

CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

In 1961, the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, in the context of its examination of data relating to manifestations of anti-Semitism and other forms of racial prejudice and religious intolerance, proposed that further action be taken to combat such manifestations (Report of the Sub-Commission, E/CN.4/815). In the same year, the issue was considered by the Commission on Human Rights at its seventeenth session (resolution 5 (XVII) of 10 March 1961) and by the Economic and Social Council at its twenty-third session (resolution 826 B (XXXII) of 27 July 1961). The General Assembly was not able to consider the item at its sixteenth session due to time constraints and decided to take it up at its seventeenth session, in 1962. By resolution 1779 (XVII) of 7 December 1962, the General Assembly endorsed the recommendations of the Economic and Social Council aiming at the eradication of racial prejudice and national and religious intolerance. On the same day, the General Assembly, considering the necessity of taking all possible steps conducive to the final and total elimination of all manifestations of discrimination on difference of race, colour and religion, adopted resolution 1780 (XVII), by which it requested the Economic and Social Council to ask the Commission on Human Rights to prepare both a draft declaration and a draft convention on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination, bearing in mind the views of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, the debates at the seventeenth session of the General Assembly, any proposals which may be submitted by Governments and any instruments adopted in this field by the specialized agencies.

The Sub-Commission decided, at its fifteenth session in 1963, to postpone the preparation of a draft convention, but it submitted a draft declaration on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination, which was contained in its resolution 7 (XV), to the Commission on Human Rights. The Commission considered this item at its nineteenth session and adopted resolution 9 (XIX) on 2 April 1963, submitting the draft declaration to the Economic and Social Council (E/3743, chapter VI). The draft declaration was adopted unanimously by the Economic and Social Council on 12 July 1963 (resolution 958 E (XXXVI)) and was submitted to the General Assembly. At its eighteenth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 1904 (XVIII) of 20 November 1963, in which it proclaimed the Declaration on the Elimination of all Racial Discrimination.

On the same day, the General Assembly requested the Economic and Social Council to invite the Commission on Human Rights to give absolute priority to the preparation of a draft international convention on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination (resolution 1906 (XVIII)). On 17 December 1963, the Economic and Social Council decided to transmit this resolution to the Commission on Human Rights and the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. The Sub-Commission, at its sixteenth session, prepared a draft convention (resolution 1 (XVI) of 29 January 1964), which was adopted unanimously and submitted to the Commission on Human Rights. Additionally, a provisional draft was submitted expressing the views of the Sub-Commission on additional measures of implementation in order to make the future convention more effective (resolution 2 (XVI) of 29 January 1964).

The Commission on Human Rights considered these resolutions at its twentieth session, in 1964 (E/3873). It had, for its consideration, the debates on the topic at the seventeenth and eighteenth session of the General Assembly, the proposals and comments from governments, as well as the texts of a number of related international instruments, including the Convention of the International Labour Organization No. 11 concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Education of 1958, as well as the

Convention of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Against Discrimination in Education of 1960 and its Protocol of 1962. At the conclusion of its debates on the topic, the Commission adopted a draft convention on the elimination of all racial discrimination (resolution 1 (XX) of 13 March 1964) and submitted it to the Economic and Social Council, which subsequently adopted it on 30 July 1964 (resolution 1015 (XXXVII) B of 30 July 1964), and referred it to the General Assembly.

The draft convention was considered by the General Assembly at its twentieth session, in 1965, both in the framework of the Third Committee and in the plenary. The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination was thereafter adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 2106 (XX) of 21 December 1965, by 106 votes in favour, none against and one abstention. The Convention was opened for signature on the same day, and entered into force on 4 January 1969, thirty days after the deposit of the twenty-seventh instrument of ratification, as provided for in its article 19.