

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

MESSAGE ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

21 March 2022

The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is both a day of recognition and an urgent call to action.

Racism continues to poison institutions, social structures, and everyday life in every society.

It continues to be a driver of persistent inequality.

No country is immune to intolerance, nor free of hate.

Africans and people of African descent, Asians and people of Asian descent, minority communities, indigenous peoples, migrants, refugees, and so many others – all continue to confront stigmatization, scapegoating, discrimination, and violence.

This year's theme – “Voices for Action against Racism” – calls on us to speak out loudly, listen closely, and act decisively.

We all have a responsibility to engage in solidarity with movements for equality and human rights everywhere. We must listen to those experiencing injustice and ensure their concerns and demands are at the centre of efforts to dismantle discriminatory structures.

Reparatory justice is also crucial to realize racial equality and atone for the enduring legacy of centuries of enslavement and colonialism.

Building a future of justice requires mending an unjust past.

We have the blueprints for determined action: the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Four-Point Agenda Towards Transformative Change for Racial Justice and Equality. We at the United Nations have also launched our own internal Strategic Action Plan on Addressing Racism.

Realizing the vision of a world free of racism and racial discrimination demands action every day, at every level, in every society.

Let us unite around our common humanity and speak as one for equality, justice and dignity for all.
