Peace One Day

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EQUAL & FAIR JUSTICE FOR ALL

Anti-Racism Live Global Digital Experience 2021

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

21st MAR

THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION is recognized by the United Nations on March 21. The day honors those who lost their lives in the largest protest against the apartheid – a system of institutionalized racial segregation that existed in South Africa from 1948 until the early 1990s.

ON 21 MARCH 1966, almost 7,000 people gathered outside a Sharpeville police station to protest segregationist laws that banned inter-racial marriages, transferred more than 80 percent of the country's land to the white minority, and restricted Black South Africans to carry passes to control their movement. Nearly 300 police officers arrived to put an end to the peaceful protest. When the police opened fire, 69 people were killed and 186 were wounded, with the most shot in the back.

THE SHARPEVILLE MASSACRE galvanized the global community to fight against racial discrimination. With the election of Nelson Mandela as President of South Africa in 1994, the apartheid system ended. The nation's first post-apartheid constitution was signed at the site of the Sharpeville massacre.

SIX DECADES LATER, the vision of equal and fair for all has yet to be achieved. Though generations of human rights activism have led to significant gains, our world is still not free of systemic racism. Discrimination and exclusion continue in our institutions today— from our education, housing, health, employment, and justice systems. While the coronavirus does not discriminate by race in itself, its impact does. The pandemic has laid bare the structural racism and legacies of colonialism that have, for generations, held black, indigenous, and people of color communities from rising. This is detrimental to all.

OUR FUTURE CAN AND MUST BE DIFFERENT. With justice demanded in peaceful protests worldwide, the lived reality of race and racism is at the center of public debate in ways we have not seen before and cannot be ignored. Now is the time for anti-racist approaches that remodel institutions to eliminate deeply embedded discrimination. The dream of justice for all will be deferred no longer.

WE HAVE THE POWER TO MAKE A CHANGE. It is up to all of us to build a world based on justice for all - regardless of race, color, language, religion, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, or national origin. This requires anti-racist action to undo centuries of debilitating policies that have preserved injustice and inequity. It requires investment in people and communities and providing equal access to education, health care, public services, jobs, and economic opportunities.

WE NEED SUSTAINED, DEDICATED ACTION of civil society justice defenders, advocates, community leaders, artists, elected officials, civil servants, union members, religious congregants of every faith, businesses, and new media makers. We need organizations, networks, and alliances that can sustain the movement, elevate messages that inform and inspire, and establish policies and practices that provide justice for all, that realize equality before the law and protect everyone from discrimination.

The United Nations has defined **'EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL**' as one of the global goals to be achieved by 2030, but we are far from achieving that goal. Whether it is a broken criminal justice system, massive disparities in access to financial services, or daily injustices in access to health care jobs and education, our task is to build a world in which all people are treated fairly and equally. That is what we must do, and that is what we will do.

WE WILL COMBAT RACIAL INJUSTICE AND INEQUITY IN OUR JUSTICE SYSTEMS.

Everyone should be able to stand up for their rights and participate fully in their society and in the economy. We must:

- **Invest in justice systems** that prevent and resolve people's justice problems and treat all people with fairness, dignity, and respect.

- **End discriminatory laws and practices**, including mass incarceration, racial profiling, and state sponsored racial violence.

- **Stop criminalizing poverty** by ending fees and fines that punish people who lack the means, resources, and support to access justice services.

- **Protect people from violence** by identifying hotspots where violence is growing, investing in prevention, proactive outreach, and legal aid, and creating safe spaces for people at risk of harm.

- **Create effective complaints and oversight mechanisms** to hold police officers accountable for misconduct, racist behavior and the excessive use of force.



WE WILL COMBAT RACIAL INJUSTICE AND INEQUITY IN OUR COMMUNITIES.

Everyone should be able to access public services free of discrimination and bigotry. We must:

- **Make people from all communities partners** in systems that work with community leaders and grassroots actors to tackle racial discrimination.

- **Support all people's access to legal identity** and ease registration processes to access public services, such as health services, social assistance, and employment opportunities.

- **Invest in prevention programs** that address racial injustice and inequity in the labor market, social protection, education, healthcare and housing to promote diversity and inclusion.

- **Transform our global and national consciousness on race** through art, culture, and media to reflect cultural diversity, offer representation and hear members of all communities.

- **Mitigate the spread of racism**, bigotry, polarization and hate-speech, and hold perpetrators accountable for race-based attacks, rejecting white supremacy's toxic culture at every opportunity.



WE WILL COMBAT RACIAL INJUSTICE AND INEQUITY IN OUR ECONOMY.

Everyone should be able to protect their home or land, get equal pay for equal work, and have equal access to economic opportunities. We must:

- **Mobilize resources and capital** to dismantle economic, market, and institutional barriers that prevent black and brown business owners from accessing capital, expertise, licenses, and services.

- **Galvanize the private sector** to fight discrimination and promote fair practices, pay people a living wage and provide equal opportunity without discrimination.

- **Create and enforce laws, policies, and practices** that provide equitable economic opportunities and achieve fair outcomes for all, striving to make all segments and levels of the work force representative of the population.

- **Extend protections** to people working in the informal sector and those that are excluded from regular banking and other financial services.

- **Invest in a green economy** and a just transition to mitigate environmental disasters and prevent black, indigenous, and people of color from bearing the brunt of the impacts of climate change.



ACT NOW FOR EQUAL AND FAIR JUSTICE FOR ALL

We call on all countries, justice leaders, international organizations, businesses, and civil society to work together to close the justice gap and address the structural, institutional and historical dimensions of racism and discrimination.

Building peaceful, just, and inclusive societies for all requires shifting from systems that provide justice for the few to systems that can provide justice for all. Old ideas, play-it-safe strategies, and incremental movement will not secure Black futures. We need bold, innovative ideas that drive us forward.

Today, on the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, we remember those who have lost their lives fighting against racism and stand committed to ending discrimination and providing justice for all by 2030.

Anti-Racism Live Global Digital Experience 21 March 2021

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