

The **International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination** is observed annually on the day the police in Sharpeville, South Africa, opened fire and killed 69 people at a peaceful demonstration against apartheid in 1960.



In 1979, the UN General Assembly decided that a week of solidarity with the peoples struggling against racism and racial discrimination, beginning on March 21st, would be organized annually in all States.

Since then, the apartheid system in South Africa has been dismantled. Racist laws and practices have been abolished in many countries, and we have built an international framework for fighting racism, guided by [the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination](#). The Convention is now nearing universal ratification, yet still, in all regions, too many individuals, communities and societies suffer from the injustice and stigma that racism brings.

The United Nations General Assembly reiterates that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and have the potential to contribute constructively to the development and well-being of their societies. In its **most recent resolution**, the General Assembly also emphasized that any doctrine of racial superiority is scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous and must be rejected, together with theories that attempt to determine the existence of separate human races.

The [International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination](#) obligates States to eradicate discrimination in the public and private spheres. The principle of equality also requires States to adopt special measures to eliminate conditions that cause or help to perpetuate racial discrimination.

**WEEK OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLES
STRUGGLING AGAINST RACISM AND RACIAL
DISCRIMINATION**

**21-27
MARCH**