



21.03.2016 – “We see an alarming increase of hate and xenophobic speech echoing across the globe. Political leaders, public figures and even mass media stigmatise and scapegoat migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers and foreigners in general, as well as minorities,” warned three United Nations experts on racism and discrimination.

The Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, Mutuma Ruteere; the Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, Mireille Fanon Mendes-France; and the Chairperson of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, José Francisco Cali Tzay also called on Governments to establish appropriate anti-racism action plans.

On the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon issued a stark warning that “Today we are witnessing a surge of intolerance, racist views and hate-driven violence. Racial profiling and violence against certain communities is on the rise. Economic hardship and political opportunism are triggering increased hostility towards minorities; this is being manifested most directly in anti-refugee, anti-migrant and, in particular, anti-Muslim bigotry, attacks and violence.” For this reason, the need to fight racial discrimination remains ever more pertinent.

The theme for this year’s International Day, which is observed annually on 21 March, is “The Durban Declaration and Programme of Action – 15 Years After”

The [Durban Declaration](#) was adopted at the 2001 World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in South Africa. The Declaration is the most comprehensive framework for fighting racism and related forms of intolerance and discrimination. It represents the firm commitment of the international community to tackle these issues, and serves as a basis for advocacy efforts worldwide. While Member States have

adopted new laws and safeguards, and established new institutions dedicated to promoting and protecting human rights, the fight is far from over.

Racism and racial discrimination attack the core of a person's dignity; they divide people into categories, some of which are considered more worthy than others. History has proved time and again that, when allowed to take root, discrimination, racism and intolerance shatter the very foundations of societies and damage them for generations.

Learn more about racism from Gay McDougal, UN Expert on the elimination of racial discrimination and the promotion of the rights of minorities around the world. She will be taking your questions on Reddit. Tune in at 21:00 (CET) on Monday, 21 March via this [link](#) .

Racism, xenophobia and intolerance are problems prevalent in all societies. Each and every one of us plays a role in either contributing to or breaking down racial prejudice and intolerant attitudes. Fight racism on [social media](#) , or by volunteering with [community groups](#) . Racism stops with you and me, together we can we can [#FightRacism](#)

UNRICs Related Links

- [Let's Fight Racism](#)
- [International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination](#)
- [United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner](#)

- [2001 World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in South Africa](#)

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