

Human Rights Council

Inter-active dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, Mr Doudou Diène 28 March 2007

Intervention by Norway

- My delegation would like to thank the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance for his excellent reports. We highly value his work and the importance of the mandate.
- This year's report again examines the current worrying trends in racism and xenophobia. We do acknowledge that in all regions of the world, globalization can lead to increased racism and xenophobia due to rejection of diversity. However, we would encourage the Special Rapporteur to give attention also to the **positive effects of globalization**, such as enrichment of national culture.
- In his recommendations, Mr Diène invites the Human Rights Council to “wage a systematic campaign against incitement to racial and religious hatred by maintaining a careful **balance between the defence of secularism and respect for the freedom of religion**”. This is a multifaceted and highly relevant challenge. We would welcome his reflections on how to approach these issues.
- We would also welcome Mr Diène's assessment regarding **the need for complementary standards** to combat racism, racial discrimination and related intolerance and **possible gaps** he might have identified.
- We thank Mr Diène for having highlighted the **interconnection between racial discrimination and related intolerance with other forms of discrimination and intolerance**. We noted his recent public statement together with three other mandate holders expressing concern about a draft legislation which would criminalise all forms of same-sex advocacy, expression and conduct. Could Mr Diène elaborate on these concerns, and indicate whether he has received any response?
- Six years after the world conference held in Durban, Norway considers that there is still an urgent need to combat racism and racial discrimination. Later this year, a national conference will be organised in Oslo on ethnic discrimination. The Norwegian Government would very much **welcome the participation of the Special Rapporteur** to be able to benefit from his expertise and recommendations.
- Finally, my delegation would like the Special Rapporteur to comment on his **cooperation with other related mandates**, such as the mandates on the human rights of Indigenous peoples, on Minorities, on Freedom of opinion and expression and on Freedom of religion or belief. We would also like to hear his views on how such related mandates can best function in a **coherent system** of special procedures.