

SHS e-Flash

March 2009

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21 March 2009: UNESCO against Racism

Paris, Monday 16 March. From Durban (**South Africa**) to Paris (**France**), two major events will be held in the next two weeks, under the auspices of UNESCO, and will provide an opportunity to remind us of UNESCO's involvement in the fight against Racism.

At the end of March, the **African** Coalition of Cities against Racism and Discrimination will hold its first general gathering in the city of Durban (**South Africa**). Given the difficulties faced by many municipalities, it was decided that this first event will concentrate on the Southern Africa sub-region, with the hope that the positive results will be extended to the rest of the continent in the near future.

In parallel, on 20 March, an International Conference on: "*Lessons from the Past, Current Challenges and Perspectives*" will convene at UNESCO HQ in **Paris**, and will be opened by Marcio Barbosa, Deputy Director-General of UNESCO.

Renowned international experts and participants from all around the world will explore – during three sessions - the evolution of racism and the emergence of new forms of discrimination, thus contributing to a better understanding of these processes. Drawing upon past experiences and lessons learned, the Conference will also discuss current challenges and opportunities for combating discrimination in and through culture, education and science.

In addition, the main issues and challenges involved in the efforts to eradicate prejudices and negative stereotypes from these processes in modern multi-ethnic and multi-cultural societies will be discussed, and how culture, education, the media and the ethics of sciences can contribute to building a positive image of the other will be explored.

Particular problems and challenges that local governments are facing in the struggle against racism will also be on the agenda, and innovative practices and initiatives that foster mutual respect and understanding among citizens will be highlighted.

The Fight against Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia is receiving more attention internationally and is recognized as one of the major issues on the global agenda. UNESCO will continue its efforts in this domain with the international community as long as the issue remains unsolved.

[Programme of the Conference](#) [PDF]

For more information, please contact:

Sergueï Lazarev, tel: +33 (0)1 45 68 38 29, s.lazarev@unesco.org

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