



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

30 June 2021

Excellency,

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 69/16 entitled “Programme of activities for the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent”, I have the honour to transmit herewith the concept note for the Midterm Review of the International Decade for People of African Descent, to be held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 22 July 2021, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 3 to 6 p.m.

The event will comprise an opening segment, three interactive panel discussions and a closing segment. The interactive panels will provide a platform for speakers to take stock of the steps taken to date and the way forward in the implementation of activities of the Decade, with a focus on the themes of the Decade – recognition, justice, and development.

I look forward to fruitful exchanges of experiences and lessons learnt from Member States, civil society and key actors of the international community.

A detailed programme of the meeting will be circulated in due course. For further information on the meeting, your office may contact my Advisers Ms. Gail Farngalo (gail.farngalo@un.org) and Ms. Laura Piazza (laura.piazza@un.org).

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Volkan Bozkir'.

Volkan BOZKIR

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York



***People of African Descent:
Recognition, Justice and Development***

Mid-Term Review of the International Decade for People of African Descent

***Thursday, 22 July 2021
United Nations General Assembly, New York***

Concept Note

Background

The International Decade for People of African Descent under the theme “People of African descent: recognition, justice and development”, was established through the adoption of UN General Assembly resolution 68/237.

The resolution established the following specific objectives for the International Decade:

- To strengthen national, regional and international action and cooperation in relation to the full enjoyment of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights by people of African descent and their full and equal participation in all aspects of society;
- To promote a greater knowledge of and respect for the diverse heritage, culture and contribution of people of African descent to the development of societies;

To adopt and strengthen national, regional and international legal frameworks in accordance with the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and to ensure their full and effective implementation.

The Secretary-General’s latest report (A/75/363) on this subject provides that “in many parts of the world, children and young people of African descent do not fully enjoy their human rights” and that that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities and is likely to further reinforce social exclusion. This crisis has highlighted the deep socio-economic disparities and marginalization of racial and ethnic minorities, including people of African descent. The urgent need for ensuring Afro-descendants are adequately represented in decision and policy making processes and spaces in order to assure their needs and their rights are reflected and translated into resourced and actionable policies and programs was the basis for the launch of the Decade, and this urgency persists today. This informal meeting, as requested by the General Assembly in resolution 69/16, will present an opportunity for Member States, civil society representatives, and stakeholders from the private sector, academia, and the media to take stock of the progress made and decide on further actions required for the International Decade for People of African Descent.

Format

The Mid-term Review will take place on 22 July 2021, comprising an opening segment, three interactive panel discussions and a closing segment. The three interactive panels will provide the platform for speakers to take stock of the steps taken to date and the way forward in the implementation of activities of the Decade, with a focus on the themes of the Decade – recognition, justice, and development.

Interactive Panel I – Recognition: Progress and Steps Forward

In this moderated discussion, panelists will be invited to share their lessons learned from implementing: the right to equality and non-discrimination; education on equality and awareness-raising; information-gathering; participation and inclusion. In addition, discussants will be asked to share best practices regarding promoting respect for the diverse heritage, culture and contribution of people of African descent to the development of societies.

Member States will be invited to take the floor during the discussion, no advance inscription is required.

Interactive Panel II – Justice in the International Decade for People of African Descent

This interactive dialogue will review progress made in the International Decade for People of African Descent thus far, with regard to access to justice and special measures, and consider necessary steps for progress for the remainder of the Decade.

Member States will be invited to take the floor day during the discussion, no advance inscription is required.

Interactive Panel III – Gains made and outstanding challenges in achieving development in the International Decade for People of African Descent

Panelists will be invited to assess progress regarding the right to development and measures against poverty; education; employment; health; and housing in the dual context of the Decade of Action to Implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Member States will be invited to take the floor during the discussion, no advance inscription is required.