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The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights presents its compliments to non-governmental organisations in Latin America and the Caribbean and would like to inform them that, as a part of the preparations for the Durban Review Conference and upon the invitation of the Government of Brazil, an intergovernmental regional preparatory meeting for GRULAC will be organized by the Government of Brazil and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights from 17 to 19 June 2008. The meeting will be held at the premises of the Ministry of External Relations of Brazil, Esplanada dos Ministérios - Bloco H CEP 70170-900 Brasília – DF.

It will be recalled that, in 2006, the United Nations General Assembly, in its resolution 61/149, decided to convene a review conference on the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action in 2009 within the framework of the General Assembly. The Human Rights Council, in its resolution 3/2, decided that the Human Rights Council will act as the Preparatory Committee for the Durban Review Conference, which shall be open to the participation of all Member States of the United Nations and to observers in accordance with the established practice of the General Assembly. In its decision PC.1/11 entitled "*Preparatory meetings and activities at the international, regional and national level*" adopted by the Preparatory Committee for the Durban Review Conference during its organizational session, States and regional organizations were called upon to hold international, regional and national meetings and/or to undertake other initiatives in preparation for the Durban Review Conference in line with the objectives of the Review Conference.

In its decision PC.1/13 entitled "Objectives of the Durban Review Conference", the Preparatory Committee decided, on the basis of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, General Assembly resolution 61/149 of 19 December 2006 and Human Rights Council resolution 3/2 of 8 December 2006 that the objectives of the Durban Review Conference will read as follows:

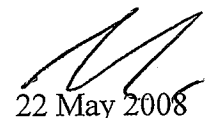
1. To review progress and assess implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action by all stakeholders at the national, regional and international levels, including assessing contemporary manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, through an inclusive, transparent and collaborative process and to identify concrete measures and initiatives for combating and eliminating all manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in order to foster the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action;
2. To assess the effectiveness of the existing Durban follow-up mechanisms and other relevant United Nations mechanisms dealing with the issue of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in order to enhance them;
3. To promote the universal ratification and implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and proper consideration of the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination;
4. To identify and share good practices achieved in the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

Non-governmental organisations shall participate in the Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean Preparatory to the Durban Review Conference with due regard to decisions PC.1/2, PC.2/1, PC.2/2, PC.2/5, PC.2/6 and PC.2/7 adopted by the Preparatory Committee during its organisational and first substantive sessions. Non-governmental organisations wishing to participate in this Regional preparatory meeting are invited to indicate the names of their representatives to the Secretariat (fax: +41 22 928 90 50) no later than 30 May 2008.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights invites all non-governmental organisations that have not yet responded to the attached questionnaire to kindly send their response to the Secretariat (Fax: +441 22 928 90 50) and to the email address rclarke@ohchr.org before 10 June 2008. The responses will be presented in a compilation prepared by the Secretariat. This compilation will be used to prepare the draft document that will be presented to the Regional Conference.

Please find attached to this Note Verbale the draft agenda and draft programme of work of the Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean Preparatory to the Durban Review Conference.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights seizes this opportunity to renew to non-governmental organisations the assurances of its highest consideration.



22 May 2008