



Civicus House,
24 Gwigwi Mrwebi (formerly Pim) Street,
Newtown 2001 Johannesburg, South Africa.
PO Box 933, Southdale 2135,
Johannesburg, South Africa.
tel +27-11-833-5959
fax +27-11-833-7997
email Info@civicus.org

1420 K Street NW, Suite 900,
Washington DC, 20005, USA.
tel +1-202-331-8518
fax +1-202-331-8774
www.civicus.org

**Intersessional open-ended working group
of the Durban Review Conference Preparatory Committee
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Comments on Section 2

CIVICUS joins all speakers in congratulating you, Mr Chair, for having been appointed to lead and guide us constructively in this drafting process, for having provided space for NGO contributions and for having helped to produce this draft document before us. We also welcome the clear distinction of various thematic clusters, indicated by italics, which will help us to better find our way through the text, although a few probably need some re-clustering.

Since we are concentrating today on Section 2, my comments will be short. Section 2 deals with United Nations mechanisms to combat racism and racial discrimination. I refer in particular to paras 105 and 106 of the General part which point to the lack of coordination, consistency and complementarity of the different mechanisms. Para 106 even mentions the proliferation of them, and their lack of output to the general public and victims, but fails to propose larger remedies.

CIVICUS believes that the text should become more outcome/action oriented and some measures of coordination should be identified. Norway, South Africa, Senegal and Cuba went into a similar direction in their interventions this morning. We also believe that the issue for civil society and victims is not so much the proliferation of mechanisms, but rather the lack of visibility of the output of these mechanisms and therefore suggest that (mass) media should consistently be invited to publish coordinated output of all mechanisms dealing with the issue of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

For the text before us we propose some initial language after para 105. A small 105 a) could be inserted:

“..encourages to this effect the Human Rights Council, in cooperation with the High Commissioner for Human Rights, to monitor coordinated output of these mechanisms under its agenda item5: ‘Human Rights bodies and mechanism’ and to invite relevant media representatives to such sessions.

As said, Mr. Chairperson, this is only an initial proposal. CIVICUS would be happy to consult further with likeminded Government or NGO representatives to strengthen the text. I thank you for your attention.