIVICUS is honored to now lead the “Every Human Has Rights (EHHR)” campaign launched by the Council in 2008.

CIVICUS demands that Member States must now mobilize the political will to ensure the full implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA). The theme of this meeting properly focuses our attention upon three essential remedies if the devastating consequences of historic and contemporary racism are to be healed: recognition, justice and development. CIVICUS stands in solidarity with its member organization Tiye International who together with the National Platform Dutch Slavery Past have issued a joint statement endorsed by over 450 African Diaspora, Women & Youth Organizations, that urges the United Nations to support NGOs in the monitoring and evaluation of governments with respect to the current state of the DDPA and deplors the relentlessly negative and false characterization that the Anti-Racism UN World Conference of 2001 and the Review Conference of 2009 were gatherings which promoted racism or anti-Semitism, among other recommendations. I would also add that it is indeed unfortunate that some would use the DDPA to cast aspersions against other countries with first examining their own societies in an equally critical manner.

To conclude, we must remain vigilant to safeguard democratic debate, dissent and freedom of assembly and association against authorities who seek to roll back civil society freedoms through legislative, fiscal, technological and extra-judicial measures. We look forward to working with all partners to foster a worldwide community of informed, inspired, committed citizens engaged towards a common dialogue of sustainable, inclusive development based on human rights and justice for all.