

NGO - Group d'experts et de travail sur les personnes d'Ascendance Africaine on Item VI

Thank you madam Chairperson,

I am miss [...], I represent the group of experts on people of African descent. In 2001 the Durban Declaration a program of action recognised that people of African descent for centuries have been victims of racism, discrimination and slavery. The same program stressed the need to ensure that they were fully integrated into economic social and political life. Since Durban progress has been made first of all by setting up an Expert Working Group which continues to investigate problems relating to persons of African descent and discusses these problems at each of its working sessions as all other problems concerning this group, in particular the rights to access education, the right to access to healthcare, to employment, to decision-making, and increasingly a study of structural discrimination which is suffered by people of African descent when there is an attempt to include them in economic activities. People of African descent suffer serious disadvantages on the labour market.

Any socio-economic integration for persons of African descent of any minority or vulnerable group is marginalised because of the racist attitude of states and discriminatory selection criteria. This socio-economic integration of any minority and people of African descent should be assessed in terms of their participation in the labour market, in education, the right to access to housing, and also civic participation. This is why studying these issues such as source of revenue and self-esteem and autonomy should be considered carefully in all societies since these are pillars. By [very] example I would like to mention all the amendments made to certain constitutions to include certain references to multi-ethnic affecters to remove institutional barriers.

Setting up promotion systems for racial equality. The adoption of laws on positive discrimination for education, vocational training, targeted programs for economic inclusion in the world of work, because access to knowledge is also a form of liberation for people of African descent. Other states by taking several measures has been able to carry out reforms in hiring practices for access to the labour market and to correct certain equalities, because persons of African descent have to be given meaningful work according to their skills, it must be acknowledged that persons of African descent have always been stigmatised and continue to undergo policies which are based on on-going racial profiling. Other states have preferred to adopt a quota system, in other words a system, which enables access to equality of opportunity but there are also unequal opportunities that are banned. There are negative repercussions on access to economic activities and for peoples of African descent they are often left on the side-lines with a high rate of unemployment. What are the main proposals. We can already say that it is difficult to include all minorities to the same extent. The state increasing should ensure that it sets up a public policies and secondly that it has supervisory bodies for those labour policies and thirdly that they carry out and evaluation on the basis of the data collected. I wish to remind you by way of conclusion that 2011 is the international year for persons of African descent. In our group at the next working session, in March 2011, we expect to bring many more clarifications in connections with issues pertaining to persons of African descent. Thank you very much madam Chairperson.