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Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance, follow-up to and implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

Written statement submitted by Sikh Human Rights Group, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status*

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement, which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[2 February 2026]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



Embracing Diversity: Strengthening the Durban Declaration and Promoting Inclusion Through a Global Declaration on Diversity

The persecution of minorities both racial and cultural is increasing and commitment to diversity is being withdrawn in some countries across the world. This will have a cascading effect on racial, linguistic, cultural and even political diversity. It is a paradox that the more educated the world becomes, the less tolerant of diversity it moves towards. So far the road towards diversity has mostly been driven by legal instruments backed by State and international policies supporting this legal approach. Legal instruments are dependent on legislature support. We see that in some countries this is being eroded.

We have been proposing a complimentary drive that will strengthen the existing instruments by encouraging States to pursue policies that make the majority comfortable with Diversity embedded in the culture of people . A non binding Declaration on Diversity that promotes positive programmes and polices to make Diversity a routine and acceptable feature of human society, could reduce the need to enforce it through the law or dependent on legislative turns.

This will make the Durban Declaration and Plan of Action an achievable mission sooner than the current slow pace and it will help to bring down the walls of prejudice and discrimination.

Diversity is natural, whether in human society, in the natural world, within any species, in the seas, oceans and different habitats.

Along with this diversity of form and habitat, there is also a diversity of cultures, worldviews and lifestyles. Nature itself has evolved many shades of human beings in colour, form, appearance, height etc. Human society has extraordinary imagination and creative ability that has led to different cultures, beliefs, civilisations and worldviews.

At a time in history when conformity is being imposed and minorities feel threatened by populist waves, the international community could address this by embracing Diversity and commit to it through a Declaration on Diversity and a UN Day of Diversity.

The Declaration will invite States to adopt policies that promote diversity within the State through positive programmes, education and community interactions.

States can also look at best practices in other countries that make diversity a success. We hope that this period in our world most needs a renewed commitment to diversity.

Such a Declaration will not only compliment the ambition that Durban Declaration and Plan of Action is aiming at, but will certainly make it both easier and achievable within a shorter period. By changing the attitudes of people, we can reverse the threats to minorities, the growing intolerance of Diversity, politicisation of Diversity and the slow grind of the DDPA. A Declaration on Diversity will be a great step forward to bring both culture, attitudes and law to work together.
