

WCC Report on the UN WCAR

Making a fresh start:
The urgency of
combatting racism

WCC Report
on its participation in the UN World Conference against Racism,
Durban, 2001

All the references to photos can be found on page 75

It is planned to have this report translated into Spanish.

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The intention of this report is to present stories that reflect the WCC delegation members' experiences in Durban. It has the deliberate intention of sharing something of the flavour, the colours, the diversity of voices, issues and visions. It is an attempt to bring the reader on a journey to Durban.

The views expressed by the authors of the reports do not necessarily represent the WCC's position on these issues.

**The journey to Durban
and beyond
by Marilia Schüller**

Walking to the Kingsmead Cricket Stadium for the opening of the NGO Forum, I was full of different feelings and expectations. Finally, after a long process that the World Council of Churches (WCC) and civil society had gone through over the last one-and-a-half years, we had arrived for the official beginning. Flashback images of telephone conversations, meetings, travels to different continents, attending the UN Preparatory Committee (Prepcom) meetings in Geneva, meals, tickets, reimbursements, debates, exchanges, encounters and sometimes dis-encounters, flooded my mind. But here we were in Durban, South Africa, at last!

Its witness and action against the sin of racism and for justice and life for the victims/survivors led the WCC to enable churches, church-related programmes against racism and regional ecumenical organizations to participate in this worldwide event: the third UN World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (NGO Forum and governments' meeting included). Inspired by the theme "United to combat racism: equality, justice, dignity", the 26 August-8 September 2001 conference aimed to ensure that international standards and instruments are applied in efforts to combat racism, and also to formulate recommendations for further action.

The five main themes were:

- Sources, causes, forms and contemporary manifestations;
- Victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;
- Measures of prevention, education and protection aimed at eradication 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.¹

Ecumenical events

Our journey towards the UN World Conference Against Racism (WCAR) started in 2000 when we held the first regional preparatory meeting, in partnership with regional ecumenical organizations. The journey continued through participation together with church delegates in all three UN Preparatory Committee meetings, UN Expert meetings, UN Regional Conferences.

The WCC's 35-member ecumenical delegation to Durban³, represented a diverse group of peoples – as would the WCAR itself: Africans and People of African descent, Indigenous Peoples, Dalits, Palestinians, advocates for the rights of the Roma/Sinti People, of migrants' rights, of women and youth from all the regions. A small team of nine people attended the inter-governmental meeting. Some of their voices can be heard in these pages – voices which vividly capture the spirit and struggles of individuals and communities united against racism.

Workshops⁴ on the intersections of gender, racism and religion, globalization, racism and the role of religion were organized in collaboration with World Young Women Christian Association (WYWCA). There were hearings on victims of racism together with the Friends World Committee, and a roundtable discussion on the role of the South African churches in the post-apartheid period, together with the South Africa Council of Churches (SACC) and the Diakonia Council of Churches in Durban. A stand was used for displays and presentation by various member churches.

A very meaningful ecumenical worship of commitment against racism took place in the Methodist Central City Mission. Attended by most Durban church leaders and a few hundred local and international people, it was followed by a candlelight procession to the City Halls. This evening was one of the highlights for the ecumenical family present in Durban. After many years of closer cooperation with the churches in South Africa during the apartheid era, the ecumenical service epitomized the rekindling of that relationship and the need to continue addressing racism in South Africa and elsewhere.

Ecumenical Caucus

One of the most significant achievements of the ecumenical family, including the WCC delegation, in Durban was their coming together around common concerns and advocacy platforms. An Ecumenical Caucus was established, and it issued a statement⁶ during the days of the inter-governmental conference. The statement affirmed once again that “racism is a sin, contrary to God’s will for love, peace, equality, justice and compassion for all”, that racism “dehumanizes, disempowers, marginalizes and impoverishes human beings,” and that the ecumenical family has affirmed that now is the time to dismantle and eradicate racism.”

The Ecumenical Caucus, facilitated by the SACC and WCC communication staff, held a well-attended press conference with the ever-meaningful presence and wisdom of Archbishop Desmond Tutu as guest speaker. The conference, under the leadership of Bishop Mvumelwano Dandala, presiding bishop of the Methodist Church in Southern Africa and leader of the WCC ecumenical delegation, was a very significant moment for the churches and particularly the South African churches. Its timing at that particular moment in the inter-governmental meeting, was to put the churches’ voice more firmly in the public arena. Archbishop Tutu’s presence helped the very diverse world community – in a context in which the media were losing sight of the crucial issues for the victims of racism – to refocus and be assured that “God is saying: I am giving you another chance to start again”.

The NGO forum and inter-governmental conference

These were great opportunities for people to hear, to understand, to dialogue about peoples’ struggles against racism, and to share information not often communicated by the mass media. It was this concern that motivated the WCC to take its own team of international journalists to Durban. They were not bound to write stories on behalf of the WCC but were invited always to cover ethical and moral issues, and to use the ecumenical delegation as their sources.

The goals, process, methods and results of the NGO Forum and inter-governmental meeting have been critiqued. However the WCC ecumenical delegation, together with many churches and ecumenical council representatives, celebrated the holding of such a Forum. Such forums fall within a WCC tradition of giving space, and supporting victims to speak publicly. The Council’s presence in concrete solidarity with peoples’ struggles for justice has reinforced its credibility among the NGO community.

Both the NGO Forum and the inter-governmental conference were profoundly affected by current world affairs. They were convened at a time when the situation in the Middle East was in the forefront of people's minds, and the issues raised in that context quickly gained prominence in the Forum.

The NGO Forum was perhaps the largest civil society gathering focused on racism ever assembled, and certainly the most representative of those victimized by racism and racial discrimination. The NGO Forum document contains the aspirations and recommendations of many communities of marginalized peoples.

The debate on the NGO Forum final document was long and, at times, complex because of the huge numbers of people involved. The methodology used was to ask specific caucuses to react, provide amendments and then vote. Members of the WCC delegation were part of the Ecumenical Caucus and other caucuses and did not vote as the WCC itself.

In keeping with WCC policy, the WCC ecumenical delegation supported the plight of Africans and People of African descent, Indigenous Peoples, Dalits, the Roma/Sinti People, migrants, women and youth. The right of self-determination for Palestinians, the right of return and the establishment of a Palestinian state were also affirmed by the delegation. It also affirmed the right of the State of Israel to exist, and condemned anti-Semitism.

The fact that the mass media focussed only on some particular sections of the NGO Forum document was disrespectful to all other peoples addressing a vast number of issues significant to them as victims of racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia. Those wide concerns were represented within the membership of the WCC ecumenical delegation and cannot be ignored.

Durban and beyond

Durban was a time for people to share their suffering, pain and resistance to racism. Indigenous Peoples, for instance, voiced their disappointment that rather than being enhanced, some of what they have gained in international law was threatened and put under scrutiny. That was the case in relation to the terminology "peoples". On the other hand, Durban was also an opportunity to build bridges with one another and learn from each others' struggles. A large civil society forum of this nature could be used to sensitize the international community and mobilize solidarity; the experience of the Dalits was a clear case in point. The Forum was an unprecedented source of empowerment. To struggle for justice was something that united us!

We have come out of Durban strengthened in our commitment against racism. In the words of Bishop Mvumelwano Dandala, leader of the WCC ecumenical delegation:

The presence of the WCC at this conference is a powerful reminder of the power and relevance of the Incarnation; God's presence in the pain and suffering of the world. Many continue to find hope in life as they are reminded that God does not shun the difficult and confusing contradictions of human experience. This conference was no different. The Church has to continue to walk with the world. The conference has shown clearly that the way ahead for the world in this century will not be forged by governments alone but by ordinary men, women and youth. The challenge for the church is to learn how it will walk this journey.

The journey continues! The challenge is always with us. It was with us before; it continues after Durban. The lessons learned, the inputs gathered in these processes will be shared with WCC member churches through the reflections presented by the Ecumenical Study on Racism in 2002.

Hopefully it will be an instrument for the WCC and its member churches to continue to walk this journey of commitment against racism. The Good News of the Gospel has always been the inspiration for our actions and justice the energizing force for our everyday life! A world without racism is the vision we cherish!

Marilia Schüller is Programme Executive Justice, Peace and Creation team, combating racism.

Notes:

1 Against the background of more than fifty years of WCC work against racism and its effects, notably through its Programme to Combat Racism, a “Submission to the High Commissioner on Human Rights” on the Draft Declaration and Programme of Action on the above five themes was presented by WCC on 15 August 2000. See appendix.

2 See appendix Calendar of Events sponsored by or with participation of the WCC.

3 See appendix WCC Ecumenical Delegation Participants List

4 See appendix Workshops

5 See appendix Christians Unite Against Racism, service and candlelight procession

6 See appendix Statement by the Ecumenical Caucus

An African Perspective by Pauline Muchina

The World Conference Against Racism brought together over ten thousand people from different parts of the world; state representatives, UN-related bodies, NGOs and individuals. South Africa was the best place to hold a conference on racism, xenophobia and related intolerance, for it provided an atmosphere of hope, having only recently become independent. Many African NGOs participating in the lead-up to the conference expressed this hope as we tabled our concerns to be addressed at the WCAR.

On the other hand, many African people and African NGOs had heard little about the WCAR. This lack of information about the conference was not restricted to Africa. For many people around the world, the conference was seen as having little to do with their daily lives. This information gap between UN world conferences and the world is typical, creating room for doubts about whether the outcomes of such meetings have any real impact in the world.

African NGOs and Africans following the process toward the WCAR noticed this disconnection early in the process. At the first preparatory meeting in Geneva, we started calling for more dissemination of information about the conference. The African NGOs voiced their concern that the conference would exclude African people because of funding and the accreditation process. They urged international NGOs and the UN to provide financial support and accredit African NGOs who did not have consultative status. They also called for the UN to provide funding for information dissemination about the conference. Although most participants empathized with African NGOs, the practical aspects of the needed solidarity were only partially realized.

I was therefore not surprised to arrive in Durban and find that few South Africans understood what was at stake at the WCAR. Many had heard Western media propaganda about the USA's and Israel's plans to pull out of the conference if the Palestinian and Israeli conflict was discussed in Durban. Very few people knew of the pressures behind the media fracas, aimed at derailing the WCAR. The taxi drivers in Durban brought this fact home to us: they had not heard about the range of issues the WCAR was to address. Most of them wanted to know whether we were having a good time in their country. But discussion on life after apartheid was always welcome, and the connection between the scourge of poverty and racial hatred was easily made in short conversations during a taxi ride. Conversation with other local residents confirmed my fears of having yet another world conference at which the local people were passive spectators.

When I arrived in Durban, experiences of the Prep-Coms lingered in my mind. I particularly remembered an incident during the second Prep-Com in Geneva in May 2001. As I sat at the back of the plenary hall, my mind wandered to my people in Kenya, where many continue to suffer the consequences of colonialism. I reflected on the slave ships and thousands of lives lost on the high seas, the Indigenous Peoples whose lands are now mining grounds, and the impoverishment of millions of people in this globalized era, which is racist at its very heart. I thought of African women fighting for their lives and that of their children, as their governments implement Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), leaving them without basic human needs. I remembered the Palestinians fighting hard for their lives, while the WCAR refuses to include them in its deliberations.

The WCAR, I thought, should be about peoples' lives. People who are in danger of extinction, and who are displaced from their ancestral lands as a result of colonization. Those who are internally displaced, and refugees, who are victims of the ethnic conflicts that are devastating

Africa. The minority youth who have no future due to institutional racism that denies them decent education, incarcerates them, and demonizes them in society. The Dalit people who continue to suffer injustice as they are regarded as untouchable in their countries. To my disappointment, the Prep meeting had not dealt with any of the concerns expressed above. I wondered aloud, what the world conference itself would do to change the lives of millions of people affected by the scourge of racism, xenophobia and related intolerance. I tried to convince myself that maybe, at this late hour in the game, a wind of “political will” would sweep across Durban, and convince the states’ representatives to consider the lives at stake.

I worked closely with the African Caucus, which met in the African Tent every day and I also participated in the Women’s Caucus. The African Caucus focused on several issues that affected the continent of Africa directly, as well as people of African descent. It called upon the WCAR to acknowledge that centuries of transatlantic slavery, colonization and neo-imperialism have caused poverty and economic exclusions of Africans within Africa and in the diaspora. These were the same claims made by the African/African Descendants Caucus. Both caucuses urged states to establish and implement policies, measures and development mechanisms that would curtail the absolute poverty ravaging Africa and its diaspora. I was continually amazed by the arrogance of the western nations, as their representatives argued that colonialism could not be seen as a crime against humanity. I thought of how our lives have been ruined by the impact of colonization – our political and economic systems, mimicking the West, have created room for exclusion of groups of people who are ethnic minorities and women. The disregard for the local cultures and the environment, compounded by poor leadership, corruption, and economic greed, continue to devastate our people. The global economic system seems to be manufactured to cater for western countries and the rich, at the expense of the poor and those living in the countries of the South. How can we ever view colonization as something beneficial for us? It benefitted the West and helped them build their economic empires. For the western powerful rich countries, enriched through this injustice, colonization cannot be seen as a crime against humanity, for some of them, supposedly fervent watchdogs of human rights, still hold colonies. To us African people, colonization is a crime against humanity and generations to come.

The African Caucus worked diligently to convince states to acknowledge slavery and slave trade as crimes against humanity. We cited the unprecedented and lasting economic, political, psychological, religious, and cultural impact of this injustice against our people. We called for measures to repair the damage caused, and referred to the measures as “reparations”. These measures, we asserted, would include policies, programmes and apology to be implemented by the material beneficiaries of slavery and the slave trade, namely, states that nurtured and protected the slave traders and slaveholders. The WCAR, in the last hour of the conference, heeded our call, and declared slavery and slave trade as crimes against humanity. This last-minute victory elated our hearts, but the implementation of it remains to be seen. The difficulty of implementing such declarations has been made clear as the western group and the UN Human Rights Secretariat has attempted to change the final documents of the WCAR. It is not surprising to learn that the paragraphs in contention – 97, 99, and 100 – are on slave trade, colonization and reparations. The western group would rather have these three paragraphs in the Declaration section of the documents, than in the Programme of Action.

The African Caucus focused also on issues such as health, education, communication technology, and research. We urged the UN to establish preventive measures against racial discrimination, which may include access to education, technological resources and economic development. Acknowledging that HIV/AIDS and preventable diseases such as malaria continue to devastate Africa, we called upon the World Health Organization to allocate resources and programmes to

Africa, giving Africans access to prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases. Citing the impact of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), we reiterated the call for debt cancellation for African and other poor countries. We claimed that the funds recovered through debt cancellation should be directed to health services, education, shelter, public safety and clean water. Somehow, this call for debt cancellation fell on deaf ears. I believe that the WCAR failed to effectively address the colour of poverty and the systematic impoverishment of African people.

As Africans and people of African descent, we laboured to have historical wrongs against us acknowledged, and measures taken to prevent the reoccurrence of these evils. We knew there are no overnight solutions to centuries of suffering, but we looked to the international community to help right the wrongs of the past and to end current manifestations of racism and servitude. The success of the WCAR was partially achieved through the many cross-issues, cross-cultural, and trans-regional networks of solidarity established. The declaration of slavery and slave trade as crimes against humanity, and the international acknowledgement of the plight of the Palestinians, Dalits, Roma, Indigenous People, Africans and African descendants, refugees and immigrant workers, are the beginning of a new world order, where racism, xenophobia and related intolerance cannot be tolerated. The WCAR helped cut out the task of the 21st Century for the international community and proponents of human rights. •

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Pauline Muchina was consultant to the WCC for the UN preparatory process to the World Conference Against Racism and member of the WCC delegation to Durban.

Questions for reflection and discussion:

1. What are the moral and ethical issues involved in making reparation or compensation for past crimes against humanity?
2. How can churches help in the understanding of accurate national histories so that issues of reparation or compensation can be better understood?

Was Durban a failure?

By Betty Ruth Lozano

The answer to this question depends to a large extent on the expectations we brought with us to the conference. In fact, people came with great hopes and expectations, some exaggerated, others more in touch with reality. Expectations were not only running high because of what might happen at the conference (we had a foretaste of that at the Prepcoms)(1). For many of us this was our first time in the continent of Africa, the continent of our ancestors. Someone in Durban asked me, “Do you find it very moving to be in Africa for the first time?” I had to admit that, unfortunately, I did not really feel anything, because it was just like home: Black youths selling fruit at the traffic lights, Black women selling fruit and other trinkets in the streets, Black people of all ages and both sexes doing the most degrading jobs, Black street children, most of the Black population living in the poorest districts. In short, a Third World country where the Black population grows poorer every day as a result of privatization policies and a long heritage of marginalization and poverty. Even though apartheid has been legally abolished, as with the legal abolition of slavery in America, the Black population received no reparations or compensation to give them a better start in their struggle for survival.

But things were not all bad, even though the United Nations Organization (UN) seemed to be doing its best to give everyone a sense of failure – for instance, by failing to supply sufficient interpreters both for the NGO forum and for the conference itself. Perhaps those who can communicate in English have never experienced the anguish of not being able to understand or make oneself understood. Among the participants from Colombia there was no-one of African or Indigenous descent who could communicate fluently in English, even in the official delegation. This had serious repercussions on the quality of participation – you can only participate up to a certain point. You cannot contribute as you would like to nor participate fully in the discussions as you had hoped – and you are dependent on other people. When documents were translated, the translations arrived late and many were of poor quality. This is not just a failure of communication, it is more than that. It amounts to the imposition of a linguistic hegemony which refuses to allow any other language to be used; one language setting itself up as the global language. Yet, as Fidel Castro, the President of Cuba, said in his speech at the closing session of the NGO forum, “we have to learn it in order to resist it”.

Along with other Latin friends I was able to take part in a workshop entitled *United to end racism*. The experience we all shared was the sense of oppression we felt because of the domination of English. Some of the people there could communicate perfectly well in that language, indeed better than in Spanish, yet they saw this as an impoverishment and not a gain. There is a challenge here for all of us who do not speak English: how can we speak it without losing ourselves, how can we master it without allowing it to colonize us? I believe we have to work on the principle of *constant resistance*.

Fidel Castro said in his speech that “this was a conference on racism, racial discrimination and all the other forms of injustice in this capitalist world covered by the phrase “... and related forms of intolerance”. In fact, this conference dealt with practically all forms of oppression produced by this discriminatory, racist western culture: discrimination based on gender, caste, racism, sexual orientation, apartheid, disability, etc.. In this respect, the input from the gender caucus concerning the intersections of different forms of oppression was extremely important. This concept made it possible to link up the different themes, and counter the assertion that many of them had nothing

to do with the central themes of the conference, without losing political strength through fragmentation. Nevertheless, the Indigenous Peoples are already proposing to hold a world conference dealing specifically with Indigenous issues, as they were not happy about the plethora of themes at this event.

So was Durban a failure? Obviously, a world conference cannot eradicate racial discrimination in all its forms but it can make an important contribution. Eliminating racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance requires a transformation in Western spirituality, in other words, a change of **civilization** which cannot be achieved through a world conference. This is especially difficult in the present situation where the United States has set itself up as the supreme and uncontested head of this forum which is the United Nations. So much so that the US delegation's withdrawal from the conference was seized upon by the communications media as an excuse, not only to distort reality, but to invent it by alleging that the conference was a failure. Commentaries to the effect that it was in the interests of the United States and the European Union to have the conference fail were already circulating in the corridors of all the Prep-Coms.

Unfortunately, at time of writing, three months after the Conference, we still do not have the final document of the official conference. But it is clear that women of African descent gained more in Durban than they did in Beijing. As far as we were able to follow the final document, it does contain concrete references to our situation as victims, even if it does not take up the concept of intersections (and they still have problems with the concept of gender!). This was a proposal put up for discussion and it remains on the table to be discussed in greater depth in future debates (at both the official and the NGO level). To be sure, this concept of the intersection of the forms of oppression is difficult for most governments to accept, as they see only their particular interests. But – and this has to be said – it is also difficult for some discriminated groups who do not want to be associated with certain others because they consider their own claims will be degraded if they are lumped together with them. The greatest victims of this discrimination by the discriminated, on the whole, are those demanding the right to full expression of their sexual orientation. Very few wish to appear alongside them, so that gender and intersections remain a fiction(2).

The many thousands of people from very different backgrounds attending the NGO Forum offered a living image of the rich ethnic and cultural diversity of our planet. For all the different victims of racism, this was a unique opportunity for encounter, for recognition and solidarity or, if you prefer, responsibility, because in the present circumstances in the world it is not a matter of some being saved. Either we are all saved, or we all perish. When I first attended the preparatory events for the conference, I had the idea that discrimination and racism were topics that concerned only Black and Indigenous People. That was the idea I took with me to the preparatory conference for the Americas in Chile. But there we met other groups of people, like the Roma people, of whom I had only a distant notion. I had sometimes seen them in my home-town and in other cities in Colombia. They had even offered to read my palm. I had heard the prejudices against them but, in my mind, they were simply “gypsies”. I thought the Roma people were in Europe and they were something different. So it came as a shock, a slap in the face, to find that the representative of the Roma people at the conference in Chile was a Colombian.

Then there were the Dalit people of India, millions of people suffering discrimination based on a combination of caste and racism. I discovered that it is an illusion to think that apartheid had disappeared from the world, when the state of Israel is subjecting the Palestinian people to this crime; meeting with many pale-skinned, blue-eyed Indigenous People from Europe, also suffering discrimination in their countries and regions, and all the other dark-skinned African

Indigenous groups; *realizing that it is not simply a matter of defending the rights of homosexuals but also, as the final declaration of the NGO Forum of the Americas in Chile says, “gays, lesbians and bisexuals, transsexuals and transvestites”*; in short, *the empirical observation of something we already knew in theory: there are not two genders, but many genders. Well, perhaps not so empirical.*

It is fair to say that no ethnic or cultural group obtained everything it was demanding and that some even experienced a set-back, like the Indigenous Peoples who did not succeed in having article 27 deleted from the Declaration and the Programme of Action, even though it has repercussions for their rights recognized under international law. Thanks to lobbying by Africans and people of African descent, the final declaration by governments included the acknowledgement that “slavery and the slave trade are crimes against humanity and should always have been recognized as such, especially the transatlantic slave trade.” Nevertheless, this aspect of the conference made us aware as never before of the global nature of the phenomenon of racism and we realized that, from the standpoint of the oppressed peoples of the world, this is not just one more topic. It is **the** topic par excellence.

The resistance from the United States also proved that this is the case, for the eradication of racism and racial discrimination touch on the most sensitive interests of first world countries, given that racism and racial discrimination underlay, and continued to underlie, the colonization, evangelization and marginalization of our peoples. Western civilization considers itself superior to all others and believes it has the moral, “messianic” obligation to save the others by colonizing and evangelizing them. So this is not simply a problem of educating the population not to be racist, nor is it simply a question of peaceful coexistence between “Whites” and “the others”. It is a problem which has its roots in the economy that justifies the unequal distribution of wealth, determines geopolitical strategies etc. This is why the countries of the first world were not interested in accepting the linkage between poverty, colonial past and slavery, nor in adopting motions in favour of the Palestinian people, or including the Dalits on the list of victims.

The UN World Conference Against Racism should not be seen as an event which took place in Durban, South Africa, from 31 August to 8 September of this year, but as a process which started from the moment the United Nations General Assembly decided in 1977 to hold this conference. Perhaps even before then, because the lobbying of the UN by various NGOs over a period of years helped to bring about this event. The process has involved many encounters which have brought us face to face with our own prejudices, and the prejudices of others. It has enabled us as organizations of people of African descent to look inward at ourselves, and we have often felt challenged by what we saw. For me the end result is our own growth as persons, as organizations, as networks. We cannot be the same after all we have experienced, with all the loves and hatreds. This process has contributed to many things and this could represent a substantial part of what this conference has achieved – plus the fact that we are certainly better prepared to tackle the next one! Let’s start work on it now!

Notes:

1. The abbreviation for the official preparatory meetings for the World Conference
2. At the last Prepcom in Geneva, for example, (30 July to 10 August) the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) was refused accreditation at the Conference. As was to be expected, the main opposition came from Islamic countries but the majority of Asian countries also voted against, on the grounds that ILGA’s work had nothing to do with the themes of the Conference.

Very few Latin American countries voted in favour, either, even though their patrons, the USA and the EU, did so.

Betty Ruth Lozano is a woman of African descent born in Cali, Colombia. She was a member of the WCC delegation at the various preparatory events and at the conference in Durban. She is a sociologist.

Questions for reflection and discussion:

1. In your own context is language one of the means by which people are marginalized or discriminated against?
2. The many aspects of racism demand new explanations and descriptions. It also requires careful analysis of the points at which they "intersect"- how one aspect may be feeding into another.

Durban and the Indigenous Peoples' participation

By Lucy Mulenkei

Durban was expected to become a moment in history where a meeting place was created for diverse peoples from all around the world to come together to discuss issues surrounding racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. And it was. Amidst this setting, Indigenous Peoples' representatives from various backgrounds and communities brought with them experiences of the struggle against oppression, injustice and human rights abuses. For them, the NGO Forum held prior to the conference became a platform to share and exchange frustrations, as well as the opportunity to articulate their hopes of building better relationships between states, civil society and themselves.

The conference was a place where marginalized peoples (including Indigenous Peoples) could stand in solidarity with each other in their efforts to build peaceful and sustainable communities. The hope was that the World Conference Against Racism would inspire new energies to continue the struggle after Durban.

Several activities were organized by the Indigenous Peoples parallel to the NGO Forum and the conference itself. The African Indigenous regional meeting was held to select their representative for the UN Permanent Forum. There were visits to Indigenous communities, conversations were held with Indigenous women, and much effort was made to interact with communities in the region, and in particular, in Durban, South Africa. Indeed the host people of South Africa were gracious in their hospitality, and friendships were quickly formed. The Indigenous Peoples' representatives were also privileged to have the opportunity to build community for the duration of the meeting. This was to be very important for ensuring a strong advocacy network in the discussions of the NGO Forum and the conference itself.

Indigenous representatives participating in the NGO Forum and government meetings had the opportunity to participate in the Indigenous Caucus. These meetings were planned on a daily basis and were aimed at sharing information and updating participants on what was happening during the conference. It also provided the space for representatives to work on a global statement by Indigenous Peoples. Blanca Chancosa from Ecuador was elected to make the statement in the related government session.

Within the Indigenous Peoples Caucus, a steering committee comprised of one representative from each region was also formed to assist in planning for the caucus meetings during the conference, as well as to organize different workshops e.g., on intellectual property, land rights, Indigenous women, language, self-governance, etc.

The Indigenous Peoples Caucus also maintained close relationships with other caucuses during the conference. The main purpose of doing this was to work together on common issues coming up during the conference, and to be in solidarity with each other.

From the beginning, Indigenous delegates in the caucus were very focussed on articulating their demands for recognition of their rights, denied for many years. They spoke about the common dispossession of their histories, land, culture, language and spirituality as a result of racism, and worked hard for these issues to be included in the final NGO document. Therefore, the Indigenous Peoples Caucus was able to fully support the sections of the NGO Declaration and Plan of Action which refer specifically to them. This reflected the consensus of opinion among

Indigenous Peoples that had developed in the regional and other preparatory meetings leading up to Durban.

The point of greatest concern came during the conference proper, where it quickly became apparent that the positions stated in the NGO document regarding Indigenous Peoples were incompatible with the state positions on these same issues. In particular, Paragraph 27 of the conference declaration became a source of major contention. The paragraph stated: “The use of the term Indigenous Peoples in the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance cannot be construed as having any implications as to rights under International Law. Any reference to rights associated with the term ‘Indigenous Peoples’ is in the context of ongoing multilateral negotiations on texts that specifically deal with such rights and is without prejudice to the outcome of those negotiations.”

Immediately, the Indigenous Peoples Caucus was faced with the fact that they were being told by the United Nations that, unlike any other individual, group or people in the world, their status and fundamental human rights were not inherent, inalienable and universal, but rather to be denied because of ‘negotiations’ subject to the prejudices and self-interest of states.

This was quickly taken up by the Indigenous Caucus, which labelled the paragraph as a manifestation of racism against Indigenous Peoples and a violation of the fundamental principles of international law. If Paragraph 27 remains in the Declaration, the UN can only be seen as guilty of practising and perpetuating discrimination within its own processes. Intensive lobbying by the Indigenous Caucus and other groups hopefully will have impacted positively on the final wording in the declaration – ideally leading to its deletion in its current form.

In conclusion, despite the difficulties experienced by all groups, it was felt that the participants’ efforts will bear fruit in the future. The NGO Plan of Action is very clear about the need to build on the work of Durban, to keep up the momentum, and to continue to model as inclusive and participatory processes as possible for future work on these issues. •

Lucy Mullenkei is director of the Indigenous Information Network in Kenya and close partner of the Indigenous Peoples’ Programme of the WCC. She was also part of the WCC delegation to Durban.

Dalit rights are human rights
by Y. Moses

Right through the WCAR preparatory process, caste-based discrimination was sometimes in and sometimes out of the official WCAR document. Finally, the draft Programme of Action carried to Durban for final touches and adoption included paragraph 73, referring to discrimination based on “Work and Descent”. It “urges States to ensure that all necessary constitutional, legislative and administrative measures, including appropriate forms of affirmative action, are in place to prohibit and redress discrimination on the basis of work and descent, and that such measures are respected and implemented by all State authorities at all levels”. However, this was not discussed and was left undecided till the end of the conference. The Indian government delegation was adamant against its adoption, and the UN procedure, dependent on consensus-building, ruled out adoption against the will of the Indian government. While this may be a setback, the Dalit Caucus was successful in getting sizable space in the final declaration produced by the NGOs. Paragraphs 19 to 24 of the NGO document spoke of the plight of Dalits, and condemned caste discrimination, and untouchability in the strongest terms possible.

The Dalit representatives in Durban did even better in the area of publicity and drawing world-wide attention to themselves and their cause. After this conference there will hardly be any place in the world where people will not know who Dalits are. This is a sea change indeed from the pre-WCAR days when Indians had to strive in vain to make non-Indians fathom what caste-based discrimination means and involves. The impact of the Dalit Caucus at the conference and indeed in Durban itself is well captured in the following report of the Asia Human Rights Commission. According to the report:

The delegation of 200 Dalits, wearing their badges and headstraps with the words “cast away caste” and telling their histories, won the hearts of every-one. In their demonstrations, they sang, “Down, Down, Casteism; Up, Up, Humanism.” Of their drums, an observer at a conference session said, “It was the Dalits’ drum that helped all victims here at Durban dance together.” These long-time sufferers of one of the worst forms of discrimination that humanity has known stole the hearts of everyone and became the humanizing factor at this conference, a conference where a few powerful governments disgraced themselves by arrogantly walking away from the conference because they could not have their own way.

A little more should be said of the Dalits’ drum. This was at one time scorned as “the scavenger’s drum”. After days of working in the most savage of conditions, these people, the poorest people of India, used to create a short spell of humanity in their own ghetto by dancing to the tune of their drums. The drum, therefore, was the sound of the ghetto and the sound of people who were silenced through the cruelest of punishments and religious sanctions. This drum has now become a symbol of pride of a newly awakened people who proudly sing, “We are Dalits; we are Dalits.”

“At Durban, these people showed that they are no longer the silent people but a very vocal lot with their own leaders, who included many Ph.D.s and other university graduates, priests, a number of members of parliament, women leaders and many others who simply call themselves Dalit activists. The quality of their interventions was high, and their spirits showed great resilience. They are now a people who show a remarkable sense of self-respect.

“It is time the international community, particularly the human rights community, speaks with one voice in support of the Dalits and calls for a quickening of their liberation. It is also time to tell the Indian government: ‘Shame, shame’.”

There was a noticeable shift in the Indian government's attitude to the issue. From a position of near denial, it moved to recognize caste-based discrimination as a serious problem to be addressed even more seriously. Mr Omar Abdullah, minister of state for external affairs, in his statement at the inter-governmental plenary, referred to India's commitment to human rights and fundamental principles. He maintained that the Dalit lobby, in the run-up to the world conference, had engaged in propaganda that was highly exaggerated and misleading, often based on anecdotal evidence, regarding caste-based discrimination.

The Indian government had all along opposed attempts to include caste and caste-based discrimination in the WCAR agenda. Its standard position has been that caste is not race, and therefore does not come under the purview of the world conference. It claimed that "untouchability" practices no longer exist and that the government has taken adequate measures to end any further forms of discrimination against Dalits. Its belligerent approach before the conference gave way to admission of the problem, even though it successfully kept the issue from being discussed in the inter-governmental meeting. Condemning caste-based discrimination as evil, Dr Abdullah referred to the constitutional, legislative and administrative framework; to affirmative action programmes which India is determined to continue. He was however, skeptical about outside involvement. "It is neither legitimate nor feasible nor practical for this World Conference or, for that matter, even the UN, to legislate, let alone police, individual behaviour in our societies. The battle has to be fought within our respective societies to change thoughts, processes and attitudes..."

Precisely because the Indian state has not shown sufficient determination and political will to eliminate caste-based discrimination, Dalits were forced to take up the issue in the international fora including the WCAR. Besides, if international human rights movements and the UN Human Rights instruments and mechanisms are to be credible, they cannot ignore the denial and violation of Dalit rights. The Dalits in India alone account for 16% (160 million) of the total population, while South Asia has about 240 million. This is about 2/3 of the total population of Europe. This staggering population alone is enough reason for the international community to officially recognize their discrimination on the basis of caste even under the covert title of discrimination based on "Work and Descent".

The Indian National Human Rights Commission adopted a more positive position in its statement. Listing all the constitutional provisions and an impressive range of legislative measures undertaken by India to end discrimination against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, which included

The Protection of Civil Rights (Anti-Untouchability) Act, 1955

The Bonded Labour (Abolition) Act, 1976

The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989

The Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act, 1993)

The statement said that, despite this, "much remains to be done to bring to an end the discrimination and inequality that have been practised for centuries, and this requires both sustained effort and time. There are manifest inadequacies in implementation which are deeply frustrating and painful to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and, indeed, to all Indians who strive to end the injustice that persists in several forms and the atrocities that occur." Furthermore, emphasizing the obligation of states parties to observe the discipline of UN instruments and treaty bodies, the statement maintained that

“this Conference provides a singular opportunity to the international community to deal openly and courageously with the vexed issues of discrimination and inequality as they exist all over the world, in all of their variety, including the forms of discrimination that persist in India and all other countries. In such a context, it is not so much the nomenclature of the form of discrimination that must engage our attention, but the fact of its persistence that must cause concern...

the Commission is of the view that the debate on whether race and caste are co-terminus, or similar forms of discrimination, is not the essence of the matter. The Commission believes deeply in the value of engaging Governments, non-governmental organizations, national institutions, and all concerned elements of civil society in the process of fighting discrimination, and urges that this process be conducted at all levels in a spirit that is genuinely interested in the furtherance of human rights, and not vitiated by self-righteousness or by political and other extraneous considerations.”

Where do we go from here?

The Dalit Human Rights Movement has gained international visibility through different human rights forums. The International Dalit Solidarity Network (IDSN) has a crucial role to play in the future in building further the raised consciousness, nationally and internationally. At the same time, the Dalit movement in India has to share the achievements and developments with the grassroots people and empower the latter further. There is a great need for sensitizing the public and exercising pressure on the political system. The church has to actively participate in all these processes. In accordance with the need of the time during the run-up to the world conference, the church maintained a low profile though it had played a significant role in the secular campaign against caste-based discrimination. In the post-Durban situation, the church however, has to play a more prominent role in mobilizing resources for the empowerment and development of Dalits.

The Rev. Y. Moses is the executive secretary of the Dalit Concerns desk of the National Council of Churches in India. He is a well known Dalit activist and belongs to the Church of South India. He was a member of the WCC delegation to Durban.

Questions for reflection and discussion:

1. What information is available locally on the situation of Dalits in India?
2. What justice issues are raised for the international ecumenical community by the continued oppression of Dalits?
3. 80% of the Christian Church in India is Dalit.

Connecting the disconnected: the vision forward by Mvumelwano Dandala

As a South African, I am very grateful for this conference. After a long period of alienation, South Africa needs to understand its own history in the context of the pains and ideals of the world. The world did not stand with us against Apartheid because all was well with the world.

The defeat of Apartheid was only one significant leap in a struggle for justice for all people in the world. South Africa will understand its responsibility to nurture and entrench a human rights

culture as something it has to be accountable for to the world that helped it defeat the legalized racism of Apartheid.

We came with questions, and we depart with a heightened awareness that answers to this intractable question are not easy. We came to Durban as diverse interest groups, each promoting its own cause; and we depart more aware of our interconnectedness and the common thread that binds our diverse struggles. We do not depart triumphantly as those who have solved the historical problem of racism, but as those who summoned the courage to identify the problem and seek to resolve it collectively. Many will debate the value of this exercise, but one thing remains beyond doubt: that as the world community we took time to deliberate, and to give a space for victims of racism, xenophobia and other related intolerance to share their stories.

The second point of value for me is that we have taken time to name the causes of their suffering and to give them visibility. Many Dalits, Romas, refugees, victims of war, descendants of slaves, victims of colonialism and contemporary forms of slavery can at last say: for the first time in history the world heard our pain. The world can no longer say that it did not know. We must continue to name on the world stage the areas where these evils continue to be practised.

The exercise would be incomplete and indeed futile were it not also to offer an opportunity for perpetrators and descendants of perpetrators to free themselves from the entrapment of the past. Otherwise, this should simply have been a conference of victims. For it to be understood properly, this conference was for perpetrators and descendants of perpetrators as much as it was for the victims. This is a global conference simply because the issue of racism is everyone's agenda. Racism puts most of us, if not everyone, on one side or the other. A conscious effort is needed to undo these boundaries if the brotherhood and sisterhood of all humanity is going to be effectively re-established. We can say with confidence today that a large part of the world recognizes the need for robust dialogue if this problem is to be overcome. In the same vein, we have seen the difficulty of getting people who do not see eye to eye to begin to dialogue.

If democracy as a way of governance is going to be embraced by the modern younger nations, the historic democracies of the world must show faith in it. We cannot dialogue simply when it is likely to favour us. The alternative to robust dialogue for a healed world is tragic war and violence. Let us dialogue to end racism, xenophobia and related forms of discrimination.

The fourth challenge is that, in many respects, we must look positively at the problems encountered at this conference. We need to keep learning how to conduct a global dialogue in ways that in the end bring us closer rather than increase the gulf between us. As NGOs, governments and diverse groups, we need to seriously explore ways whereby global dialogue, particularly on issues where there is a gulf of opinion and beliefs, will move the world to closer positions. Fixedly defined positions on matters religious, ideological and historical often prove to be a stumbling block in meaningful dialogue on matters of racism, xenophobia and related intolerance. The challenge is how these can be so addressed that they cease providing theoretical bases for the justification of exclusive tendencies and positions, in order to embrace broader bases that have been examined and tested beyond their own confines.

The biggest challenge for us is the global implication of the crusade to rid our political, social and moral landscape of racism. As it was with the issues of abolition of slavery, it is right that the crusade to eradicate racism becomes a global crusade. Nation states and national policies cannot regard themselves as immune from the global scrutiny. Just as the world voiced its objections to Apartheid and forced this country to reconsider, so must it be with all nations. None must be

allowed rest as long as it practises racism and abuse of human rights. Indeed we cannot afford to simply treat as an own affair the issue of racism. In this respect, we must begin to seriously pose the question whether, on such an issue, (an issue that cuts across national boundaries), we should treat such policy as the protected reserve of nation states. Should we not declare that no state can regard racially based policies as its internal politics? This item must be kept firmly on the agenda of global discussions on racism, xenophobia and related discrimination.

One crucial lesson we have learned from this conference is that racism is completely unacceptable and those states that practise institutional racism should not be allowed to rest comfortably. Our concern though must also be what to do with subtle forms of racism, internalised systems of racism, and those practices that have lifted racism to some acceptable form. Here we are referring to racism in the media, research, academia, religion, and mainstream culture. We know that, besides being the most difficult form of racism to acknowledge, it is also the most stubborn since it enjoys higher forms of rationalization. In the end, it is easier to condemn Apartheid and the caste system than it is to condemn racial stereotyping of Hollywood and see the Afro-pessimism of western media as a form of racism.

An important lesson of this conference, in the words of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, spoken at a media conference a few days ago, is that “it is the millions and millions of ordinary people in the Middle East, the Americas, Europe, Latin America, the Pacific region, Africa and Asia, who should forge a strong bond to wage the fight against racism. The fight against racism will not see the light of day without the active involvement of ordinary people”. If there was a fight that dare not be left exclusively to governments, this is it. This is a peoples’ struggle. Certainly governments have their share, but ultimately, it is the commitment of ordinary social institutions, organized religion, organized labour, educational institutions and civil society organizations in general that will ultimately overcome racism in the world.

It is significant that this conference was held in Africa, a continent whose entire life has been marked by scars of racism. Today, in the manner in which Africa has related with those who abused her racially, embracing them for the sake of the survival of humanity and the welfare of all, Africa must find courage and capacity to challenge the world to embrace as a basis for the war against racism, UBUNTU, the philosophy that I am because you are, and you are because I am. The drive for the renewal of this continent must not be driven merely by a desire to emulate the western world. It must be driven by a desire to put UBUNTU at the heart of globalization as an alternative philosophy for the world. Africa cannot seek to build its economy on the back of slaves, as some major economies have done. New bases for the world economic well-being must be designed.

We may still be disconnected, but at last the dim lines that connect us as one humanity are beginning to emerge. We are now aware that, despite the long legacy of racism, our common aim is to recover the age-old thread that joined us together in the distant past as a common people with common ancestors. Historical tragedies may have driven us apart, but our common humanity must reunite us, and remind us of our common destiny.

We came to Durban heavily laden with anxieties, anger, guilt and despair. We came with great expectations and high hopes for speedy remedies. We depart filled with dreams of what is possible. We depart energized to make a difference in our local areas, in our nations and in the world. We depart united in our common resolve to declare for now and for posterity; racism is our business and we will join forces to eradicate it.

Bishop Myumelwano Dandala is Presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church in Southern Africa and President of the South Africa Council of Churches. He was the leader of the WCC Ecumenical delegation to the WCAR.

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**SUBMISSION TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER ON HUMAN RIGHTS
ON THE DRAFT DECLARATION AND PROGRAMME OF ACTION**

DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA
26 AUGUST – 7 SEPTEMBER 2001

**Commission of the Churches on International Affairs
of the World Council of Churches (CCIA/WCC)
NGO in General Consultative Status with ECOSOC**

The Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, against the background of more than fifty years of work by the World Council of Churches against racism and its effects, notably through its Program to Combat Racism, has submitted comments for consideration in the drafting of the Draft Declaration and Program of Action on 15 August 2000.

This submission in its present form has been revised to integrate the comments and amendments presented by the participants of the Regional Preparatory Consultations organized by the World Council of Churches in Latin America, Asia/Pacific, Africa (two Consultations) and Gender, Religion and Racism for the Africa region.

These preliminary proposals reflect the experience of victims around the world who are members of or related to the 342 member churches of the WCC.

Sources, causes, forms and contemporary manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

No country or society today is completely free of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. Thus it is appropriate that the Declaration and Programme of Action address all governments, non-state and private-sector actors and civil society organizations - including the churches and church-based organizations and religious institutions - that bear shared responsibility for the elimination of such violations of fundamental human rights in their own societies and for the application of universal standards in all countries.

Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance are at the root of many contemporary internal and international armed conflicts, and efforts to eliminate these sources of injustice are integral to the global Agenda for Peace and to the building of a universal culture of peace and non-violent approaches to conflict transformation.

Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance are barriers to development in poor countries and to equal economic opportunity in rich ones. The negative impact of economic globalization, which includes racial/ethnic inequities and the exclusion of large sectors from the benefits of the global economy.

It discriminates especially against former colonies and continuing territorial colonies of European powers in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific, against Indigenous Peoples in Latin America, and against native and Aboriginal and Indigenous Peoples in predominately White industrialized nations. Colonization and slavery demonstrated the heinous nature of an earlier period of economic globalization that was also driven by self-interest and was equally devoid of compassion.

The dominant source of racism and racial discrimination is White racism against people of color around the world. The rising tide of violence in internal conflicts in many regions, however, demonstrates that extreme manifestations of national identity and of ethnocentrism are forms of related intolerance that have similar impact upon peoples of the same or similar racial heritage in many societies. The relationship between internal conflict and colonial heritage cannot be overlooked.

Caste is a prevalent form of discrimination affecting some 240 million people in South Asia and some parts of Africa, in violation of Art. 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The sources of this discrimination lie deep in the cultures and religious formation of these societies, making it especially complex and resistant to purely legal remedies.

The role that Christian missions have played in denigrating and devaluing Indigenous contributions to the understanding of Christianity in the context of non-Western traditions has to be acknowledged. Religious intolerance and the political manipulation of religion and religious affiliation are on the rise in many parts of the world and are increasingly a factor in national and international conflict. As a Christian religious organization we recognize that certain religious teachings and practices contribute to and aggravate religious intolerance and perpetuate cultural and racial discrimination. Historically certain religious enterprises have served as catalysts for colonization, slavery and apartheid. The efforts of the Special Rapporteur on Religious Intolerance, who has drawn attention to these questions, should be supported and strengthened.

Governments should be further encouraged to respect the right to religious freedom, and to acknowledge the spiritualities of Indigenous Peoples as authentic religion, following the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on Religious Intolerance. State religion often aggravates discrimination against those who profess a religious belief different from the state religion.

2. Victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

Women and children of color often suffer first and most severely the effects of racism, sexism, caste and class discrimination. Societies and social systems dominated by patriarchal attitudes and use of power often favor racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, making the oppression of women still more acute and complex. Racism, sexism and class frequently form a triangle of discrimination in which many women of color are trapped in their daily lives. The poor are the most vulnerable to the impact of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. With the feminization of poverty it is again women who are most severely affected and rendered vulnerable to other violations of human rights through sex tourism and trafficking of women, discriminatory population control policies and sterilization, inequitable access to education and discrimination in employment which relegates them to the most poorly paid and demeaning jobs.

Victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, especially Indigenous and displaced peoples and those living in colonized territories, tend to be denied ownership of, control over, access to, and relationships with their ancestral lands. This has profound economic consequences for these peoples and often constitutes a violation of religious liberty for those whose spirituality is profoundly linked to the land and the natural environment. Regardless of where they live, their political or social culture, or their particular beliefs, Indigenous Peoples all view the land as sacred and the essential basis of their survival. Their identities, cultures, languages, philosophies of life and spiritualities are bound together in a balanced relationship with all creation.

Victims of caste discrimination suffer the imposition of separate habitation, exclusion due to prohibitions of inter-dining and inter-marriage, untouchability, discrimination and denial of equal opportunity in public life.

Examination of contemporary manifestations of racism should address issues of environmental racism. In many countries, people of African-descent, Indigenous Peoples and ethnic minorities are those who are more likely than Whites to live in environmental hazardous conditions and near uncontrolled toxic waste sites. Indigenous Peoples' lands and sacred places have been invaded by extensive mining operations and made into radioactive waste sites. A double standard exists as to what practices are acceptable in certain communities, villages or cities and not in others. As a consequence, the residents of these communities suffer shorter life spans; higher maternal, infant and adult mortality; poor health; poverty; diminished economic opportunities and substandard housing. Their quality of life overall is degraded.

Expressions of xenophobia - the rejection of outsiders - are increasingly evident in all regions of the world. Governments are devising more sophisticated ways of preventing would-be migrants and asylum-seekers from reaching their territories. Such government policies are designed especially to keep people of color out of these countries and to control their population growth. Politicians often use foreigners as a scapegoat for domestic political and economic problems. There are increasing incidents of hostility and violence towards foreigners, whether legal migrants, undocumented workers, refugees, or asylum-seekers. Undocumented migrants, particularly migrant women, are especially vulnerable. They often have no recourse for redress against the violence to which they are subjected.

Governments should be encouraged to sign and to ratify the Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families. Governments should commit themselves to addressing the causes, which force people to leave their communities, such as political and religious persecution, human rights violations, war, poverty, and environmental degradation. Governments should refrain from keeping asylum seekers in prisons for long periods of time while their cases are being processed.

Governments should develop awareness-raising programs about the reasons for migration, the contributions which migrants make to their societies, and the need to appreciate the rich variety of cultures in the world. The relationship between xenophobia and racism needs further study.

Governments should ensure that their asylum procedures provide maximum protection to those seeking protection from persecution and that they are in full accord with international refugee law.

Governments should consider adopting measures to legalize the undocumented status of migrants in their countries, to facilitate the integration of migrants into national life and to allow long-term migrants to become citizens.

Governments should acknowledge that the institutions of their societies have in many cases been built on the values, beliefs and traditions of white society, and as such deny the values, beliefs, and knowledge of Indigenous Peoples.

The Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aiming at the abolition of the death penalty and related decisions adopted by the United Nations have encouraged states to abolish or strictly limit the death penalty. Article 6(5) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) expressly prohibits the imposition of the death penalty for crimes committed by persons below eighteen years of age. In some countries, which continue to apply the death penalty --including to juvenile offenders -- statistics show a consistent pattern of racial discrimination and racial bias towards juvenile and adult offenders in law enforcement and the administration of criminal justice.

Governments that have made reservations to Article 6(5), which are incompatible with the object and purpose of the ICCPR, should withdraw these reservations. Special measures should be adopted at the national level to address discriminatory attitudes and conduct within the juvenile and adult justice systems, including the police. Governments should also evaluate and dismantle any racist judicial structures/procedures that render people of color vulnerable to judgment without proper legal representation or a fair trial.

3. 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.

Government ministries of education, those responsible for education at all levels of society, including through private and/or religious schools, should review curriculum content at all levels of schooling and education, and revise all those which either explicitly or implicitly discriminate against social groups on the basis of race, ethnicity, nationality, caste or descent. New, innovative educational materials should be researched and developed to promote race, ethnic and national tolerance and a culture of inclusiveness and non-discrimination. Such an approach to education should include civic education with respect to anti-racist laws and forms of legal redress available to the victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. History text books and teaching materials need to reflect the perspective of those who have suffered colonization, slavery, apartheid, genocide, religious conquest, and other forms of repression.

Programs promoting tolerance, language recovery, the recovery of truth in history and multiculturalism should be encouraged in the schools and through public awareness-raising

campaigns. Targets for equitable outcomes should be set, and monitoring mechanisms put in place.

Governments of countries where caste discrimination is widespread should put in place all necessary constitutional, legislative and administrative measures, including appropriate forms of affirmative action, to prohibit discrimination on the basis of caste-bound occupation and descent, and put in place effective legal standards at state and local levels.

4. Provision of effective remedies, recourse, redress, (compensatory) and other measures at the national, regional and international levels.

Impunity for past offenders responsible for massive crimes, including slavery, colonialism, apartheid, genocide and indentured labor, committed against populations based on racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance should be abolished in international and national law. Victims are entitled to the truth, to have it recognized publicly, and to compensation for offenses committed. Living offenders should be charged and tried, preferably in national courts of justice, or in appropriate international courts or tribunals. Removing impunity and allowing formal public accounting for past offenses and compensation are important in creating public awareness and are essential to the process of social healing and reconciliation in order to break spirals of retribution and violence which pass from generation to generation. The removal of impunity for past offenders must be accompanied by the redistribution of national wealth, e.g. land, industry and financial institutions.

The International community should establish legal means to prosecute those who benefit from armed conflict through the sale and supply of arms to warring parties, and the extortion of natural resources such as oil, diamonds and gold.

Governments of countries where caste discrimination continues should implement legislation, monitor compliance and provide accessible avenues of redress through instruments accessible to victims. They should ensure that persons or institutions responsible for discrimination based on caste, occupation or descent or for the trafficking of women do not remain immune from prosecution under the law and assure that victims are fairly compensated. Degrading practices such as manual scavenging should be brought to an end and persons engaged in them rehabilitated and trained for occupations that respect human dignity. Scavengers' contribution to society must be recognized and adequately compensated.

The UN WCAR presents governments with the opportunity to right the wrongs of the past and design new ways of combating racism today. While the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination condemns racial discrimination, it does not provide strategies for remedies. These remedies may come in the form of reparations to victims and communities who have suffered racism, including the cancellation of debt for former colonized poor countries that are highly indebted to financial and governmental institutions dominated by former colonizers.

5. Strategies to achieve full and effective equality, including international cooperation and enhancement of the United Nations and other international mechanisms in combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and follow-up.

The consistency and political will exercised by the United Nations in support of those in South Africa who struggled for decades to abolish the apartheid system stands as a pertinent example of the capacity of the international community to address effectively the root causes of racism and racial discrimination. This international, multi-sectoral approach should be reflected in the Program of Action of the World Conference, taking into account measures ranging from economic cooperation and practice in both public and private sectors, education and awareness-building campaigns, cooperation in the military and security spheres, and other measures to sanction and/or isolate governments of countries where there is a consistent pattern of gross violations of human rights based on racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. The international community must refrain from declaring reconciliation without justice or without the establishment of mechanisms that would prevent further racial discrimination and violence.

The call of the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights for more effective coordination among United Nations bodies in the field of human rights should be reiterated and strengthened with respect to racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

At the national level, participatory mechanisms for assessment of the implementation of the Declaration and Program of Action should be established within National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. As provided in the Paris Principles of 1991, the composition of National Institutions should ensure the pluralist representation of civil society, including representatives of organizations involved in efforts to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, as well as discrimination based on descent.

National mechanisms for redress, including the judiciary at all levels, should also include persons belonging to groups representing victims of racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, including discrimination based on descent.

At the international level, a thematic mechanism should be established within the United Nations human rights machinery to examine, monitor and publicly report on discriminatory practices related to occupation and descent, including caste.

The international community should create a political and legal mechanism that will prevent the flow of resources from poor countries to rich countries through corruption and unequal trade policies, and begin the repatriation of such extorted resources back to poor countries.

A permanent follow-up mechanism should be established within the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to monitor and evaluate programs to combat racism and to coordinate the exchange of information. This mechanism should monitor and report on the implementation of the final outcome of the World Conference.

A time-defined review of the implementation of the Program of Action under the auspices of the United Nations should be included.

In addition to the recommendations for action included under previous headings, the following should be considered for inclusion in the Draft Program of Action:

- The establishment of effective mechanisms for the eradication of poverty and equality on the distribution of wealth within States and basic conditions to improve the living conditions of women and children;
- The establishment of effective mechanisms within States to redress the inequalities of opportunities for formal education and employment;
- The establishment of effective measures to prevent and to redress practices of sex tourism and trafficking of women and children in general, and women and children whose lives have been affected by racism and caste;
- The creation of mechanisms to ensure that the health systems provide equal treatment to women of racial/ethnic communities and women of descent related to caste, and that their reproductive rights are respected;
- The development of means to assure accessibility of health facilities and medication to women of color.
- The institution of measures to assure compensation to all victims of racial violence and discrimination, and establish programs to uplift the well-being of the victims;
- The affirmation of the economic, political, social, cultural and spiritual rights of Indigenous Peoples as coequals in the shaping of the world's historical, cultural and spiritual heritage;
- The establishment of effective policies for land redistribution in colonized countries where Indigenous Peoples have been displaced from their land;
- The building of bridges between Indigenous Peoples and the wider community, and to help unite and strengthen Indigenous Peoples' experiences and their existing institutions so that they may play a full and active part in the elimination of racism. To encourage greater diffusion of information about the rights and values of Indigenous Peoples and their traditional cultures at national and international levels;
- The development of international means to monitor and prosecute multinational corporations that are involved in the exploitation of communities of color, engaged in child labour and those that practice environmental racism;
- The reiteration of the need for affirmative action to redress the injustices done to all victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia or related intolerance;
- The undertaking of studies on toxic and hazardous waste facilities, threatening presence of poisons and pollutants and their impact on the health and livelihood of communities of African-descent, Indigenous Peoples and ethnic minorities; propose measures to control such abuse and punish offenders; and propose domestic and international remedies and compensation for victims of environmental racism;
- The establishment of mechanisms by which to monitor the role of media in perpetuating racial stereo-types and exacerbating racial violence.
- The reform of legal systems to make them free of racial prejudices and end the criminalization of people of color;
- The undertaking of an in-depth analysis of the negative impact of racial and gender discrimination on women of color, and implement legislation, policies and educational strategies to protect their rights;
- The creation of means to make visible the multiple forms of discrimination to which women of color are subjected, in order to establish effective measures to end these forms of multiple discrimination.

Address to the UN World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance by His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of Cilicia, moderator of the WCC Central Committee

“Intolerance has become the mark of many contemporary societies. The causes for intolerance are economic, religious, social and political. Intolerance is evil; it is a source of violence, hatred and division, and it manifests itself through racism, discrimination, xenophobia, and violation of human rights. Therefore, it must be eradicated in the life of human societies. Religions, actors of civil societies and states can together play a pivotal role in combating violence in all its forms and expressions. I consider such a partnership of crucial importance in this globalized world; a partnership that maintains the particularities of each partner, uplifts the specific vocation of each, and strengthens collaboration for common action. In this perspective, I would like to make a few observations and share with you a few experiences from my own Armenian background, and global ecumenical experience:

Speaking of tolerance or intolerance means basically speaking of diversities. In fact, the creation of the universe and humanity by God is characterized by diversities. Creation is not a monolithic reality; diversity is a salient feature of it. In the story of creation told in the book of Genesis, diversity is a dominant reality. However, along with the emphasis on diversity, the book of Genesis also speaks of coherence, harmony, interaction and unity as inherent qualities of creation. These two aspects show that in the context of God’s cre-ation, diversity is a source of enrichment that acquires its true meaning and value through unity. In fact, the creation of the universe and humanity is in its essence a concrete manifestation of unity in diversity and diversity in unity. Diversity is a gift of God that must be preserved for the integrity and sustainability of creation. This basic affirmation of Christian theology is common in all living faiths.

As diversity is a gift of God, it is also the commandment by God and a basic necessity for the preservation of the integrity and unity of the creation, and a *conditio sine qua non* for the survival of the creation and humanity. This commandment by God is a call to humanity to live together, and live out differences through dialogical interaction. Intolerance hinders interaction, destroys coexistence and jeopardizes the future of the world. It is a sin against the Creator. We must, therefore, combat intolerance with its far-reaching consequences. We must initiate action-oriented processes and set efficient programmes that transform intolerance to tolerance and isolation to co-existence. In this context I would propose some specific ways through which we could achieve this goal:

1) **Educating people.** We should not always react and condemn intolerance. We must become pro-active and promote mutual understanding, mutual respect and trust among peoples and between communities. We should design education programmes for people of all ages. Programmes that will help them to live together as neighbours, as men and women and children in communities. Programmes that will inculcate in the minds of people that in spite of their difference, as communities they are part of one big world community, the same humanity, and one creation. Programmes that will enhance the sense of mutual responsibility and accountability. Diversities and differences should not become a hindrance to peaceful and harmonious

coexistence among people, religions and cultures. They are integral to the fabric of human society.

2) **Promoting human rights.** Violation of human rights is another form of intolerance. Human rights are not discoveries of human beings. They are gifts of God and hence inviolable. Violation of human rights is a sin against God and the denial of other's rights to live in justice, peace and dignity. The challenge to eradicate intolerance comes to us in the form of the following questions: How can religions with other players of civil society work for the promotion of values of human rights? How can, all of us together, stop the continuing violations of human rights? It is evident that unless the rights of all peoples and nations for freedom, homeland, equal opportunity, participation and community are fully respected, intolerance will increase and generate more hatred and violence.

3) **Community building.** Intolerance implies exclusion from community or rejection of community. Intolerance is a concrete expression of exclusion and marginalization. Where there is community, there should also be equality, diversity and participation. Where there is community, there can be no intolerance. Community-building is essentially tolerance-building; it is a process of generating mutual confidence and understanding among people of different race, religious belonging, cultural identity and ethnic backgrounds. We must, therefore, aim at building communities that safeguard diversities, where identity and unity interact and where rights and obligations of all are fully respected.

For all people of faith, eradication of intolerance is a continual affirmation of their own beliefs and religious values. For Christians, it is a response to the will of God. As the spiritual head of the Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia, and the moderator of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, I pray that the growing partnership between the United Nations, world religions and civil society will become real, and that this effort to work together will deepen collaboration on issues arising from intolerance and give shape to relevant forms of action in concrete situations. It is also my hope that the forthcoming Durban World Conference will wrestle with the question of intolerance seriously and responsibly, that its message will touch the conscience of all those who perpetrate human rights violations, and commit all people of good faith to go beyond statements and make a difference. I hope and pray for all these to happen not for our own glory but for the Glory of the Creator and the integrity of His creation.”

**Ecumenical Caucus
statement at World Conference Against Racism**

Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, presented the statement of the Ecumenical Caucus at the UN World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCAR) to the media in Durban, South Africa, 5 September.

The Ecumenical Caucus included representatives of the World Council of Churches (WCC), United Methodist Church (General Board of Church and Society and General Board Global Ministries), United Church of Christ/Disciples of Christ, Lutheran World Federation (LWF), Church World Service and Witness/National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, Diakonia Council of Churches (Durban), Church of England, Sisters of Mercy, Canadian Council of Churches, Presbyterian Church USA, Church of Christ in Thailand, Medical Mission Sisters, Christian Reformed Church of Canada, and Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa.

The text of the Statement of the Ecumenical Caucus follows:

“Racism is a sin. It is contrary to God’s will for love, peace, equality, justice and compassion for all. It is an affront to human dignity and a gross violation of human rights.

Human dignity is God’s gift to all humankind. It is the gift of God’s image and likeness in every human being. Racism desecrates God’s likeness in every person. Human rights are the protections we give to human dignity. We participate in the human rights struggle to restore wholeness that has been broken by racism. The struggle against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerances is the struggle to sanctify and affirm life in all its fullness.

Racism dehumanizes, disempowers, marginalizes and impoverishes human beings. Its systematic and institutional forms have resulted in the death of many peoples, the plunder of resources, and the decimation of communities and nations.

Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerances all work, singularly and collectively, to diminish our common humanity. They thrive within the intersections of race, caste, colour, age, gender, sexual orientation, class, landlessness, ethnicity, nationality, language and disability. The dismantling and eradication of racism requires that we address all its manifestations and historical expressions, especially slavery and colonialism.

As people of faith, we call on all peoples, non-governmental organizations and governments to earnestly strive to break the cycles of racism and assist the oppressed to achieve self-determination and establish sustainable communities, without violating the rights of others.

The time to dismantle and eradicate racism is now. It is urgent for us and our churches to acknowledge our complicity with and participation in the perpetuation of racism, slavery and

colonialism, or we are not credible. This acknowledgment is critical because it leads to the necessary acts of apology and confession, of repentance and reconciliation, and of healing and wholeness. All of these elements form part of redress and reparations that are due the victims of racism, past and present.

As a faith community we pledge to struggle against racism and all its manifestations in the hope that God's people fulfil today the Gospel mandate that we "may all be one" (John 17:21).

To the above ends we commit ourselves to put the following priorities before the World Conference Against Racism as well as to our churches and related ecumenical bodies and institutions:

1. **SLAVERY, COLONIALISM, APARTHEID AND REPARATIONS.** For our churches and governments to acknowledge that they have benefited from the exploitation of Africans and African descendants and Asians and Asian descendants, and Indigenous Peoples through slavery and colonialism. We further call upon our churches to address the issue of reparations as a way of redressing the wrongs done, and to be clear that the trans-Saharan and transoceanic – Atlantic, Pacific and Indian – slave trade and all forms of slavery constitute crimes against humanity.

2. **PALESTINE.** For the end of Israeli colonialist occupation in the occupied Palestinian territories, the achievement of the right to self-determination by the Palestinian people, including the right of return, and for the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian state. We encourage dialogue between and among Jews, Muslims and Christians to promote peace, tolerance and harmonious relationships.

3. **DALITS AND CASTE-BASED DISCRIMINATION.** For the recognition of Dalits among the victims of racial discrimination and for caste-based discrimination to be included in the list of sources of racism. Further, that mechanisms be evolved by governments and the United Nations to prohibit and redress discrimination on the basis of work and descent.

4. **ROMA, SINTI AND TRAVELLERS.** For churches and governments to recognize that they have exploited Roma through slavery, ethnocide and assimilation. Governments should adopt immediate and concrete measures to eradicate the widespread discrimination, persecution, stigmatization and violence against the above peoples on the basis of their social origin and identity. Public welfare, including accommodation, education, medical care, and employment, as well as citizenship and political participation must be ensured for them. All these concerns must be addressed with the participation of Roma, Sinti and Travellers and their communities.

5. **MIGRANT WORKERS AND GLOBALIZATION.** To ensure that all migrant workers have the right to fair working conditions, decent wages and the right to organize, free from racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerances, both in sending as well as receiving countries. We urge governments to legislate against and stop the trafficking of women and children for sexual exploitation and domestic labour. Poverty and landlessness breeds racism. The relation between migration, poverty and landlessness must be analyzed especially under schemes of privatization and globalization.

6. **MIGRANTS, ASYLUM-SEEKERS, REFUGEES, AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLES.** To acknowledge that racism and all its manifestations are at the root of discrimination against refugees, migrants, asylum-seekers, displaced peoples, undocumented persons and internally displaced persons. We urge the United Nations to call on governments to take appropriate action to protect the rights of such individuals in both the receiving as well as the sending countries, ensuring them freedom of movement, equitable access to education and health, housing and legal services.

7. **INDIGENOUS PEOPLES.** To join efforts with all entities to stand in solidarity with Indigenous Peoples in their struggles for self-determination and in their efforts to build peaceful and sustainable communities and to safeguard their indigenous knowledge, resources, land and ancestral domains, free from discrimination and based on respect, freedom and equality. We also call on all of us to embrace the richness of the social, cultural, spiritual and linguistic diversities of Indigenous Peoples.

8. **RELIGIOUS LIBERTY AND RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE.** To promote religious freedom and religious liberty as human rights. Any intolerance, aggression towards, or denial of this freedom to anyone and any community or society is an attack on human dignity. Even as churches must examine their complicity in religious intolerance in the past and present, we call on churches and governments to respect the freedom of religion or belief and protect the act of religious worship. We must acknowledge the negative impacts of religion, including the uncritical use of sacred texts that unduly results in the assertion of superiority of one group over another, but especially so on women, and take immediate steps to address the violence that stems from such impacts.

9. **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE.** To ensure and empower children and young people to have a voice and be included in anti-racism strategies. Non-governmental organizations and governments should develop programmes in consultation with children and young people on all matters aimed at educating them about their rights, involving them in cultural, political and economic decision-making, and assisting them in creating positive self-identity and confidence, ensuring that their ethnic, indigenous, linguistic and religious heritages are valued.

10. **FOLLOW-UP AND MONITORING MECHANISMS.** To ensure that there are clear follow-up measures and monitoring mechanisms to both the implementation of and adherence to the aspirations contained in the Declaration and the concrete actions contained in the Programme of Action of the World Conference Against Racism. Considering the specificity of women's experiences of racism, the Programme of Action must incorporate gender analysis. National action plans must be developed and resources identified and allocated for the implementation of this Programme. The Programme of Action must be gender-sensitive on all levels – local, national and international.”

**Points of clarification of WCC policy
in response to questions about proposed ecumenical actions in the context of the
current Palestinian - Israeli conflict**

On the WCC response to the current situation in Israel/Palestine

The WCC has been deeply involved in efforts for peace in the Holy Land since the State of Israel was created in 1948. It sought to help European Jews escape from Nazi-occupied territories in Europe during the time of the Holocaust and helped them to emigrate to safe havens. It assisted Palestinians refugees displaced as a result of Partition. It repeatedly called for a comprehensive peace agreement that would assure the rights, well-being and security of Israel and the Palestinian people. It has encouraged dialogue between Christians, Jews and Muslims to promote tolerance and harmonious relationships. It has since 1948 recognized the existence of the State of Israel and the right of Palestinians to have a state of their own. It has been in close relationships with its member churches and the Christian communities in Jerusalem.

Since 1995, the WCC focused its attention on Jerusalem as a key to peace in the wider region, calling for it to be recognized by all as a shared city. With the breakdown of the Oslo peace process, the provocative visit of Ariel Sharon to the Esplanade in Jerusalem and the resulting second Palestinian uprising, the WCC has intensified its efforts for international advocacy on behalf of its member churches and Christians of Jerusalem and the Holy Land. More and more of the latter have been forced to emigrate as a result of Israeli occupation of their lands and discriminatory practices against Palestinians.

In February 2001, the WCC Central Committee stated:

“We share the frustration and disappointments of our Palestinian sisters and brothers. We are deeply disturbed by a pattern of discrimination, routine humiliation, segregation and exclusion which restricts Palestinian freedom of movement, including access to the Holy sites and includes the disproportionate use of military force by Israel, the denial of access to timely medical assistance, the destruction of property, including tens of thousands of olive trees, and which requires special permission for Palestinians to enter areas under Israeli jurisdiction and establishes “cantonization” of the land, so that Palestinian land is separated from one another – a pattern so very reminiscent of policies that the WCC has condemned in the past.

We therefore urge the member churches of the WCC to increase their efforts to condemn injustice and all forms of discrimination, to end Israeli occupation, to pray for and promote a comprehensive and just peace in the Middle East. To help inform and strengthen those efforts, we commend to the churches the background information presented to this meeting for their study and urgent action.

We call upon the General Secretary and staff of the Council to:

- *continue their support of efforts towards a negotiated peace in the Middle East, based on international law, paying special attention to the future status of Jerusalem, the right of return of Palestinian refugees, the increasing number of settlements and measures to enforce all relevant United Nations resolutions, including those regarding the withdrawal from all occupied territories – the Palestinian territories, the Golan Heights and Shaba'a.*

- *continue to analyze and to keep the member churches regularly informed on the evolving situation;*
- *accompany the churches of the Holy Land and their members, and advocate their rights;*
- *support local Israeli and Palestinian grassroots peacebuilding efforts; and*
- *promote and/or cooperate with church, ecumenical and other initiatives, to strengthen broad international support for a comprehensive peace based on justice and security for all the peoples of the region.”*

In pursuance of this statement, an ecumenical delegation was sent to the Holy Land in June 2001 on a consultative mission on behalf of the WCC General Secretary. Its mandate was to report back to and advise the General Secretary on the local ecumenical strategies and plans within the current context, and to prepare for an international ecumenical consultation held in August. The latter was convened to bring together the churches and ecumenical partners from the region and around the world that are actively engaged in advocacy work for peace in the Middle East. The consultation provided the churches with an occasion to share ideas and initiatives and begin to coordinate their efforts in support of a comprehensive peace based on justice and security for all peoples of the region. The recommendations from the delegation report and the consultation will be submitted to the WCC Executive Committee for its consideration.

On the condemnation of violence, terrorism and extremism

The WCC has always condemned the use of all forms of violence, both direct or physical as well as indirect or systemic, by all sides. It has particularly denounced violence against innocent civilians, and expressed condolences to the families of victims on both sides. Moreover, it has repeatedly advocated the need for a negotiated peace in the Middle East based on UN resolutions and international humanitarian law. The WCC has consistently avoided advocacy of any particular position but rather has underlined the fundamental importance of agreed norms of international law and human rights applicable to both sides of the present conflict. The WCC delegation report emphasizes the need “to identify, listen to and lift up the alternative and moderate voices on both sides of the civil society who are struggling to find a common vision and future and seek ways to bring them together...”. This is in line with the policy of the WCC, in the context of its Decade to Overcome Violence, to promote efforts to transform conflict by active non-violent means.

On the boycott of settlement goods

The International Ecumenical Consultation held in August suggested seven possible forms of action, including support for the campaign of some Israeli peace groups to boycott goods produced by Israeli settlements. This action was supported in particular by WCC member churches and ecumenical partners who are already active on the issue. Since the settlements constitute a particular form of illegal occupation and have repeatedly been condemned by the United Nations as a clear violation of international law, boycotting their goods was viewed as an effective, non-violent way of resisting Israeli occupation. The seven points are being submitted to the WCC Executive Committee meeting in mid-September for its further consideration.

On the issue of antisemitism

The WCC, whose process of formation was interrupted by the Second World War, was from the beginning deeply conscious of the roles played by some Christians and churches in fomenting antisemitism during the period of the Holocaust. From the time of its first Assembly in 1948 it has consistently condemned antisemitism and other forms of discrimination or intolerance based on race, religion or national origin. Similarly, it has condemned discrimination against Muslims and persons of Arab origin living in predominantly Christian nations. It has affirmed the right of the state of Israel to exist and the right of the Palestinians to have their own state as foreseen in the UN decisions on Partition in 1948. The criticism now of Israeli practices and policies, as expressed in WCC statements and actions, is not in any way directed against the Jewish religion or Jewish people. It is rather a criticism of the aggressive policies and actions of the government of the state of Israel against the Palestinian people. A 1992 study paper commended to the churches by the WCC Central Committee said, “criticism of the policies of the Israeli government is not in itself anti-Jewish. [The] pursuit of justice invariably involves criticism of states and political movements... Expressions of concern regarding Israel’s actions are not statements regarding the Jewish people or Judaism, but are a legitimate part of the public debate. The same holds true for a critique – from within or from without – of states and political movements that claim a Christian foundation for their basic values.”

Present criticism of the state of Israel follows from the WCC policy to hold all states accountable for their violations of international law and particularly for violations of international human rights and humanitarian norms applicable to all. No state can claim immunity from such obligations. Similarly, the international community has the obligation to apply equally to all states the sanctions provided in the Charter of the UN when a particular state consistently refuses to comply with the decisions of the UN Security Council.

For more information

For more information you are invited to visit the WCC webpage on Jerusalem at:
<http://wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/international/jerusalem.html> (the section on ‘WCC statements’ includes a selection of policy documents on Jerusalem and Israel/Palestine since 1948) and the webpage on the ecumenical Decade to Overcome Violence at
<http://wcc-coe.org/wcc/dov/index-e.html>

**BACKGROUND TO QUESTIONS ARISING FROM SOME ASPECTS OF THE
PARTICIPATION OF A WCC DELEGATION
in the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, Durban, South Africa**

There is need to clarify the actions of the World Council of Churches delegation during the debate for the adoption of the NGO declaration and programme of action at the end of the NGO Forum preceding the UN World Conference Against Racism in Durban recently.

Background

It is important to understand that the NGO Forum was divided into 44 regional and interest-based caucuses. One of those was the Ecumenical Caucus, of which the WCC delegation was part. Any voting done on the document was by caucuses and therefore at no stage did the WCC delegation actually vote as a delegation.

It is a fact that the spokesperson for the Ecumenical Caucus in some of the debates happened to be a member of the WCC delegation but whoever it was speaking on behalf of the Ecumenical Caucus and not exclusively on behalf of the WCC delegation.

The paragraphs on Anti-Semitism

In the draft of the NGO declaration there were three paragraphs relating to anti-semitism. These were paragraphs which the WCC delegation were monitoring very carefully because of the WCC's long standing commitment against anti-Semitism.

Two of the paragraphs presented absolutely no problem for the delegation and the delegation gave its wholehearted support. (these were paragraphs 12 and 13 in the draft text and subsequently, unchanged, became paragraphs 77 and 78 in the final text). The text was:

12. Antisemitism is one of the oldest, most pernicious and prevalent forms of racism which still exists and is even increasing in many areas of-the world; recognizing the dehumanization, persecution and genocide of Jews in the Holocaust, as well as other minorities during and before World War II; deeply alarmed by the continued activities of proponents of Holocaust denial and Holocaust revisionism, Holocaust trivialization, Holocaust minimization and by the channelling of racist rhetoric and calls to violence on the Internet; noting with distress that Jewish people still suffer from persisting prejudices and are victims of a deeply rooted antisemitism in many countries throughout the world; distressed by the recent desecration of many Jewish cemeteries, synagogues, and Jewish communal buildings and other property, as well as an increase in harassment and assaults of Jewish people worldwide; convinced of the necessity of more effective measures to address the issue of antisemitism worldwide today in order to counter these phenomena and increase awareness about them.

13. Antisemitism remains a pervasive and ingrained form of religious discrimination and Jewish people are increasingly a racialized minority; recognizing that Jewish populations and institutions continue to be targets of threats and acts of violence in countries around the world, and documented overt acts of antisemitic harassment and vandalism are on the rise; alarmed that extremist groups are proliferating at an alarming rate and propagating antisemitic and racist views and hate propaganda, increasingly on the Internet; deeply troubled by the electoral

successes of far right parties, with an increasing presence in coalition governments; profoundly concerned that in many countries in the world, Jewish people live in fear, frequently terrorized by extremist groups, and discriminated against in employment, education, in the media and social services.

It was the third paragraph which required careful study and which the Ecumencial Caucus proposed should be deleted. The text was :

14. We are concerned with the prevalence of antizionism and attempts to delegitimize the State of Israel through wildly inaccurate charges of genocide, war crimes crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing and apartheid, as a virulent contemporary form of antisemitism leading to firebombing of synagogues, armed assaults against Jews, incitements to killing, and the murder of innocent Jews, for their support for the existence of the State of Israel, the assertion of the right to self determination of the Jewish people and the attempts, through the State of Israel, to preserve their cultural and religious identity.

The Ecumencial Caucus was of the opinion that the clause added little to the strength of the previous two paragraphs. But, more importantly, the text was confusing in its structure in that it mixed the Jewish people with the State of Israel and implied that whatever criticism was made of the State of Israel was to be regarded as anti-Semitic.

This opinion was shared by every other Caucus except one and its deletion was greeted with applause.

The WCC position on anti-Semitism

From their arrival in Durban, even before the NGO Forum began, the WCC delegation was absolutely clear that, in any debates which might occur about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, criticism of the State of Israel and should not be regarded as criticism of all Jewish people. The delegation was determined to oppose such a construction.

From the time of its first Assembly in 1948 the WCC has consistently condemned anti-Semitism and other forms of discrimination based on race, religion and national origin. Any criticism of Israeli practices and policies, expressed in any WCC statements and actions, is not in any way directed against the Jewish religion or Jewish people. A 1991 study paper, commended to the churches by the WCC Central Committee, said ‘criticism of the policies of the Israeli government is not in itself anti-Jewish. The pursuit of justice invariably involves criticism of states and political movements. Expressions of concern regarding Israel’s actions are not statements regarding the Jewish people or Judaism, but are a legitimate part of the public debate. The same holds true for a critique, from within or without, of states and political movements that claim a Christian foundation for their basic values.

The document: ‘Points of clarification of WCC policy in response to questions about proposed ecumencial actions in the context of the current Palestinian-Israeli conflict ‘ was distributed to the media during the NGO Forum so there would be no doubt about the WCC’s position.

Press Stories and updates

South African Christians and international ecumenical movement unite against racism

by Stephen Webb

An extraordinary coalition of church leaders attending a worship service in Durban on August 31 marked a strengthening of the relationship between the ecumenical movement and the South African churches in the fight against racism.

Hundreds of Christians from around the world gathered for a service at the Methodist Central Mission, a candlelight procession through central Durban, and another service outside City Hall.

Under the theme “Christians unite against racism: May they all be one (John 17:21)”, worshippers listened to readings and prayers from international church leaders, including Presiding Bishop Mvumelwanolwano Dandala of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. Dandala is also the president of the South African Council of Churches (SACC), and the leader of the World Council of Churches (WCC) delegation to the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCAR).

Participating in the service were Cardinal Wilfrid Napier, archbishop of Durban, Thudiso Virginia Gcabashe, honorary life vice-president of the SACC, the Rev. Dr Sirirat Pusurinkham from the Church of Christ in Thailand, Bishop Rubin Phillip, Anglican bishop of Natal, Suzanne Lind from the Mennonite Central Committee, SACC general secretary, the Rev. Dr Molefe Tsele, Bishop Purity Malinga from the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, Frans Klopper from the Dutch Reformed Church, John McCullough from Church World Service USA, and Bishop Patrick Matolengwe from the SACC.

The English-language service included readings in Zulu and Thai, hymns in Zulu, drummers, African dancers, and a marimba band.

While the momentum and focus of the fight against racism seems to have weakened in the years since the victory over apartheid, the number of people and number of church leaders attending the Durban service indicated the significance for local churches of having the WCAR in the city.

As one church leader said, “Just by being here you have challenged us to reawaken our role in the struggle against racism in this country.”

In his sermon, Bishop Phillip said Christians must acknowledge and confess that racism and other forms of prejudice and intolerance still exist in the church. “We must cry: Lord have mercy, Christe Eleison, Nkosi Sihawukele.”

He said it is necessary to apologize to and seek forgiveness from one another “if our quest for genuine unity and reconciliation is to bear lasting fruit. Instead of being defensive about and

denying the existence of racism, let us rather have the grace to apologize for our acts – or the nations’ acts – of racism and to seek forgiveness from those whom we or our forbears have offended. To close the door on forgiveness is to close the door to true reconciliation.”

On the other hand, he said, those who have been at the receiving end of racism must also find the courage to forgive, however difficult that may be. “To forgive the other is to set that person free and to contribute to her discovering her full humanity, which was eroded in the act of racist behaviour.”

“I am convinced that if South Africans (as I am sure is the case with other nations) are to discover their new humanity in this beautiful and incredible land, then we must confess our wrongs, seek forgiveness and find the grace to forgive,” he said. At a reception following the service, WCC programme executive for combating racism Marilia Schüller said the international ecumenical community was very close to the South African churches during the apartheid period.

“Tonight it felt as if we had restored that friendship. It felt again as if the international ecumenical movement and the local churches are indeed united against racism,” she said.

Media told: there's a whole world of racism out there

by Stephen Webb

The world's media have been told to show more respect for the "invisible" victims of racism around the world and to stop making the World Conference Against Racism (WCAR) a single-issue event.

The admonition came during a media conference in Durban, South Africa, on September 5 when Archbishop Desmond Tutu launched a statement by the Ecumenical Caucus.

At the packed press conference, Marilia Schüller from the World Council of Churches (WCC) said that "Every time a journalist comes to us and only wants to speak about Palestine and Israel, I think that is disrespectful to Indigenous people, to Dalits, to Africans and people of African descent." Schüller was responding to a question about contentious references to Israel in the declaration from the NGO Forum that preceded the World Conference.

She said that the ecumenical family comes from diverse backgrounds, but came together at the WCAR with a common purpose. Pointing to the statement of the Ecumenical Caucus, she noted that the church delegation was composed of people actually affected by the situations described in the statement. She said that the WCC, as part of the Ecumenical Caucus, was in Durban to give space and recognition to the victims of racism. "We are here because this conference addresses the life of people."

Schüller was clear that "We absolutely are for self-determination, for a state of Palestine and for the people of Palestine, as we definitely are for the right of self-determination for many other peoples of this world." But the world is much larger than the Middle East, she said. "And this is the plea I want to make to you: if you want to contribute to the world and to an ethical concern about people's lives, move beyond Israel and Palestine."

Launching the Ecumenical Caucus statement, Desmond Tutu, archbishop emeritus in the (Anglican) Church of the Province of Southern Africa, said that "There are millions of people who are hurting, who have been sidelined, who are invisible in their own countries. These people look to this conference as a beacon of hope."

Lies will not prevail forever against the truth, and evil will not prevail forever against good, Archbishop Tutu said. "It is important for us here to go out and announce to the world that, yes, we are taking God seriously because God has a dream ... that one day all of my children will realize that they are all members of one family."

"Let us celebrate our diversity. Because we discovered in this country that when you dehumanize another, inadvertently, whether you like it or not, you are dehumanized," Archbishop Tutu warned.

The Caucus statement calls racism a sin, "contrary to God's will for love, peace, equality, justice and compassion for all. It is an affront to human dignity and a gross violation of human rights".

It says that racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerances all work, singularly and collectively, to diminish a common humanity. “These thrive within the intersections of race, caste, colour, age, gender, sexual orientation, class, landlessness, ethnicity, nationality, language and disability.”

“As people of faith, we call on all peoples, non-governmental organizations and governments to earnestly strive to break the cycles of racism and assist the oppressed to achieve self-determination and establish sustainable communities, without violating the rights of others.”

The statement identifies ten priority issues to be put before the WCAR, as well as to churches, related ecumenical bodies and institutions.

The Ecumenical Caucus at the conference includes representatives of the WCC and nearly 20 other churches and church commissions, including the United Methodist Church (General Board of Church and Society and General Board of Global Ministries), the United Church of Christ/Disciples of Christ, the Lutheran World Federation, Church World Service and Witness/National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, the Diakonia Council of Churches (Durban), the Church of England, Sisters of Mercy, the Canadian Council of Churches, the Presbyterian Church USA, the Church of Christ in Thailand, Medical Mission Sisters, the Christian Reformed Church of Canada, and the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa.

Asked about the implications of the US leaving the conference and reports that the European Union (EU) was threatening to do the same, Archbishop Tutu said in reference to NGO participants, “You have forgotten that there are Americans here.” “We are people who represent important constituencies and we are people who vote.”

Asked about the issue of compensation and reparation for victims of colonialism and slavery, he said it is important to realize that the language used is reparation, not compensation. “How do you compensate me for the loss of freedom? How do you compensate me for the loss of a loved one?” He said, “Reparation isn’t saying, ‘I am compensating you’[...] It is almost like a balm. There are wounds too deep to speak about[...] There are hurts that are sitting in the pit of the tummy which people need to bring out[...] and what we are talking about in this conference is: look, we want to open these wounds, we want to cleanse them, pour balm on them and hope they will heal.”

“Reparation is saying sorry for what happened. And people don’t know how liberating confession is. It is not weak people, it is a strong person who says, ‘I am sorry, I was wrong.’” And there is surprising generosity in people who just want an acknowledgment, he said.

Archbishop Tutu said he hopes the World Conference is not finger-pointing, but saying, “We are in this together. How do we get out of it?”

Closing the media conference, South African Council of Churches President Bishop Mvumelwano Dandala, who is the leader of the WCC delegation to WCAR, said that “As churches right around the world, we want to recognize that what is being done at this conference is to set the climate and to draw the bottom line for what we believe will make the world a better place.”

“We would love for governments of the world to commit themselves to these bottom lines. But we are here to say that we also recognize that it will take more than just governments and parliaments to make the world a different place.”

Dandala said that the basic issues outlined in the Ecumenical Caucus statement were going to inform the priorities of the church throughout the world.

“We recognize that the church itself does not have entirely clean hands when it comes to the oppression of people around the world, and sometimes to the rationalization of the oppression of people. In this country, it was a part of the body of the church that gave a theological rationale for apartheid.

“And so when we speak like this, we are not doing so from a point of self righteousness. We are doing so first and foremost from a confessional position.”

Dandala said that the church is committing itself to correcting its own perspectives and to continuing to help challenge the world to deal with the cancer of racism.

Statement

by the World Council of Churches delegation at the UN World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, Durban, South Africa

“The sin of racism has been a central concern for the ecumenical movement since the beginning of the last century, and at the heart of the life of the World Council of Churches (WCC) since 1948. Out of this commitment, the WCC offered strong support to the UN Conference from its early planning stages onwards and itself contributed to the process by convening a number of regional ecumenical consultations. In August 2000, the WCC submitted a detailed submission to the High Commissioner for Human Rights, which was subsequently revised after the regional meetings. The final submission was delivered to the Durban Conference.

The NGO Forum was perhaps the largest civil society gathering devoted to racism that has ever assembled and certainly the most representative of those victimized by racism and racial discrimination. It provided the victims of racism with a place to speak of their experience and their pain and to make proposals for change. The WCC delegation celebrates that such a forum was held, because it falls within the WCC’s long-cherished tradition of giving space, and supporting victims to speak publicly.

The WCC delegation considered the process adopted by the NGO Forum to be vitally important, worthy of affirmation and respect, and recognized that the NGO Forum document contains the aspirations and recommendations of many communities of marginalized peoples.

Many ideas and recommendations from the NGO Forum were incorporated into the document. The debate on that text was long and, at times, complex because of the huge numbers of people involved. The methodology used was to ask specific caucuses within the Forum to react, provide amendments and then vote. Members of the WCC delegation were part of the Ecumenical and other caucuses and did not vote as the WCC itself.

The focus of the NGO Forum and the World Conference was profoundly affected by current world affairs. The Durban meetings convened at a time when the situation in the Middle East was in the forefront of people’s minds, and the issues this highlighted quickly gained prominence in the NGO Forum. The WCC delegation was greatly helped by the sensitive explanations and support of its Palestinian members.

During the NGO Forum, in keeping with WCC policy, the WCC delegation supported the right of self-determination for Palestinians, the right of return and the establishment of a Palestinian state. It also affirmed the right of the State of Israel to exist, and condemned anti-Semitism. There are some statements in the NGO Forum document which are outside the WCC’s policy framework, and which the WCC cannot support, such as: equating Zionism with racism, describing Israel as an apartheid state, and the call for a general boycott of Israeli goods.

This does not detract from the WCC’s support for the document as a whole.

The WCC delegation believes that to focus only on some sections of the NGO Forum document is disrespectful to all other sections, which cover a vast number of issues significant to the

victims of racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia. Those wide concerns are represented within the membership of the WCC delegation and cannot be ignored.

“We are making history”
**WCC delegation at the United Nations World Conference against Racism, Racial
Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance**

“The range of issues and the intensity of the debates on racism are a dramatic challenge to the churches world-wide. When we know racism to be a sin, do we give our work against racism the priority it needs?”

This challenging question was asked by Bishop Mvumelwano Dandala, leader of the World Council of Churches (WCC) delegation to the UN World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCAR) being held in Durban, South Africa.

In the run-up to the WCAR, more than 7000 representatives of hundreds of non-governmental organizations have been meeting in a Non-governmental organizations’ (NGO) Forum , 28-31 August. Among them has been a 35-member delegation drawn from WCC member churches. There are also a number of delegations from individual churches and faith communities.

Issues holding centre stage at the NGO Forum include a number of central WCC concerns, including Palestine, Dalits, Indigenous Peoples, women, and people of African descent. There have also been calls for slavery and colonization to be recognized as crimes against humanity. On this issue, the WCC delegation, in a submission prepared for the Conference, said, “impunity for past offenders responsible for massive crimes including slavery, colonization, apartheid, genocide and indentured labour... should be abolished in international and national law”.

The WCC delegation contributed to Forum discussions on several issues. It issued a detailed comment on the Palestinian question in which it stressed the need to continue to support efforts towards a negotiated peace in the Middle East. The comment referred to a WCC Central Committee statement of February 2001 which spoke of “a pattern of discrimination, routine humiliation, segregation and exclusion which restricts Palestinian freedom of movement” and “establishes ‘cantonization’ of the land, so that Palestinian land is separated from one another.” The delegation included three Palestinians.

Violation of the human rights of Dalits in India has been another controversial issue and the government of India has consistently blocked its discussion. WCC delegation member Rev. Yesudoss Moses of the Dalit Concerns desk of the National Council of Churches in India said, “[It] has been forcefully argued that the governments’ agenda should include caste discrimination, and that governments should introduce mechanisms to deal with it. The NGO Forum has made that clear.”

The WCC also hosted workshops on “Racism, Gender and Religion” (co-hosted with the World Young Men’s Christian Association) and, with the South African Council of Churches, a panel on “Churches in post-apartheid South Africa”. Another workshop looked at “The impact of globalization on people of colour and the role of religion”. A number of listening projects were

co-sponsored with the American Friends Service Committee, and the Durban-based Diakonia Council of Churches hosted a church service and candlelight march to the City Hall.

Despite their efforts, WCC staff member, Marilia Schüller is disappointed about “how little the voice of the churches has been heard”. She attributes this to the fact that “there is so much more our churches could, and should have, done. In a number of round table discussions, NGOs pointed to the historical role of the church in racial oppression. Delegates at a discussion on the plight of Indigenous peoples, for example, suggested that, apart from a written apology, the church should be looking at paying reparations.”

Bishop Mvumelwano Dandala for his part said that “In South Africa we feel a sense of excitement that, after years of struggle against apartheid, the world has chosen our country to discuss racism worldwide. But we realise that the churches have not been intentional enough in addressing the issues

On the participation of Indigenous Peoples, WCC staff member for Indigenous issues, Eugenio Poma of Bolivia, said, “Confusion and disorientation resulting from the organization of the NGO Forum diminished the expectations of Indigenous delegates and their hopes to contribute to the outcome of the conference. But in spite of that, they contributed to discussions on topics like land dispossession, self-determination and language genocide.”

“Although we don’t expect much from the Forum, we will continue to struggle patiently until we fulfil the aspirations we brought to the World Conference,” Poma said. He agreed with UN secretary-general Kofi Annan’s recommendation to the Forum that any success would depend on what the delegates could achieve in the future rather than during the conference itself.

At the workshop on gender, religion and racism, another WCC delegation member, Rev. Dr Sirirat Pusurinkham from the Presbyterian Church in Thailand, demanded to know what the churches, civil society and the international community were doing to stop the trafficking and prostitution of women and children. “These are children who are suffering! Children as young as nine years old are victims of trafficking.” The workshop heard that governments were not willing to crack down on trafficking and prostitution for fear of hurting their tourist industries. In most cases the victims of trafficking are women of colour.

Hurdles

Canada downgraded its delegation to the government conference at the last moment, leading to accusations that it is following in the footsteps of its neighbour, the USA, which has only a low-level representation. WCC delegation member Lyn Headley-Moore, from the Episcopal Church in the USA, said “I am really disappointed, really angry with my government . As a superpower it has a greater responsibility to be here than anyone else. With the history of our country it is so important it should be here.”

Having initially committed itself to partnership, the British government has excluded UK NGOs from their official delegation. The UK Churches Commission for Racial Justice and anti-racist and community organizations say that this is to silence voices which would embarrass the British government’s relationship with the Americans.

Signs of hope

Reasons for optimism remain. In his address to the NGO Forum, Kofi Annan remarked that NGOs across the spectrum “have discovered that they have more in common than they thought”. Schüller notes that “We are making history. It is the first time that representatives of so many oppressed groups have come together in an attempt to build a coalition against racism. Unfortunately, this attempt was hampered by the lack of space and time to dialogue on the issues.” But Dalits from India have found solidarity with Palestinians, while Palestinians have linked up with people of African descent, and women of all backgrounds have made common cause in the way racism intersects with discrimination against them.

The biggest hurdle of all is the difficulty NGOs will meet in trying to make their voices heard at the governments’ meeting. There has been a great deal of anger and disappointment that, despite the UN call for NGO participation, only 750 NGO representatives will have access to the governments’ meeting. Schüller says that “Governments do not want to confront the issues that the NGOs are putting forward.”

**Human Rights for the “Children of God”
LWF, WCC Stand behind Dalits at World Conference Against Racism**

by Erika von Wietersheim

“Dalits’ rights are human rights!” Wearing this slogan on headbands, a large group of women and men, mostly from India, ran from panel discussions to demonstrations during the NGO Forum at the UN World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Associated Intolerance (WCAR). They are representing the 250 million Dalits of India who comprise the outcast substratum of Indian society. “Here in Durban we want to show the world that we are mercilessly and shamelessly oppressed in India,” one young Dalit told a television reporter.

Examples of Dalits’ oppression could be heard in numerous discussions and personal conversations at the August 28 - September 1 NGO Forum, and can still be read about on flyers and leaflets being distributed everywhere. The South African newspapers too have been reporting almost daily on the Dalit issue since the World Conference began.

“The Dalits – who used to be known as ‘untouchables’ – do not belong anywhere in India’s caste system. We are outcasts,” said Dr. Raja Selvakumar from India, a member the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) delegation to the UN Conference. He noted that Mahatma Gandhi referred to the so-called “untouchables” of India as the “children of God” since they were not even credited with having a history, descent or place of origin.

“Every village in India has an area set aside for Dalits to live. Neither water nor garbage collection or schools are provided there,” said Dr. Sarada Karnatakam, also in the LWF team. The situation is particularly difficult for Dalit women. Compelled to work as household servants, they are not only exploited but also raped regularly, she said. Recently a Dalit woman “was dragged naked into the streets and ridiculed,” after she tried to defend herself and insist on her human rights. “Dalit girls are also abused in the name of religion when they are taken to temples as sacred prostitutes. As soon as they lose their virginity, they are sold to brothels,” added Karnatakam.

“Belonging to the Dalit ‘caste’ means that we have to do the society’s dirty work. We have to clear away corpses and gather up human excrement by hand in buckets and baskets,” was an often-repeated example of the humiliation experienced by Dalits.

These are only a few voices from among the world’s 260 million Dalits, of whom about 10 percent are Christians. The remaining 90 percent are mostly Buddhist, Muslim or Hindu. Both the World Council of Churches (WCC) and LWF have taken a strong stand at the Durban conference on behalf of the victims of the caste system – not only the great majority of the Dalits in India but also, according to Peter Prove, LWF’s Assistant to the General Secretary for International Affairs and Human Rights, “all people who suffer discrimination on the basis of their occupation and descent, for example in Senegal, Japan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Nepal.” During its Ninth Assembly in Hong Kong, China in 1997, the LWF resolved to stand in solidarity and support with all the member churches and others in their struggle against oppression of Dalits, particularly that of Dalit Christians.

“The Dalits’ problem is an expression of racism, discrimination and marginalization in a most concentrated form,” said Rev. Dr. Ishmael Noko, LWF General Secretary, who is also participating in the Durban Conference. Noko pointed out that the Indian Constitution purported to abolish untouchability and outlaw discrimination on the basis of caste but did not do away with the caste system itself.

The WCC has concerned itself with the Dalits’ problem since the late 1980s. It consciously did not just concentrate on the Christian Dalits but offered its support to Dalits of all faiths. At the World Conference in Durban, the WCC and LWF, both with significant Dalit representation in their delegations, are working together with numerous other church groups in complementary ways. “It is our job as the church to make trouble in a process in which governments are trying as much as possible to avoid critical but necessary attention to the real issues of contemporary racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. As churches and NGOs we can build bridges between the victims and international organizations,” says Prove.

“Even though the Indian government doesn’t see the caste system as a racism problem, it is one of the most flagrant examples of racial discrimination. The Indian government has admitted that the problem of caste discrimination exists, and has banned ‘untouchability’. However, India refuses to discuss this topic at the conference, saying it is an internal problem. They say that enough is being done about in India itself, that enough attention is being paid to it,” says Marilia Schüller, leader of the WCC delegation to the World Conference.

Yesudoss Moses of the National Council of Churches in India, a member of the WCC delegation, is involved in the Dalit Caucus at the Durban Conference. He is working with other Dalit representatives to save Paragraph 73 of the draft Program Action of the World Conference, which urgently calls upon states to “prohibit and redress discrimination on the basis of work and descent.” India wants this paragraph deleted. “But India is finding itself isolated. There is great sympathy for the Dalit problem. It will be difficult for other countries to speak against the Dalits’ interests,” says Moses.

“But we are hoping for more,” he continued. “We want the same paragraph also to mention explicitly ‘victims of caste discrimination’.” Here the Dalits are hoping that their rights will be made more clearly and visibly a part of the international agenda than before. In this way, more pressure can be put on India really to change the caste system.

However, whether particular sentences are deleted, retained or added, at the August 31 - September 7 World Conference in Durban the Dalits have shown that 260 million people are no longer prepared to let themselves be treated as third class human beings. They are demanding universally accepted human rights for themselves and calling on the international community to live up to its responsibility.

“No other oppressed group in this world has managed to put itself in the international limelight so quickly, so loudly and so convincingly,” says Bob Scott, the Communications officer of the WCC delegation in Durban. “In the end, what is in the official text of the UN program is only secondary. Every Dalit can now say, I am a Dalit, and the world will know what that means.

Support for the Dalits is one of the miracles which has happened with the help of the UN apparatus.”

Erika Von Wietersheim, from Namibia, was a member of the WCC journalists team at the UN WCAR.

Church leaders condemn US attempts to subvert anti-racism conference

by Stephen Webb

Church leaders in South Africa and the United States have reacted strongly to the news that the US has further downgraded its delegation to the World Conference Against Racism, being held in Durban, South Africa, this week.

It first appeared that the United States, along with Israel, had pulled out of the conference altogether on the night of September 3. But the next morning, Mary Robinson, UN high commissioner for Human Rights and secretary general of the conference, said the US would still participate.

She reported that Michael Southwick, the head of the US delegation, had told her that he and other colleagues were returning to Washington but that Craig Kuehl, the consul-general of the US in Durban, would represent the delegation and would be “looking after US interests at the conference in the normal way”.

On the morning of September 5, media were told that the conference was still waiting to hear if the US wanted to withdraw its credentials.

While Robinson was optimistic for the future of the conference, the US action was seen by some as rendering the conference a failure.

Rev. Dr Robert Edgar, general secretary of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, said from his office in New York that he strongly regretted the downgrading of the US delegation. “To begin with, the decision prejudices the conference’s ultimate declaration, which will not be finalized until September 7. Even then, the US government could have registered its objections at the points it deemed necessary, while demonstrating with its presence its commitment to ending racism.”

Walking out spoke loudly and clearly, Edgar said. “The US government made its point, but at an unfortunate, heavy cost, I contend. In walking out, the US forfeited a critically important opportunity to address with courage the legacy, tenacity and toll of racism, and to be a part of taking a step – however small, however imperfect – towards setting things right.”

Bishop Mvumelwano Dandala of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa said that “My despair is that a nation that celebrates democracy like the USA finds it difficult to pursue vigorous dialogue in a situation where it finds itself in a minority.”

Dandala, who is president of the South African Council of Churches (SACC) and leader of the World Council of Churches (WCC) delegation to the World Conference said: “This is a terrible message to young democracies who have ideals of replacing war with dialogue.”

US civil rights leader Rev. Jesse Jackson, speaking at parallel events during the conference, said that the US government had chosen not to withdraw from the conference “but to subvert it”. “The US cannot lead the global fight against racism from the rear. It cannot lead through disengagement,” he said.

South African president Thabo Mbeki was reported as saying that the US decision was “an even worse error of judgment than sending a low-level delegation”.

Reporting that there had been a great deal of sadness and dismay over the decision by the US and Israel to withdraw their delegates, Mary Robinson highlighted a very welcome spirit among delegates to ensure that the important work of Durban continue and come to fruition. She said that the conference president, Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, South Africa’s foreign minister, had proposed that all language relating to the Middle East be withdrawn from the Conference text and that substitute language be agreed upon.

While the US withdrew its delegation ostensibly because the conference seemed likely to “single out Israel for censure and abuse”, its decision came immediately after strong statements to the conference plenary by African nations on the matter of reparations. Some observers felt that this was not a coincidence.

Members of the WCC delegation to the conference were disappointed that the US had apparently left because it found one or two issues unpalatable when dozens of racism issues are to be addressed by the conference’s programme of action.

Common culture between religions needed to end racism

by Stephen Webb

Islamophobia, anti-Muslimism and related intolerances were the main focus of a September 1 panel discussion on religious intolerance during the World Conference Against Racism (WCAR) conference in Durban.

Offering “an interfaith European perspective”, Dr Charles Graves from Interfaith International in Geneva spoke of the need to find a “common culture” between Abrahamic, Eastern, and Indigenous peoples’ religions.

In a message to the panel, Prince El Hassan bin Talal of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan suggested that WCAR’s objectives included “discerning in our diversity the potential for mutual enrichment, and realising that it is the interchange between great traditions of human spirituality that offers the best prospect for the persistence of the human spirit itself”.

“The Holy Qur’an says: ‘We have made you nations and tribes that you may know one another’ not that you may despise one another,” he stated, affirming that “From the very outset [...] Islam rejected any notion of differences based upon racial or ethnic distinction, and so rejected any notions of discrimination that might be based upon such differences.”

“That is why we are here,” he continued, “to know each other, to know each other’s points of departure, to agree to disagree, to be different, to be various, to accept that the concept and idea of oneness of humanity (Tawhid) is one of Islam’s contributions to human civilization[...].”

Referring to a call by the UN secretary-general Kofi Annan for “an injection of ethics, a spiritual ethos” into the UN and world bodies, bin Talal suggested that “The fight against intolerance can only be intensified if the diversity of humankind in all its aspects including spiritual, is appreciated. It is at the spiritual level that we often find the common ground.”

Dr Abdel-Fatah Amor, UN special rapporteur for Religious Intolerance, noted instances of Islamophobia in Australia, the US and Germany. It arose, he said, in times of crisis, and affected people in terms of housing, employment and immigration policies. He called for dialogue between religious leaders, education on the issue, and the encouragement of respect.

Reporting on recent instances of ethnic conflict in northern England, Ased Rehman, from Amnesty International UK said that the struggle against racism was formerly organized from within religious institutions. Mosques and churches, by uniting in community organizations and providing welfare, places to meet and an exchange of views, helped form an active civil society. Later, Rehman highlighted a move from anti-black, anti-immigrant, anti-Asian racism to anti-Muslim racism in the UK. The battleground and also the language of racism has shifted, he claimed. “Just as ‘Paki’ was a ‘70s or ‘80s word, I believe ‘Muslim’ is a new way of playing the race card.” One explanation, he suggested, is that “when communism went, Islam became the last perceived coherent political ideology that threatens the Judeo-Christian philosophical basis of society”.

Rehman believes that what is needed is not multicultural societies but inclusive cultures. “Multicultural education didn’t challenge people’s assumptions or beliefs. Rather, we need to understand the role racism has played in Western society, how it is used to justify and maintain certain positions – historical, economic, political.”

On the question of reparation, Rehman said that people are looking at it too narrowly, as a monetary issue. “I think reparation is actually the first step towards unravelling and understanding slavery as the basis for legitimizing racism.” “It was from that starting point that you got the coming together of intellectual thought, of Christianity, to justify racism... You have to go back to that point to see the legacy and how we unpick these things.”

In its submission to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on WCAR’s draft declaration and programme of action, the World Council of Churches’ Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (WCC/CCIA) noted that religious intolerance and the political manipulation of religion and religious affiliation are on the rise in many parts of the world, and are increasingly a factor in national and international conflict.

The WCC/CCIA submission called for the efforts of the UN special rapporteur on Religious Intolerance to be supported and strengthened, for governments to be encouraged to respect the right to religious freedom, and particularly to consider Indigenous peoples’ spiritualities as authentic religion.

Indigenous protest UN's discriminatory language

by Stephen Webb

Around 150 members of non-governmental organizations representing Indigenous peoples demonstrated outside the World Conference Against Racism (WCAR) on September 4, calling for the deletion of a “racist” paragraph from the conference’s declaration.

Chanting, drumming and waving placards, they welcomed conference delegates arriving for morning sessions.

Prominent in the protest were several members of the World Council of Churches (WCC) delegation to the conference.

The object of the protesters’ criticism was a “caveat paragraph”, number 27, of the conference’s draft declaration. The paragraph says use of the term “indigenous peoples” in the conference’s declaration or programme for action cannot be construed as having “any implications as regards to rights under international law”.

The Indigenous caucus at the conference understood the paragraph to be telling Indigenous Peoples that the status and human rights vested in “all peoples” were not vested in them. “We are being told that our status and human rights as peoples are not recognized, respected or applicable.”

Paragraph 27 was seen to be telling Indigenous peoples that their status and human rights were not inherent, inalienable and universal, but had to be derived from “ongoing multilateral negotiations”.

Eugenio Poma, from Bolivia, an Indigenous Peoples’ representative in the WCC delegation, said that if paragraph 27 remained in the declaration, or if the declaration contained language that reduced the rights of Indigenous Peoples in international law, the UN would be guilty of practising and perpetuating discrimination.

Also under fire from the protesters was paragraph 26, that only recognizes “the rights of Indigenous Peoples consistent with principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity of States” and stresses “the need to adopt the appropriate constitutional, administrative, legislative and judicial measures, including those derived from applicable international instruments”. “We argue that if the UN is serious about ending racism, it should refer the matter of indigenous sovereignties for an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice. Article 26 will continue to subjugate Indigenous Peoples to second-class rights,” the protesters said.

Stephen Webb, from the Uniting Church in Australia was a member of the WCC journalists team at the UN WCAR.

Workshops

The WCC and the World YWCA co-sponsored two workshops at the World Conference on Racism (WCAR): “The intersections of gender, racism and religion” and “The impact of globalization on people of colour and the role of religion”. The two workshops drew audiences from different backgrounds, nationalities, religion, age and race.

The intersection of gender, race and religion

This workshop brought together a diverse group of people interested in analyzing how religion intersects with racism and how they both play out in this gendered society. The three speakers – Dr Delores Williams, Rev. Sirirat Pusurinkham and Ms Suzco Kaira – spoke from their faith-based perspective. They highlighted how religion, compounded with racism, has undermined the lives of women throughout the world.

The workshop discussions generated heated debate on the role of Christianity in liberating or exacerbating racism. The speakers talked about discrimination against women in churches – women denied ordination, excluded from decision-making process and viewed as inferior to men. They argued that this form of discrimination against women flourished during the western missionary enterprise period and continues to exist in some of the mainline churches and Pentecostal churches.

Ms Suzco of YWCA in Zambia asserted that some of the African Indigenous religious practices were more life-affirming to women than western Christianity. Rev. Sirirat from Thailand challenged the audience to think about the role of the churches in trafficking of women and girls. She urged the participants not to remain silent while women and girls as young as nine years old are sold into prostitution. Dr Williams shared the experiences of African-American women and their struggle to overcome the legacy of slavery and forced evangelization.

Impact of globalization on people of colour

The panelists, selected from different parts of the world, presented their understanding of globalization, its racist nature, and the role of religion in the emancipation of the poor and marginalized.

Questions raised in this workshop included the role of the churches in the campaign for debt cancellation for poor countries, the role of capitalism, the colour of poverty, the mal-distribution of resources in the world, and the power relationship between the rich countries in the north and the poor countries in the south.

Chairing this panel discussion, Dr Musimbi Kanyoro of the World YWCA encouraged the panelists – Ms Alicia Nebot of Puerto Rico and USA, Lucy Mullenkei of Kenya, Rev. Sirirat Prusurinkham of Thailand and Omega Bula of, Zambia and Canada – to share their experiences of the impact of globalization on their communities.

Alicia Nebot spoke about the church in the United States of America and what the churches were doing to educate their congregations about globalization. She gave statistics on the level of

poverty in the USA. She talked about the faith-based initiative, and why the churches must not assume the role of the government in caring for the poor.

Lucy Mullenkei shared the experiences of Indigenous People in Africa, and how this globalized economy has served to exclude them from the mainstream economic system.

Here again, Rev. Pusurinkham demonstrated the impact of globalization on women through a video on trafficking of women in Thailand. According to Rev. Pusurinkham, women who are trafficked or sold into prostitution are exposed to diseases and eminent death. She told the audience that one of the young girls featured in the video was one of her parishioners who died recently after battling with HIV/AIDS.

Ms Omega Bula spoke about the impact of Structural Adjustment Programmes on women and children in Africa.

**United Nations and WCC events
related to the United Nations World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination,
Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCR) to be held in Durban, South Africa
31st August – 8th September 2001**

WCC/CLAI: Consultation for Latin America and the Caribbean (Spanish speaking), 27-30 July 2000.

UN: Experts meeting: Migrants and Trafficking in Persons with particular reference to Women and Children, Bangkok, Thailand, 5-7 September 2000. (WCC represented).

UN: Experts meeting: Prevention of Ethnic and Racial Conflicts in Africa. Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia, 4-6 October, 2000 (WCC represented).

UN: Experts meetings: Economic, Social and Legal Measures to Combat Racism, with particular reference to vulnerable groups, Santiago, Chile, 25-27 October 2000 (WCC represented).

UN: Regional preparatory meeting for the Americas, Santiago de Chile (Chile), 5-7 December 2000 (Deadline for application for NGO participation: 28 November 2000) (WCC represented).

UN: NGO Meeting, Botswana, 8-12 January, 2001 (WCC represented).

UN: Informal consultations, Geneva (Switzerland), 15-16 January 2001 (Deadline for application: 10 January 2001) (WCC represented).

UN: Open-ended working group for the Preparatory Committee of the World Conference, Geneva (Switzerland), 5-9 March, 2001 (WCC represented).

UN: Regional preparatory meeting for Africa, Dakar (Senegal), 22-24 January, 2001 (WCC represented).

WCC:Global Conference on Racism and Casteism, organized by NCC-India and WCC related groups; India, 1-4 February, 2001.

UN: Regional preparatory meeting for Asia, Teheran (Islamic Republic of Iran), 19-21 February, 2001 (WCC represented).

WCC/AACC: Consultation for North, East and West Africa, Nairobi, Kenya, 26-28 February, 2001.

WCC/AACC: Planning meeting for Consultation on Gender and Racism to be held in June. Held in Madagascar, 1-4 March, 2001.

WCC: Consultation during the meeting of the UN Commission on the Status of Women; New York, 6 March, 2001.

UN: Inter-sessional open-ended working group, Geneva, Switzerland, 6-9 March, 2001.

WCC/AACC: Preparatory meeting for Western and Central Africa, Cotonou, 27-29 March, 2001.

WCC: WCC Reference Group on Racism, Geneva, 25-27 April, 2001.

WCC: Preparatory meeting for North America, Detroit or Canada, 11-13 May, 2001.

WCC/CCA: Preparatory meeting for Asia/Pacific regions, Bangkok, 17-19 May, 2001.

UN: 2nd Preparatory Committee of the World Conference, Geneva, 21 May - 1 June, 2001.

WCC/AACC: Consultation on Gender, Racism and Religion in Madagascar Africa; 20-24 July, 2001.

UN: World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, Durban (South Africa), 26-27 August Youth Forum, 28 August - 01 September, NGO Forum, 31 August - 7 September, 2001, World Conference - Governments.

CLAI: Latin American Council of Churches

AACC: All Africa Conference of Churches

CCA: Christian Conference of Asia

Appendix B

“CHRISTIANS UNITE AGAINST RACISM”

Organized by the Diakonia Council of Churches in association with the South African Council of Churches and sponsored by the World Council of Churches to mark the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance

SERVICE AT CENTRAL CITY MISSION YASETHEKWINI

OPENING HYMN

As the procession of service leaders enter the church and take their place in the sanctuary, all stand and sing:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Singabazalwane, singabazalwane,
Bantwana benkosi enkulu;
Kuhle sithandane, kuhle sithandane,
Awukho umona phezulu. | 2. Singabasizani, singabasizani,
Bakhonzi benkosi enkulu,
Masingahlukani, masingahlukani
Akwenziwa njalo phezulu. |
| 3. Silibutho-linye, silibutho-linye,
Maqhawe enkosi enkulu;
Kuhle siyilwele ngenhliziyo inye,
Akukho bugwala phezulu., | 4. Ekujabuleni sonke ezulwini,
Sobonga inkosi enkulu;
Kungawo amandla avel' enkosini,
Esofika ngawo phezulu. |

WELCOME

Cardinal Wilfrid Napier OFM, Archbishop of Durban, welcomes all to the service.

OPENING PRAYER

Thudiso Virginia Gcabashe, Honorary Life Vice-President of the SACC

Loving God

you hold us in your hands
for we are all made in your image.

Help us to celebrate our differences.

Help us to use our diversity
to share with each other
the richness of our many cultures, languages
and backgrounds.

Help us to dissolve the barriers of race and work for a just society in which none are despised and discriminated against on the basis of false divisions of race and in which each is valued for their true humanity.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, who saw beyond all human divisions and reached out to the good within each person.

ALL: AMEN

PROCESSION OF WORD AND LIGHT
Dancers will carry in a bible and a candle.

READINGS

Isaiah 25:6-8

Read in Zulu by Nomusa Dube, Speaker of the Durban Unicity Council

On this mountain, for all peoples,
the Lord is preparing
a banquet of rich food, a banquet of fine wines,
of succulent food, of well-strained wines.
On this mountain, God has destroyed
the veil which used to veil all peoples,
the pall enveloping all nations,
God has destroyed death for ever.
The Lord has wiped away the tears from every cheek,
Has taken away the shame of God's people everywhere on earth.

CHORUS: Peace, perfect peace
Ukuthula

John 17:21-22

Read in English by Rev Dr Sirirat Pusurinkham, Church of Christ, Thailand

Ukuba bonke babe-munye, njenga-lokhu wena-Baba ukimi, nami ngikuwe, ukuba nabo babe-kithina, ukuze izwe likholwe ukuthi wena ungithumile. Nenkazimulo ongiphé yona ngiyiphile bona, ukuze babe-munye, njengalokhu thina simunye.

SERMON

Bishop Ruben Phillip, Anglican Bishop of Natal

(Summary iii Zulu by Sipho Mnguni, Roman Catholic Justice & Peace Commission)

1. Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me bring your love.
Where there is injury, your pardon, Lord.
And where there's doubt true faith in you.
2. Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope.
Where there is darkness only light,
and where there's sadness ever joy.
3. O Master, grant that I may never seek
so much to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved, as to love, with all my soul.
4. Make me a channel of your peace,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

in giving to all that we receive,
and in dying that we're born to eternal life.

CONFESSION

After each Confession has been read, all sing:

KYRIE ELEISON, CHRISTE ELEISON, KYRIE ELEISON
(Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy)

1. Bishop Rubin Phillip, Anglican Bishop of Natal

“As a new century begins, we realize that racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and all kinds of racial intolerance have not gone away. We recognize that they persist in the new century and that their persistence is rooted in fear: fear of what is different, fear of the other, fear of the loss of personal security.” (Nelson Mandela)

2. Suzanne Lind, Mennonite Central Committee

“Racism and xenophobia are the source of many of the world’s conflicts; they are a key element of the vicious cycle of poverty and social exclusion; they run directly contrary to the fundamental message of human rights which is that every member of the human family has equal and inalienable rights.” (Mary Robinson)

3. Rev Dr Molefe Tsele, SACC General Secretary

“For every right we proclaim, hundreds of abuses are committed every day. For every voice whose freedom we secure, many more are still threatened. For every woman or girl whose right to equality we uphold, thousands more suffer from discrimination or violence. For every child whose right to education and a peaceful childhood we seek, far too many remain beyond our reach.” (Kofi Annan)

4. Bishop Purity Malinga, Methodist Church of Southern Africa

“The disadvantages faced by women in societies around the world are familiar: lower pay for work of equal value; high illiteracy rates; and poor access to health care. While race is one reason for inequality and gender is another, they are not mutually exclusive forms of discrimination. Indeed they often intersect, giving rise to double discrimination.” (United Nations)

5. Ds Frans Klopper, Dutch Reformed Church

“In recent years, the world has witnessed campaigns of “ethnic cleansing”. Racial minorities, migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and indigenous peoples are persistent targets of intolerance. Millions of human beings continue to encounter discrimination solely due to the colour of their skin or other factors that indicate the race to which they belong.” (WCAR Booklet)

6. Marilia Schüller, World Council of Churches

“Every society in the world is affected by discrimination. It is no longer sufficient for the world community to address conflicts relating to racism as they arise; it is now necessary to look at the roots of racism and to make institutional changes to prevent its eruption”. (Programme of Action for the Third Decade Against Racism)

7. Cardinal Wilfrid Napier, OFM

“We confess that racism, xenophobia, intolerance and discrimination still exist in the church. We ask pardon from those we have offended, and humbly ask mercy from God, who in Jesus Christ has promised peace and reconciliation.” (Based on the Jubilee 2000 Confession of Pope John Paul II)

PRAYER

Presiding Bishop Mvumelwano Dandala, Methodist Church of Southern Africa SACC President and Leader of the WCC Delegation to the WCAR

O God, our loving parent,

we know you as a God of mercy and compassion

slow to anger and rich in kindness and mercy.

Hear the confessions which we offer

on behalf of all the peoples of the world,

our sisters and brothers.

We thank you that you offer us pardon and forgiveness through the saving death of Jesus our brother.

May his resurrection and the gift of the Holy Spirit

give us the strength to overcome all forms of

racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

and to live as a model of the loving community

you desire for all people.

ALL: AMEN

PEACE GREETING

All hold hands across the aisles and along the rows, singing:

1. Let there be peace shared among us

Let there be peace in our eyes.

May now your peace sweep all nations

Teach us, O Lord, to arise.

Give us a fresh understanding

Of family peace that is real.

Let there be peace shared among us

Let there be peace.

2. Let there be love shared among us

3. Let there be hope shared among us

DIRECTIONS FOR THE PROCESSION

CANDLES

Dancers will move down the aisle lighting candles. Please pass on the light to those around you.

ANTHEM

The Choir will sing “Nkulunkulu oluthando” (God of love and God of light) as the procession leaves the church.

FINAL HYMN

1. Masibonge kuy’ uiesu,
Ngokuba wasifela,
Wasenzela ububele
Ngokusifela kwakhe.
Shwele! Baba,
Yiba-noniusa kithi.
2. Thina-bantu bobumnyama,
Oweza kithi lapha.
Awakhetha-bala lamntu,
Wafel’ izimpumputhe,
S hwele! Baba,
Yiba-nomusa kithi.
3. Abansundu nabamhlophe,
Mabadumise kanye,
Mabezwakalise bonke,
Bahubele inkosi.
Shwele! Baba;
Yiba-nomusa kithi.

PROCESSION

The procession walks in silence, accompanied by drummers.
Please follow the direction of the marshals.

SERVICE OUTSIDE THE CITY HALL HYMNS

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Namhla niyabizwa nonke
Umsindisi ongukristu,
Oselokhu anibiza
Usabiza nize kuye. | 2. Uthi, “Wozanini nonke,”
Nize’kuzwa izwi lakhe;
Ningabolibal’ ukuza,
Niyabizwa umsindisi. |
| 3. Akamemi ngokukhetha;
Uthi, “Wozanini nonke!”
Nina boni phendukani,
Nikhululwe nisindiswe. | 4. Phangisani niye kuye,
Kuseyisikhathi senu;
Niye kuye ngokucela,
Nikhululwe nisindiswe. |
| 5. Isikhathi siyadlula,
Kuza’kwahlulelwa konke;
Phaphamani, boni nonke, | 6. Khulekani enkosini,
Engubaba omakade,
NakuJesu indodana, |

Nikhuleke kumsindisi.

NakuMoya oyingwele.

1. When I needed a neighbour were you there were you there?
When I needed a neighbour were you there?
And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter, were you there?
2. I was hungry and thirsty, ...
3. I was cold, I was naked, ...
4. When I needed a shelter, ...

LITANY

Led by John McCullough, Director, Church World Service, USA

LEADER:

Lord, you made the world and everything in it;
you created the human race of one stock
and gave us the earth for our possession.

ALL:

Break down the walls that separate us
and unite us in a single body.

LEADER:

Lord, we have been divisive in our thinking,
in our speech, in our actions;
we have classified and imprisoned one another;
we have fenced each other out by hatred and prejudice.

ALL:

Break down the walls that separate us
and unite us in a single body.

LEADER:

Lord, you mean us to be a single people,
ruled by peace, feasting in freedom,
freed from injustice, truly human, men and women,
responsible and responsive in the life we lead,
the love we share, the relationships we create.

ALL:

Break down the walls that separate us
and unite us in a single body.

COMMITMENT

All are invited to hold their candles up high as they recite the following Act of Commitment.

ALL:

In a spirit of prayer and love

we make this act of commitment

as individuals and as representatives of many churches, faiths and societies from around the world.

We commit ourselves to work for an end to racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and to accept all people as made in God's image.

We will examine the institutions, structures and practices of our religious institutions to identify and eradicate all exploitation and discrimination against people because of race or culture.

We will oppose policies and practices of governments, organizations and institutions which are racist and unjust.

We will work to establish friendship and dialogue among people of different faiths so that together we can strive for a better and more just world.

We will be involved locally, nationally and internationally, in promoting justice and the restoration of the wholeness of God's creation.

VOTE OF THANKS

Durban Unicity Mayor Mr Obed Mlaba

BLESSING

Bishop Purity Malinga, Natal Coastal District, Methodist Church of Southern Africa

May God the Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier

bless each of us as we seek to carry out the commitment we have made.

We pray for God's blessing on the World Conference Against Racism.

May it be richly successful in exposing the truth,
healing wounds and drawing all people
to live in greater tolerance, harmony and peace.

ALL: AMEN

FINAL HYMN

1. For the healing of the nations
Lord, we pray with one accord,
For a just and equal sharing
Of the things that earth affords.
To a life of love in action
Help us rise and pledge our word. (x2)

Glory, glory hallelujah (x3) Help us rise and pledge our word.

2. Lead, Creator, into freedom,
From despair your world release
That redeemed from war and hatred,

All may come and go in peace.
Show us how, through care and goodness
Fear will die and hope increase. (x2)

Glory, glory hallelujah (x3) Fear will die and hope increase.

3. All that kilts abundant living,
Let it from the earth be banned;
Pride of status, race or schooling,
Dogmas keeping us apart.
In our common quest for justice
May we practice love's great art. (x2)

Glory, glory hallelujah! (x3) May we practice love's great art.

4. You, Creator-God, have written Your great name
on humankind; For our growing in your likeness Bring the life of Christ to mind; That
by our
response and service Earth its destiny may find.
(x2)

Glory, glory hallelujah! (x3) Earth its destiny may find.

As people disperse, a collection is taken to cover the costs of the service, the marimba band plays and the bells of St Paul's Church ring out in a joyful welcome to all our visitors to the City of Durban.

DIRECTORS OF CEREMONIES

Bishop Patrick Matolengwe (SACC) and
Nomabelu Mvambo-Dandala (Diakonia Council of Churches)

CREDITS

Central City Mission YaseThekwini, for the use of their facilities and for their catering

Choir of Methodist Central City Mission - led by Themba Sangweni
Organist: Musa Ndlovu

The City of Durban for the use of the City Hall steps

Choir of St Faith's Anglican Church led by David Mthembu
Organist at City Hall: Melvin Peters

Marimba Band: Convent of Precious Blood, Mariannahill

Drummers: St Joseph's Theological Institute, Cedara

Bells: Durban Guild of Church Bellringers

Photo Credit and captions

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Cover page: A very large protest march was held through the streets of Durban as the UN World Conference Against Racism was beginning its opening sessions. Many groups, including those from Southern Africa protesting about land issues, joined the march.

Page 2: Marilia Schüller, photo: Catherine Alt/WCC

Page 3, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25: Dalit drummers perform during their protest demonstration at the UN World Conference Against Racism in Durban 31 August – 7 September. They were protesting at the refusal of governments to equate “caste” with discrimination.

Page 4, 5, 11, 65, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72: After an Ecumenical Service, attended by all church leaders in Durban, held in the Central Methodist Church, the large congregation marched, holding candles, to the City hall where a short service of commitment against racism was held.

Page 7: Pauline Muchina

Page 8, 10: A very large protest march was held through the streets of Durban as the UN World Conference Against Racism was beginning its opening sessions. Many groups, including those from Southern Africa protesting about land issues, joined the march.

Page 9: Sirirat Pusurinkham during one of the workshops.

Page 12: Betty Ruth Lozano

Page 13: Among the many communities taking part in the protest march through the streets of Durban, preceding the UN World Conference Against Racism, were migrants from many parts of the world.

Page 6, 14, 15, 16, 17, 27, 28, 29, 30: A section of the protest march through the streets of Durban during the UN World Conference Against Racism. Called by the trade unions of South Africa the march made room for all manner of groups attending the NGO Forum preceding the government conference.

Page 18: Lucy Mulenkei

Page 20: William Commanda and Billy Two Rivers

Page 21: Y. Moses with Dalit drummers during their protest demonstration at the UN World Conference Against Racism in Durban 31 August – 7 September. They were protesting at the refusal of governments to equate “caste” with discrimination.

page 26: Mvumelwano Dandala

page 59: Laura Cheifetz and Daniel Samuel, two members of the WCC delegation.

Page 60: Left to right: Pauline Muchina, Suzco Kaira, Delores Williams and Sirirat Pusurinkham during the workshop “Intersections of gender, racism and religion”.

Page 61: An Ecumenical Caucus, of the various church delegations including the WCC, met regularly during the UN World Conference Against Racism in Durban. Centre is Mr Levi Bautista of the United Methodist Church (USA).

page 66, 67: Ecumenical Worship Service in the Central City Mission Yasethekweni.