

**International Day for Elimination of Racial  
Discrimination:  
UN expert calls for full engagement in the Durban  
Review Process**

21 March 2009

*The Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, Mr. Githu Muigai released the following statement on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.*

"In 2009, the International Day comes at a timely juncture. Within a month, the Durban Review Conference will take place, marking the largest world gathering to fight racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance since 2001.

Day after day we are reminded of the continued relevance of the fight against all forms of racism. Displays of intolerance abound, from small gestures in interpersonal relations to large-scale violence targeting people of different skin colour or ethnicity. In particular in times of a global financial crisis, intolerance tends to become even more pronounced, fostering racial, ethnic and xenophobic tensions.

Time is ripe for a renewed international engagement against racism. The Durban Declaration and Programme of Action remains the most comprehensive framework of international, regional and national actions needed to counter racism. A successful Review Conference will empower all stakeholders across the world, providing them with yet additional tools to be employed in their daily fight against racism. I therefore call upon States as well as civil society organizations to participate constructively in the negotiations leading to the Review Conference in April and to devise consensual solutions that can make a positive impact on people's lives".

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*Mr. Githu Muigai (Kenya) commenced his mandate as Special Rapporteur on UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance on 1 August 2008, after being appointed by the Human Rights Council. Since the same date, he has also been serving as a Judge in the African Court of Justice. Mr. Muigai is a lawyer, Associate Professor at the University of Nairobi and Senior Partner in Mohammed Muigai Advocates. He holds a Ph.D. in Law from the University of Nairobi and an LLM Degree from Columbia University. He has researched and published extensively in the areas*

*of international law, constitutional law and human rights and has previously worked as a consultant to various international organizations, including the African Union, UNDP, the World Bank and the ICRC.*

**For more information about the Durban Review Conference, its planning process, the UN anti-racism framework and structures, their roles and mandates - including that of the Special Rapporteur on racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance - visit the following links -**

Durban Review Conference ( Geneva - April 20-24, 2009 ) -

<http://www.un.org/durbanreview2009/sessions.shtml>

Intergovernmental Working Group on the effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action - <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/racism/groups/index.htm>

Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent -

<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/racism/groups/african/4african.htm>

Special Rapporteur on Contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance -

<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/racism/rapporteur/index.htm>

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination -

<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cerd/index.htm>

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