



**Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
Thematic Discussion on “special measures / affirmative action”**

4 – 5 August 2008



During its 73rd session, to be held from 28 July to 15 August 2008, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination will hold a thematic discussion on special measures in the context of articles 1 (4) and 2 (2) of the Convention.

"Special measures" is a term used in the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination for all such measures that Governments may put in place to promote certain disadvantaged racial or ethnic groups within their countries, including indigenous peoples, for instance by giving a preference to such groups in access to education or by specifically promoting their participation in government. Such measures are otherwise also frequently referred to as 'affirmative action' or sometimes as 'positive discrimination'.

The thematic discussion is intended to initiate the Committee's preparation of a General Recommendation on the subject of special measures in the context of the Convention, which will be aimed at giving guidance to States on the circumstances in which the adoption of such measures may be appropriate and on how such measures should be designed to achieve their purpose in a manner that does not create injustices vis-à-vis other groups.

Date and venue

The thematic discussion will take place in Geneva, at the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Palais Wilson (Ground floor conference room), 52, rue des Pâquis, 1201 Genève*, in the **afternoon of 4 August 2008, from 15.00 to 18.00 hours**. Interested States parties as well as intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations are invited to share their experience and express their views on the subject of special measures at that meeting. In the morning of 5 August 2008, from 10.00 to 13.00 hours, the members of the Committee will continue the thematic discussion in a public plenary meeting, which representatives of States parties as well as intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations are welcome to observe.

Participation

The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination invites States parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to participate in the thematic discussion and to provide written information on the subject under discussion. Those wishing to make a 5-minute oral intervention during the meeting should inform the Secretariat of the Committee at the latest by 28 July 2008.

Written contributions and statements may be submitted in English, French or Spanish. They should be sent to the Secretariat in electronic form to: tschackel@ohchr.org (copied to: gmendoza-solorio@ohchr.org).

Accreditation

Please fill out the below conference registration form and send it to the Secretariat by email: jfucio@ohchr.org (copied to: gmendoza-solorio@ohchr.org) or by Fax: (41 22) 917 9029 **by 28 July 2008**.

Further information

For further information on the thematic discussion, please contact the Secretariat of the Committee: gmendoza-solorio@ohchr.org



UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA *Please Print*
Conference Registration Form Date

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 An additional form is required for spouses.

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