



**Dignity International**  
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### **NGO Intervention on Item 9: DRC (20-24 April 2009)**

Mr. President and Madam High Commissioner.

This statement enjoys the support of the ASIAN NGOs informal grouping of 14 NGOs listed below.

Dignity International joins in the voices of frustration of how little progress has been made since the adoption of DDPA in Durban 8 years ago. We applaud with caution the recently adopted Outcome Document. Will this be a another highly sophisticated “talk shop” text of governments? The need for making DDPA a tool for the eradication of racism remains a dim hope for us, unless our governments become human rights based governments.

In fighting racism, we must start with acknowledging the pain of all victims suffering persecution, oppression and denial of their rights. A respected body like this one must realise and recognise that racism has caused immense human rights violations to victims who have names, with identities and come from a particular country, like that of the Palestinians, the Dalits in India, the minority groups seeking self determination like that of the Tamils in Sri Lanka, the people’s of West Papua and the people of Mindanao, Philippines to name a few. In this same light the denial of historical gross violations of the Holocaust is a disservice to the cause of fighting racism.

Dignity International, while doing human rights education on Economic, Social and Cultural rights will take cognisance of the DDPA and the DRC outcome document but some critical questions remain.

When we look at Para 8 that “reiterates that poverty and underdevelopment is closely associated with racism, racial discrimination...” and ask why the poor farmers and indigenous peoples continue being discriminated in Philippines and Brazil amongst other countries.

In relation to Para 38 of the outcome document we are shocked that 16 states have yet to sign since the DDPA of 2001, and another 6 have yet to ratify.

In relation to Para 51 we are appalled at India for not doing enough in “preventing, combating and eradicating racism” of the 160 million Dalits.

In relation to Para 53 that demands for “mobilizing the political will”, we are taken aback that a lack of visible solution on the basic rights of the slum community such as that in Kenya that at times have favored some and influenced the ability of certain ethnic communities to access land and even public services such as water and sewerage.

In relation to Para 54 and ask why instead “ of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, and freedom of information” to fight all kinds of discrimination, we find oppressive laws such as national security laws (ISA) and Sedition laws in Malaysia that do not allow for communities to fully engage with the State in fighting racism.

In relation to Para 108, reaffirming the importance of human rights education by involving NGOs and yet we see very little engagement of states doing HRE with the support of NGOs.

Mr. president, the list analyzing the paragraphs can go on. It is imperative that the Outcome Document should not stand hollow in the face of real questions of scrutiny. The pressure is on this DRC and each of the governments here to produce results immediately and not remain silent for another 8 years.

Thank you (Jerald Joseph, Dignity International)

***\*Migrant Forum Asia;Joint Committee with Migrants in Korea;Jana Utthan Pratisthan, Nepal;Pax Romana; National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights, India;Transient Workers Count Too;Solidarity Network with Migrants, Japan;\_Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development, International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism(IMADR); Asia Pacific- International Women's Rights Action Watch (IRRAW);Forum Asia;Dignity International;Swadhikar; Asian Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Network (AITPN)***

