



YACSA

Youth Affairs Council
of South Australia

Cross-Cultural Links

Report of the First
Australian Youth Consultation
On the World Conference Against Racism
Held 10 April 2001, Adelaide, South Australia

"UNITED TO COMBAT RACISM: EQUALITY, JUSTICE, DIGNITY"
The slogan of the World Conference Against Racism



Youth Affairs - A Statement of Policy Principles

YACSA believes that the interests of young people in South Australia must be taken into account in public policy decision-making. The objectives of public policy must be the elimination of poverty, exploitation, alienation and all forms of discrimination, including racism and sexism.

The Council believes that economics and political processes must address the basic needs and social harmony of all young South Australians. The first priority of social justice is to guarantee the right of all to the common wealth. This means more than special programs for those young people classified as "disadvantaged". Social justice requires action which tackles the structural causes of discrimination, poverty and powerlessness, and which leads to a more inclusive and tolerant society.

Our concern is not only about the rights of young people, but also about any circumstances which deprive the community of the resource that it has in its young people.

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Introduction

The Youth Affairs Council of South Australia (YACSA) is the peak body in South Australia representing the interests of young people, youth workers, organisations and networks throughout the non-government youth sector. YACSA is also responsible for liaison and co-operation with government youth services, policy makers, and for advocacy to State and Federal Governments on a range of matters which affect the lives of young people in South Australia. Young people participate in the work of the Council through our Management and Executive Committees, Policy and Advocacy Groups and two forums for young people: the Youth Participation & Action Group (YPAG), and Cross-Cultural Links (C-CL). The First Australian Youth Consultation on the World Conference Against Racism was an initiative of Cross-Cultural Links members that was underwritten by YACSA.

The following report provides a brief background to the World Conference Against Racism (WCAR), and presents the outcomes of the Youth Consultation. The purpose of this consultation was not only to clearly channel young people's perspectives on racism into the World Conference process, but also to familiarise and demystify the United Nations and its various structures.

The Forum was a unique opportunity for the voices and perspectives of young Australians to be heard, and to contribute to the facilitation of change on a global level.

The importance of youth voices

The need for a specific youth perspective on racism issues in Australia cannot be underestimated. The importance of young people's opinions and perspectives has been increasingly recognised in recent years. Until recently, however, young people were not recognised as an important sector of the population, as "active social agents in their own rights, with their own lives, needs, and desires" (Matthews, Limb, Taylor, 1999:135); and, for the most part, were given very little opportunity to engage in discussions about their economic, social and environmental futures.

In 1989, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. The Convention formally recognises young people's right to participate in society: Article 12 enshrines young people's right to express an opinion and have that opinion taken into account in any matter or procedure affecting them; Article 15 recognises young people's rights to association and assembly, and Article 29 recognises young people's rights to an education that encourages responsible citizenship.



Despite this, many countries, including Australia, who is a signatory to the UNCROC, perceive young people as apathetic, self-interested, and ignorant of political and societal issues (Carson, Fitzgerald, and Roche, 2000: 88). Those young people who are high achievers in academic, social and political spheres are seen as exceptions to the norm.

These stereotypes are clearly not the case. Young people are increasingly politically active and passionate about contributing to our lived environment and to the controversial debates of the day (Carson, Fitzgerald, and Roche, 2000: 88). The increasing youth membership of social justice organisations such as Amnesty International, the involvement of large numbers of young people in social movements around issues such as republicanism, Aboriginal reconciliation and a racially non-discriminatory immigration policy, and the increase in the number of youth forums and events around the country, such as the annual Youth Week and youth arts and media festivals such as *Noise*, all testify to the indisputable youth interest in political participation (Beresford & Phillips, 1997).

Young people and racism

One of the political issues that young people have a unique and significant perspective on is racism. Australia, with its history of genocide of indigenous people, white migrant settlement, and more recently, increasing non-white immigration, has been a very specific site for racism issues. Statistically, young people make up about one-fifth of Australia's population. Fourteen percent of young people are overseas-born, with sixty-seven percent of those originating from a country where the main language spoken is not English. Three percent of Australia's young people identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1997).

As highlighted by Jason Li, one of the key note speakers at the Youth Consultation, young Australians have an exciting, distinctive viewpoint on racism, especially those who have grown up here or lived here for substantial portions of their lives. Many take for granted the indigenous origins of this country, and believe that responsibility must be taken for past and continuing discrimination against indigenous peoples if Australia is ever to move forward to a future without racism. Young people also value the diversity of cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds of Australia's population, and understand that this diversity is a strength and an asset that must be genuinely appreciated by our government.

Young Australians have also borne the brunt of racism, whether as direct attacks or more subtle discrimination. These experiences have a very profound effect on young people - on their self-esteem, on their understanding and value of their own cultures, and ultimately have societal consequences as



well. For example, Indigenous young people in Australia have had to deal with the ramifications of living in 'two worlds': *"Today many young Indigenous people are confused about their personal cultural identity. Young people have had to adapt into 'two worlds', one that explores and understands their cultural heritage, and one that exists on a whole within Australian society... Almost all youth that expressed this said that they were never completely themselves within either Indigenous or non-Indigenous communities, that they were somewhere in-between, within a shade of grey"* (Goodwin: 1-4).

Young people also have an appreciation of the intersectionality of issues such as race, gender, sexuality, disability, age, and religious beliefs which can result in a very specific type of discrimination: for example, a young Pakistani Muslim girl who wears the *hijab* (head scarf) to school may experience discrimination not only based on her ethnicity, but also her age, her gender and her religious beliefs, which will be significantly different to the experiences of discrimination an older Indigenous man may face within Australian society. Racism is not just about skin colour or ethnicity, but can be influenced by other factors as well.

Youth perspectives are not limited to the individual and the national, but also pertain to the international. In a constantly shrinking world, where advances in technology and globalisation diminish the national and geographical boundaries of the past century, racism is a reality that must be eradicated if we are to avoid repeating the mistakes of the past. Globally, racism manifests in the forms of modern slavery (for example, bonded labour in Asian and African countries that produces goods for the developed world), trafficking of women and children, and the economic enslavement of many developing countries to international financial giants such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank (New Internationalist, vol. 21:2000).

Young people thus have crucial global perspectives on how to combat racism that must be considered within the World Conference Against Racism processes.

Young people and the World Conference Against Racism

The perspectives of young people are at best marginalised, and at worst, unsought, at international fora such as United Nations World Conferences. Therefore, the significance of this consultation cannot be undervalued, not just in the Australian domestic context but internationally as well. It is important for young people to be involved in the processes of the WCAR, not only to ensure that their perspectives are incorporated into the programme of action, but also to be involved in the implementation of the document.

Cross-Cultural Links has contacted the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and have a commitment that the outcomes of this consultation will be considered and be given a place within the global discussions occurring in the lead up to the WCAR. This report will also be forwarded to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission of Australia, the Australian Government, and to all non-government organisations involved in the preparations for the WCAR. The outcomes will also be forwarded to the International Youth Conference on Racism that will take place concurrently with the World Conference Against Racism in South Africa.

Paragraph 23 of the Draft Durban Declaration and Commitment to Equality and Justice (the draft WCAR document) states:

We recognise that international exchange and dialogue among youth is an important element in building intercultural understanding and respect and will contribute to the elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

In this spirit, the Adelaide Youth Consultation focussed on the following topics in developing recommendations to send to the World Conference Preparatory Committee Meeting being held in Geneva from 21 May to 1 June 2001.

1. *Based on your experiences, how do you **define** racism? What sort of **impact** does racism have on an individual and/or societal level?*
2. *In your experience, **where** in society is racism most prevalent? i.e., in institutions like the school system or the Parliament **or** in particular areas such as regions, peer groups?*
3. *What can be **done** about racism? By governments? By non-government organisations (NGOs)? By individuals?*

Organisation and Structure of the Youth Consultation

In line with the United Nations definition of 'youth', young people aged 30 years and under from a broad cross section of community, industry, education, government and welfare and rights based organisations were invited to attend, including representatives from organisations in regional areas, such as Port Augusta and the Fleurieu Peninsula.

Invitees were asked to register their interest within three weeks of receiving the invitation. Background information in the form of a briefing kit for the consultation was then sent to each participant, including topics for them to consider before the consultation. The briefing kit also included general information about the United Nations and relevant website addresses for further information. In addition, a section of the day itself was committed to discussing the objectives of United Nations World Conferences and the preparatory processes leading up to them, with a specific focus on the WCAR.

To ensure access and an opportunity to participate for those who were unable to attend the forum, we linked the topics and a submission form to the Youth Affairs Council of South Australia website; the ability to contribute via the website was advertised both in South Australia and nationally. This also allowed for young people interstate to respond to the topics.

The organisation of the forum itself was done on a voluntary basis; however, sponsorship and donations were sought from non-government organisations, government departments, and businesses to cover the costs of the venue, catering, information packs, air travel and accommodation subsidies for speakers, and collation and production of the final report.

Donations were received from:

- ➔ Adelaide Central Mission
- ➔ Adelaide University Union
- ➔ Great Holiday Escape, Adelaide
- ➔ Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission
- ➔ Salvation Army
- ➔ South Australian Department of Education, Training and Employment
- ➔ South Australian Minister for Human Services
- ➔ Youth Affairs Council of South Australia
- ➔ YWCA Adelaide

Structure

Major Sumner, who is a well-known Kurna man and co-ordinator of the Aboriginal Sobriety Group, Inc. in Adelaide, opened the forum with a traditional indigenous welcome. There were three guest speakers: prominent human rights lawyer and republican, Jason Li; Young Indigenous Person of the Year 2000 in the ACT, Michael Quall, and Director of the Social Justice Unit of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, Darren Dick. The morning concluded with an information session, and questions and answers, on the United Nations, the structures of UN World Conferences, and the process leading up to the WCAR.

The afternoon comprised of a workshop session focusing on the three questions mentioned above. There were three workshop groups with 10 to 15 participants in each. After the workshops, a representative from each group provided a brief presentation of the main issues to the larger forum. The day concluded with a panel discussion of three young South Australians, Yasmine Ahmed, from the Muslim community, Serafina Maiorano, from Doppio Paralello, a multimedia theatre company interested in cross-cultural issues, and Neil Pahuja, from Cross-Cultural Links. The speakers gave their perspectives about a future without racism and related some of their own experiences of racism.

The following findings and recommendations have been extrapolated from the workshop outcomes. It is envisioned that they will be forwarded to the Australian Government, to Australian NGOs, to the WCAR Preparatory Committee Meeting, and to other youth organisations internationally, in order to inform the deliberations and discussions in the preparation of the final WCAR document. The findings and recommendations have already been presented at the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission Youth Summit Against Racism held in early May. Members of the organising group for the Youth Consultation are broadening the consultative process to young people from around Australia by soliciting submissions and responses to the Forum questions nationally in the months leading up to the WCAR. For further information, please contact the Australian Youth NGO Working Group for the WCAR at aust_youth_ngo_wcar@hotmail.com.

See appendix for the outcomes from the workshops.

Main Findings of the Youth Consultation

Defining racism

Forum participants recommended that the following issues of definition be addressed by the WCAR:

1. Racism stems from fear, ignorance, and hatred, and incorporates an intentional bias against, and intolerance of, those who are different, based on their skin colour, ethnicity, cultural or religious values, physical features. Racism can be based on genuine differences, but is also used by a dominant ethnic or homogenous social group, to assert power over individuals or minority groups, power that is manifested through the unequal distribution of social, economic, and physical resources, such as land.
2. Racism can display itself in many ways: it includes physical violence towards, and oppression of, minority groups and individuals; it can operate to exclude ideas, beliefs and values which do not reflect the majority view; it can also operate much more insidiously and become well-entrenched within social structures, allowing discrimination to continue without being exposed. Young people often experience racism through bullying, teasing, and name-calling, as well as physical harassment. Racism is also experienced in different ways and can be incorporated into experiences of intersectional discrimination, which also includes sexism, homophobia, ageism, and disability discrimination.
3. In countries with Indigenous populations, histories of white settlement, and more recent migrant populations, such as Australia, racism is more difficult to name and define because of the rapidly growing, multi-ethnic demography of its population. In these countries, governments, non-government organisations, and civil society must be made aware of, and combat, the subtle ramifications of racism.
4. The ramifications of racism are cyclical for individuals who have suffered racism throughout their lives, and can have societal ramifications by entrenching barriers to education, employment, and social opportunities for minority groups. Racism engenders racism: racism encourages distrust, aggression, anger and fear, and further divides and destroys communities.
5. Racism results in encouraging conformity and assimilation, in entrenching value-laden differences between groups which distinguishes what is

'normal' and 'acceptable', and what is not. This value system has severe societal consequences, especially for young people, in the forms of high rates of suicide, crime, and depression.

Sites of racism

Forum participants recommended that the following issues regarding sites of racism be addressed by the WCAR:

1. In developed countries with Indigenous populations and increasing migrant populations such as Australia, policies on multiculturalism and Aboriginal issues have only resulted in a narrow focus on apparent commonalities between different minority groups, rather than a comprehensive understanding of the issues, interests and values of each different group of people. This superficial approach has entrenched existing stereotypes about minority groups, which act as further barriers for members of those groups to accessing their full social, economic, educational and civic rights.
2. Government structures and processes can be inherently racist. For example, governments can perpetuate racism through resource allocation, thus dictating society's attitudes to the needs of minority groups through their budget priorities. Parliaments, whether state, regional, or federal and local councils, also perpetuate racism through the enactment of legislation and regulations with racially discriminatory outcomes: for example, mandatory sentencing legislation in the Northern Territory and Western Australia which has a disproportionately higher impact upon Indigenous young people.
3. Racism can also be perpetuated through the racist attitudes prevalent within the legal system: research documents the discriminatory attitudes from police and the judiciary towards young people of minority backgrounds.
4. Racism is often perpetuated by the media - both mainstream media and government advertising campaigns that reinforce negative stereotypes of minority groups.
5. Racism is prevalent in educational institutions, such as schools and universities, where there is limited opportunity for multiple modes of teaching/learning to be accepted. Curriculum is often very oriented to Western culture; this allows for one 'world view' which can discriminate against the teachings, histories and values of other cultures and nationalities.

Recommendations to the WCAR

1. That the World Conference urges non-government organisations and services, and government departments, to conduct grass-roots consultations with diverse populations, to document a comprehensive understanding of racism issues in each country. This consultation process must incorporate young people's views and recognise that racism can be a causal, rather than a peripheral, factor in rates of youth suicide, youth depression, and youth unemployment.
2. That the World Conference urges Governments to investigate and address Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young people's lack of access to welfare and social services, including the way these services are structured, promoted, and resourced. Further, that Governments prioritise funding culturally sensitive services for young people of diverse backgrounds, and allocate funding for community workers to liaise and work with young people of diverse backgrounds at a grassroots level, to ensure that they are accessing all the social services, educational and employment opportunities available.
3. That the World Conference urges the Australian Government and all Australian political parties to endorse the recommendations of the HREOC *Bringing them Home* report, which includes an apology to Australia's indigenous people and acknowledgement of past injustices.
4. That the World Conference calls upon participating States with Indigenous populations to incorporate Indigenous studies, including Indigenous history, cultures and languages, as a compulsory component of primary, secondary, and tertiary education curriculum. Further, that the World Conference encourages States to recognise the value and importance of different styles of teaching and educating, such as the passing down of oral history, and to implement these different approaches as appropriate into educational curriculum. States are urged to work with educational institutions to incorporate anti-racism strategies within curriculum to allow students a more comprehensive understanding of history and cultures. States and educational institutions must also encourage zero tolerance for racism on campuses and within schools by rewarding inclusive attitudes.
5. That the World Conference encourages governments to recognise prior educational qualifications of refugee and migrant peoples and to grant them similar qualifications in their adopted country.

6. That the World Conference urges all governments to create mandatory provisions for training educational personnel, such as teachers and university professors, and legal personnel, such as police officers, barristers, and judges, in cross-cultural sensitivity and youth issues, and that this training be recognised as necessary to obtaining professional qualifications.
7. That the World Conference urges States to ensure that media professionals are trained in cross-cultural sensitivity issues, and encourage responsible reporting of issues and events about minority groups which do not rely on stereotypes or sensationalism. Further, that States use the media as a primary influence in setting the social agenda, to launch educational programs nation-wide to break down stereotypes and racist assumptions about Indigenous, immigrant and refugee peoples, in a sensitive and responsible manner, as relevant to each country.
8. That the World Conference formally recognises that in order to eradicate racism, we must involve civic society, and urges States to initiate and broaden awareness-raising, anti-racist campaigns at the grass-roots level. This can not only involve a national merit system that supports anti-racist programs and projects executed by individuals and organisations, but the national recognition of the religious and cultural festivals and special days of the different ethnic groups within each country, such as Hanukkah, Ramadan, Diwali and Easter, for example.
9. That the World Conference recommends that United Nations, States' and non-government organisations' structures need to be reviewed to assess the most effective and representative way that Indigenous, immigrant, and refugee young people can participate within those structures and processes. This includes representation of these groups on boards and committees, as well as support at all levels of the collective voices of Indigenous, immigrant and refugee youth voices.
10. That the World Conference urges governments to implement human rights and anti-racist conventions into domestic legislation and policy. States must also develop an 'inclusive' culture and promote much more inclusive, diverse national identities. The World Conference urges States to enact and strengthen racial vilification laws, and ensure that the penalties for breaching these laws are enforceable. Further, that the penalties for breaching these laws also focus on constructive change, which can include education of the perpetrators of racism, rather than a punitive system of fines or imprisonment.
11. That the World Conference urges non-government organisations to mobilise support for anti-racist campaigns and issues, through the organisation of

public meetings and rallies that will encourage open discussion of racism within society and how to combat it; this will challenge communities and provide opportunities for discussion, debate and consultation on racism issues, especially for young people. Non-government organisations should also undertake to monitor government implementation of human rights conventions, including the Convention Eliminating Racial Discrimination, and put pressure on States to fight racism in all its forms. Non-government organisations can also educate the community through cultural awareness-raising campaigns, and awareness of racism in all its manifestations, from overt racist violence to more subtle racial discrimination.

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Appendix

Record of workshop deliberations at the Youth Consultation

Question 1: Based on your experiences, how do you define racism? What sort of impact does racism have on an individual/societal level?

GROUP 1

Definition ...

- ➔ Racism is about 'beliefs'
- ➔ Racism is about stereotypes, ignorance, and difference
- ➔ Racism is an abstract concept - subtle
- ➔ Racism is about dominant ideas
- ➔ To isolate someone as less than some undefinable, unarticulated standard
- ➔ Racism is exclusion, oppression, violence towards people, groups, ideas, beliefs
- ➔ Racism is the denial of identity, the continual attack on identity, and the categorisation according to assumptions based on appearance
- ➔ Racism is the rejection of people/ideas/personalities

Impact ...

- ➔ On the media, the 'fear of the unknown' manifests itself through stereotypes the media propagates
- ➔ Policies on multiculturalism have only resulted in 'washing over' core issues and resulting in a focus on surface-level commonalities between minority groups
- ➔ Language can also be racist - the words we use can limit individuals without being blatantly discriminatory or derogatory
- ➔ Racism has long-reaching consequences on individuals – affects self-esteem and sense of identity
- ➔ Individuals can constantly be identifying who and what they are and are not

- ➔ Pressure and expectations upon an individual to behave and look a particular way has specific societal ramifications as well, especially for young people: high rates of suicide, crime, and depression
- ➔ One impact of racism is an emphasis on assimilation, pressure for everyone to assimilate and emulate a certain way of dressing, behaving, etc. For example, institutions can discriminate on appearance with employment opportunity, which can result in societal barriers for individuals
- ➔ Entrenchment of 'Anglo' icons in Australia as a result of racism

GROUP 2

Definition ...

- ➔ Racism is based on connotations of difference, and can take the form of physical violence, to verbal abuse, to more subtle forms of racism
- ➔ It is a combination of power and perspective – individuals/groups with power can determine the way others are defined and perceived
- ➔ Pervasiveness of racism makes it difficult to get away from
- ➔ Racism can be about people's land, history, culture
- ➔ Racism can be based on genuine differences, but is also used to assert power over someone or a group of people, power that is manifested through the unequal distribution of social, economic, and physical resources
- ➔ Racism relies on a system of democracy, where the 'majority' has the final say; hence those that do not agree with or do not conform to who the majority is are marginalised
- ➔ Racism also relies on democratic power structures, where the majority has the power, and will not want to relinquish it: the capitalist system as it exists rewards those who adhere to its conformist standards, and marginalises those who do not
- ➔ Those who maintain racist structures are catered to more than those who experience racism – the subtlety of racism means that experiences of racism are very often not taken seriously or believed

Impact ...

- ➔ Racism results in intolerance to differences of any sort; hence those that are different are marginalised from community and participation in society

- ➔ Racism affects people's socio-economic status
- ➔ Racism results in conformity – value-laden differences between groups and people which distinguishes what is normal and what is not

GROUP 3

Definition ...

- ➔ Racism is a state of mind, a reflection of one's own world view
- ➔ Racism incorporates an intentional bias, prejudice
- ➔ Racism is about fear, hatred, ignorance, a response to difference, recognition of difference, emphasis on distinction

Impact ...

- ➔ Racism impacts upon self-esteem: challenges one sense of self and one's place in society
- ➔ Impacts upon sense of belonging, resulting in isolation
- ➔ Racism results in strengthening of minority communities, partly out of fear, but also to retain own cultural identity within the dominant Anglo culture
- ➔ Racism creates segregation
- ➔ Racism allows for one dominant culture to be forced upon others and expects minority cultures to conform

GROUP 4 (Peer educators from the Vietnamese community; workshop conducted off-site)

Definition ...

- ➔ Racism is the discrimination of someone's background. They are distinguished by particular features such as skin colour and hair colour
- ➔ Racism derives from a lack of knowledge
- ➔ Racism to me is a different culture that stands out against other cultures
- ➔ Racism is teasing, bullying, and harassment

Impact ...

- ➔ Aggressiveness and fighting
- ➔ People misjudge you, stereotype according to the norm. You rebel and may turn out to be racist yourself
- ➔ Racism makes individuals hate their own cultures and themselves

Question 2: In your experience, where in society is racism most prevalent, i.e. in institutions, like the school system, or Parliament, or in particular areas such as regions (rural areas), peer groups, etc?

GROUP 1

- ➔ Racism is prevalent in schools and universities, where only one way of teaching/learning is accepted, and the curriculum is very Western-oriented; this also allows for stereotypes of minority students to be perpetuated, e.g. international students
- ➔ in the media, both mainstream media and government propaganda (e.g. government sponsored advertising on television)
- ➔ In everyday language, which can be racially discriminatory
- ➔ Within organisations/institutions, which can racially discriminate with regards to who they decide to hire, with what projects they decide to fund. etc
- ➔ Within families
- ➔ Government perpetuates racism with its allocation of funding and dictates society's attitudes with its example of budgetary priorities (e.g. defunding services for migrants, etc.)
- ➔ Political parties also perpetuate racism in their policy priorities, in their internal structures, e.g. must conform to certain behaviour and ideologies to belong, etc

GROUP 2

- ➔ Racism is prevalent in the media, which perpetuates stereotypes of different minority groups – e.g. 'Asian gangs', etc. Indigenous people always named as such and it reinforces stereotypes
- ➔ Priorities in government spending – e.g. spending thousands to rescue a yachtsman as opposed to Aboriginal deaths in custody or stolen generation compensations
- ➔ Priorities in immigration policies
- ➔ State and Federal Parliament, and local councils, passing discriminatory legislation and regulations – e.g. mandatory sentencing, alcohol ban on Victoria Square in Adelaide which affects Aboriginal people who spend

time in the Square the most without trying to address alcoholism or homelessness in a socially responsible way

- ➔ This sort of legislation/regulations discriminate at a grass-roots level, affecting individuals

GROUP 3

- ➔ Racism is prevalent in schools – acted out and reflected in adult (teachers, parents, administrators) and community attitudes which teach young people how to behave and what is acceptable and normal
- ➔ Prevalent in established structures and school processes
- ➔ Racism prevalent in government policies
- ➔ Racism prevalent in the law: police, judiciary, legislation
- ➔ Difficult to state where racism is most prevalent as it is insidious and subtle

GROUP 4

- ➔ Racism prevalent mostly in society, out in the streets
- ➔ Racism occurs in schools, which are very competitive places, and public places, on the streets

Question 3: What can be done about racism, and by whom? (e.g. By governments? By non-government organisations? By individuals and society?)

GROUP 1

- ➔ To address racism, must go down to grass roots level and do consultations to be able to understand experiences and impact of racism, otherwise can easily get lost in the 'system'. Stereotypes must be challenged, and this can be done through changes to school curriculum and what is taught, starting at a primary school level
- ➔ Nationally, must have more awareness-raising days, such as 'Harmony Day'
- ➔ Need media accountability for racist stereotypes – educate journalists regarding subtlety of racist language and attitudes

- ➔ Use the media as a tool to raise awareness
- ➔ Think about notion of 'unity' and focus on ways to explore diversity in unity
- ➔ Must talk about differences

GROUP 2

- ➔ To address racism, fundamental social changes need to occur at the bottom up
- ➔ Anti-racist strategies can include organised resistance, public movement of protests, which can be called upon when Government passes racist legislation, etc
- ➔ At school, allow students to learn about and deconstruct all the 'isms', must start at primary school to give young people alternatives and choices of viewing the world, history and people; incorporate anti-racism within subjects; government education departments and school principals can do this
- ➔ Must engender attitudes which value not being racist – rewards within the school system, or socially, a merit system, which rewards people who challenge anti-racist structures: this is something NGOs can organise within their own membership, similar to achievement awards, etc
- ➔ Racial vilification laws must have stronger penalties, but these penalties need to result in constructive change, not just about locking up the perpetrators
- ➔ Government recognising the 'special days' of other cultures and religions: why only celebrate Christmas and Easter, what about Chinese New Year and Divali and Hanukkah?
- ➔ Government must say 'sorry' and acknowledge the cost of refusing to do this

GROUP 3

- ➔ To address racism, firstly everyone, government, NGOs, society, must accept that racism exists
- ➔ Governments can implement human rights, anti-racist conventions into legislation and policy; government must also develop an 'inclusive' culture and much more inclusive, diverse national identity

- ➔ NGOs can put pressure on the government to do what they should to fight racism; educate the community through cultural awareness-raising and awareness of racism in all its manifestations; challenge communities and provide opportunities for discussion, debate and consultation on racism issues, especially for young people
- ➔ Individuals and society must practice anti-racism daily, challenge stereotypes, etc., and put pressure on government and NGOs

GROUP 4

- ➔ We can try to be aware of all the different cultural backgrounds
- ➔ School student councils should talk to the racist people
- ➔ Nothing, you can't change people's views and opinions
- ➔ Educate the next generation. Put it in the schools and media
- ➔ More public awareness needs to be shown
- ➔ Call the police
- ➔ Educate people to accept difference