

# A conversation on human rights

## *International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination*

### People of African descent

Organized by the Department of Public Information

21 March 2011, 10:45 – 11:45, ECOSOC Chamber NLB

United Nations Headquarters

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#### Speakers:

**Ivan Šimonović**, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights – head of OHCHR's New York Office

**Magen Govender**, Counsellor at the South African Permanent Mission to the United Nations

#### Moderator

Maher Nasser, Officer-in-Charge  
Department of Public Information and  
Director of Outreach Division

*“Racial inequality is not fundamentally a matter of what is in people’s heads, nor a matter of their private individual intentions, but rather a matter of public institutions and practices that create or perpetuate racism”.*

Mirjana Najcevska - Chairperson of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent,  
3 March 2011

The **International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination** is observed annually on 21 March. On that day, in 1960, police in Sharpeville, South Africa opened fire and killed 69 people at a peaceful demonstration against the apartheid "pass laws." At UN Headquarters, DPI will bring New York students to the ECOSOC Chamber where they will link up via video with fellow students in Canada, the US and the Caribbean to talk about challenges of racial discrimination.

In this conversation with *students* our experts will address racial and other forms of discrimination that people – especially those of African descent – face and discuss ways we can fight to counter them.

This event is part of the global observance of 2011 as **International Year of People of African Descent**.

The discussion will be webcast so more students in other locations can participate during the discussion. For live webcast, please visit: [www.un.org/webcast](http://www.un.org/webcast). Online viewers are encouraged to submit their questions to [kanhema@un.org](mailto:kanhema@un.org)

For further information, please contact:  
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