



**17th session of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation
of the Durban Declaration and Program of Action**

Statement

**delivered by Mr. Emin Aslanov, First secretary of the Permanent Representation of the
Republic of Azerbaijan to the UN Office and other International Organizations in
Geneva**

16 December 2019

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

Let me start by congratulating you with your election as the chairperson of the 17th Session of the Working Group and wish the Working Group a successful session under your able leadership.

It is very unfortunate that people in all parts of the world continue to suffer daily from racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, which is still a permanent challenge to the enjoyment of fundamental human rights and freedoms.

Along with the Durban Declaration and Program of Action, which constitute a solid foundation for the struggle against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, we recall the UN General Assembly Resolution of December 2018 requiring concrete actions for elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

States should develop proactive policies to strongly prevent and tackle all instances of racial violence, hate speech and incitement to hatred, including zero tolerance policies towards racist, xenophobic, neo-Nazi and populist ideologies.

Using the opportunity, I would like also to share with you the experience of my country in promotion of intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity.

With its unique location at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, Azerbaijan has historically been a place for the peaceful co-existence of followers of different cultures and religions. Building on this successful model of coexistence we have transformed our devotion to

strengthening of intercultural dialogue into concrete initiatives to support the dialogue among cultures, religions and nations by holding various important international events.

The most notable of them is the Biennial World Forum on Intercultural, which serves as a valuable international platform for dialogue and exchanges on promoting and ensuring mutual respect among peoples of different cultural and religious identities.

Moreover, as a firm believer in importance of education, Azerbaijan also provides opportunities for the people of African descent to study in Azerbaijan with financial assistance of State and charity organizations.

I thank you.