

GUYANA

Special Action or Decisions Taken Re: Reporting, Including Urgent Action Procedure

CERD A/58/18 (2003)

II. PREVENTION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, INCLUDING EARLY WARNING AND URGENT PROCEDURES

A. Decisions adopted by the Committee at its sixty-second session

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Decision 2 (62)

Guyana

1. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination notes that Guyana has submitted a second periodic report to the Human Rights Committee and an initial report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, but it regrets that Guyana, which ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination in 1977, has not to date submitted any report to the Committee.
2. The Committee recalls that the purpose of the system whereby States parties submit reports is to establish and maintain a dialogue with the Committee on the action taken, the progress made and the difficulties encountered in complying with obligations arising out of the Convention. It also observes that the State party's failure to honour its reporting obligations under article 9 of the Convention is a serious impediment to the efficient operation of the monitoring system established under the Convention.
3. The Committee draws the attention of the State party to the Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, according to which the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination is the principal international instrument for the elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and States are urged to cooperate with the Committee in order to promote the effective implementation of the Convention.
4. The Committee recognizes the difficult economic and social conditions facing Guyana and remains deeply concerned about the extensive political and ethnic conflicts which have aggravated the situation in the country and led to serious clashes.
5. Many intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies agree that the vicious circle of political and ethnic tensions has brought Guyana to a state of political instability which has adversely affected human rights, weakened civil society, increased racial

violence and poverty and exclusion among indigenous population groups, and hampered both the administration of justice and the application of human rights standards.

6. While the Committee has acceded to the State party's request to submit its initial report in March 2004, it wishes to emphasize that, in the light of the urgent character of the situation outlined above, it may decide to request and discuss information on the state of racial discrimination in Guyana under its early warning and urgent action procedure even earlier.

*1582nd meeting
21 March 2003*

CERD CERD/C/64/Dec.1 (2004)

Decision (1) 64 on Guyana

1. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination recalls its Decision 2 (62) adopted on 21 March 2003, and regrets that the State party has been unable to fulfill its commitment to submit its initial to fourteenth periodic reports combined in one document, in time for consideration at the 64th session of the Committee. However, it takes note of the submission by Guyana of its report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and of its report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child.
2. The Committee notes that, following repeated requests from the State party for technical assistance from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, a decision was recently taken to appoint a consultant to assist the State party in the preparation of the report. In this connection, the Committee also takes note of the State party's assurances that it remains committed to the preparation and submission to the Committee of its initial to fourteenth periodic reports, combined in one document.
3. The Committee recognises the difficult economic and social conditions facing Guyana and remains deeply concerned about the extensive political and ethnic conflicts which have aggravated the situation in the country and led to serious divisions in society, and that this has affected the ability of the State party to conform to the requirements of the Convention.
4. The Committee agrees with intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations and United Nations agencies that a vicious circle of political and ethnic tensions has adversely affected human rights, weakened civil society, increased racial violence and poverty and exclusion among indigenous population groups, and hampered the administration of justice and the application of human rights standards in Guyana.
5. The Committee reiterates that the purpose of the system whereby States parties submit reports is to establish and maintain a dialogue with the Committee on actions taken, progress made and difficulties encountered in complying with obligations arising under the Convention. It further reiterates that any State party's failure to honour its reporting obligations under article 9 of the Convention is a serious impediment to the operation of the monitoring system established under the Convention.
6. The Committee is particularly encouraged by the indication made to the Committee by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, that the process of political dialogue currently underway will make a fundamental contribution to the long-term resolution to the problem of ethnic polarisation in the country (see also E/CN.4/2004/18/Add.1).
7. The Committee recommends that the initial to fourteenth reports of Guyana, combined in one document, be submitted before 30 September 2004, so that they can be processed and scheduled for

examination in 2005. In the event of the non-receipt of the report by the above date, the Committee will re-schedule the examination of the situation in Guyana under the review procedure at its sixty-sixth session, to be held in March 2005.

1636th meeting

9 March 2004