

UNITED
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International Convention
on the Elimination
of all Forms of
Racial Discrimination

Distr.
GENERAL

COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION
OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Declaration on the prevention of genocide

The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Recalling that 133 States Members of the United Nations have adhered to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, assuming the obligation to prevent and punish genocide, including war crimes and crimes against humanity,

Condemning the genocides that have been perpetrated since the founding of the United Nations in which tens of millions men, women and children have been killed,

Noting that genocide is often facilitated and supported by discriminatory laws and practices or lack of effective enforcement of the principle of equality of persons irrespective of race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin,

Recalling that, for more than a decade, the Committee, acting under its prevention of discrimination early warning and urgent action procedures, has brought to the attention of the Security Council, through the Secretary-General, a number of country situations where systematic violations of human rights and persistent patterns of racial discrimination could escalate into violent conflict and genocide,

Noting that the first international conference on the prevention and punishment of genocide since the adoption of the Convention, held in Stockholm in January 2004, called for a strategy for genocide prevention that must include provisions for the worst case when prevention fails and atrocities occur, and for military action as an extreme measure to stop genocide in extreme cases,

Endorsing the Secretary-General's Action Plan to Prevent Genocide, including, inter alia, swift and military action in extreme cases, presented to the Commission on Human Rights on 7 April 2004 the tenth anniversary of the Rwanda genocide, calling that the international community had failed to prevent the genocides in Rwanda and Srebrenica because of lack of will,

Noting that the High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change found that the international community has a further responsibility to act, inter alia, with force if

as suggested by the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;

4. Expresses its resolve to strengthen and refine its anti-racial discrimination early warning and urgent action as well as follow-up procedures in all situations where indications of possible violent conflict and genocide prevail; in such cases, it will consider in-country visits to obtain first-hand information on the situation;

5. Considers it of vital importance that stronger interaction is established between United Nations human rights treaty bodies and the Security Council, and in this regard the Committee will explore how further can work together in raising awareness about possible outbreaks of violent conflict and genocide and address the Secretary-General and the Special Adviser to pass on concerns and warning to the Security Council;

6. Agrees with the High Level Panel's finding that the developed countries have particular responsibility to do more to transform their armies into units suitable for deployment to peace operations, and that more States will have to place their contingents on standby for United Nations purposes and keep air transport and other strategic lift capacities available to assist peace operations. This will require resources commensurate with the scale of the challenges ahead;

7. Notes the Global Peace Operations Initiative proposal for Western States to train, equip and provide logistical support to the international military forces willing to participate in peacekeeping operations to be funded by members of the Group of Seven (G-7) States;

8. Urges increased resource allocation by States Members of the United Nations, more particularly by the developed countries, and that developed countries reinforce peacekeeping contingents from the developing countries by contributing their own contingents;

9. Considers it essential to build the capacity of peacekeeping contingents for more rapid deployment;

10. Commends the global cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union in the field of peace and security;

11. Considers it imperative to dispel the climate of impunity that is conducive to war crimes and crimes against humanity by referring all perpetrators of these crimes to the International Criminal Court;

12. Urges the international community to look at the need for a comprehensive understanding of the dimensions of genocide, including in the context of situations of economic globalization adversely affecting disadvantaged communities, in particular indigenous peoples.

1701st meeting
11 March 2005

ⁱ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 18 (A/48/18), para. 18 and annex III.