



Unité – Egalité – paix
سلام – مساواة – وحدة

Mission Permanente De la République de Djibouti
Auprès de L'office des Nations Unies
Et des autres Organisations Internationales à Genève

الدم ببعوثية الدائمة لجمهورية جيبوتي
لدى مكتب الأمم المتحدة
والمنظمات الدولية الأخرى
سوي سراج نيف

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STATEMENT OF H.E MR. MOHAMED-SIAD DOUALEH
CHAIR OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL WORKING GROUP
ON THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DURBAN
DECLARATION AND PROGRAMME OF ACTION

10th SESSION OF
THE WORKING GROUP

GENEVA

11 OCTOBER 2012

**Excellency's,
Distinguished delegates
Dear Experts Panellists
Dear Participants**

In recent years we have witnessed a disturbing trend in which racist and xenophobic discourse has been increasingly exploited in politics and by politicians.

Our intergovernmental working group, while being aware of this situation, decided for its 10th session, to devote part of its discussion on the positive role that politicians and political parties can play in combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

As we all know, the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action underlines the role that politicians and political parties can play in combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

Political parties, according to the DDPA, are encouraged to take concrete steps to promote equality, solidarity and non-discrimination in society, inter alia: by refraining to stigmatize people of different origins by acts or omissions; by encouraging equal participation of all racial and cultural, linguistic and religious groups in all sectors of society in particular through appropriate representation in political parties and parliaments; by developing voluntary codes of conduct which include internal disciplinary measures for violations thereof, so their members refrain from public statements and actions that encourage or incite racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

As this working group decided and insisted to speak about the positive role that politicians and political parties can have in the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, I cannot start without reminding all of us that unfortunately, politicians and political parties use to contribute to the genesis of these phenomena and are often part of the problem. This is why, our intergovernmental working group, by choosing this topic, placed itself as an effective contributor to the solution.

I sincerely hope that our discussion will help us exploring and identifying all the tools in the hand of politicians and political parties which will allow them to play an active role in combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

Through the choice of this topic, we all strongly believe that politicians and political parties can have a crucial role to play in the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and we count on our panellists and on all participants to analyse, provide examples, and suggest the manner through which, politicians and political parties can contribute to combat racism racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, while highlighting challenges, as well as lessons learned when attempting to:

- Promoting and ensuring the effective participation of politicians of migrant origin and minorities in political parties, National Assemblies and local government.
- Fostering political will, at all levels, to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, particularly, by taking resolute action to counter any tendency to target, stigmatize, stereotype or profile people on the basis of race, colour, descent and national or ethnic origin or to use racist propaganda for political purposes.
- Promoting solidarity, tolerance and respect for diversity, especially against the backdrop of the current global economic crisis.
- Calling for reliable data collection, with the understanding that inadequate data collection can hide discrimination and abuses against vulnerable groups, while the collection of reliable data allows for analysis to be made that could help detect discrimination, inequality and exclusion of vulnerable groups, both individually and as a group.
- Sustaining national and international awareness of the profoundly corrosive effect of racist or intolerant attitudes on our societies. This requires a strong commitment on the part of politicians and political parties, to publicly condemn racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.
- Eliminating stereotyping and stigmatization of individuals or groups based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin from political discourse during electoral campaigns, and to encourage the media to employ factually correct and balanced terminology, and
- Pressing for effective sanctions and legal redress.

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As I highlighted before, politicians and political parties have a key role to play in combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, through the enactment or amendment of constitutional protection and domestic legislation. At the same time, they can have an active role in addressing structural causes, the interdependent nature of discrimination and in summoning the political will to implement and enforce those laws, including by promoting access to justice and domestic accountability mechanisms. They can also support the development, implementation and evaluation of National Action Plans against Racial Discrimination

At the same time, politicians and political parties have a role to play in pressing for the constitution, where they do not exist, of independent national or specialized institutions against all forms of discrimination.

My hope is that at the down of our discussion, we will be able to identify and recommend how politicians and political parties can, among other measures:

- Demonstrate ethical and responsible leadership and openly reject all forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;
- Ensure that their platforms, programs and actions reflect the principles of non-discrimination, tolerance and respect.
- Ensure that effective measures are adopted and implemented to prevent and punish the promotion of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in political life.
- Ensure that ordinary criminal law is consistent with relevant international human rights law and includes an appropriate range of offences and sanctions concerning the promotion of racism, xenophobia and intolerance.

I thank you