



WHAT ARE SOME OF THE KEY CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS RELATED TO PREVENTION AND RESPONSE TO RACISM?

1) Equality and non-discrimination: A principle which is proclaimed in the first article of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)**: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights” and reiterated in all international and regional human rights treaties. The human rights legal framework also contains international instruments to combat specific forms of discrimination, including discrimination against indigenous peoples, migrants, minorities, people with disabilities, discrimination against women, racial and religious discrimination, or discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

2) Racial discrimination: The International Convention on the **Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)** is specifically devoted to the elimination of discrimination based on race. Racial discrimination is defined in Article 1(1) of the ICERD as: “*Any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, color, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.*”

3) Intolerance: There is no international definition of what constitutes intolerance. The **Inter-American Convention on against Racism, Racial Discrimination and Related Forms of Intolerance** defines intolerance as “an action or set of actions or expressions that denote disrespect, rejections, or contempt for the dignity, characteristics, convictions, or opinions of persons for being different or contrary.” This Convention acknowledges that intolerance can manifest itself as “marginalization and exclusion of vulnerable groups from participation in any sphere of public or private life or violence against them”.

4) Xenophobia: There is no internationally recognized legal definition of xenophobia. The UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance suggests a definition whereby xenophobia “denotes behavior specifically based on the perception that the other is foreign to or originates from outside the community or nation”. Generally, xenophobia implies discrimination based on the perception of the other as foreign or originating from outside a community or a nation. However, manifestations of xenophobia can occur against people of identical physical characteristics, even of shared ancestry, such as when people arrive, return or migrate to States or areas and are considered as outsiders.

5) Hate crime: While an official legal definition of “hate crime” does not exist in international law, this Guidance employs definitions that consider hate crime as composed of two elements, namely “criminal offence + bias motivation=hate crime”. Hate crimes are motivated at least in part by bias or prejudice against someone’s real or perceived connection, attachment, affiliation, support, or membership of a particular group, directed against a person(s) or property. Members of the group may have common characteristic such as racial, national or ethnic origin, language, color, religion, gender, age, mental or physical disability, or other similar factors.

6) Hate speech: There is no international legal definition of hate speech, but it is generally understood as “any kind of communication in speech, writing or behavior, that attacks or uses pejorative or discriminatory language with reference to a person or a group on the basis of who they are, in other words, based on their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, color, descent, gender, or other identity factor”. The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination considers that racist speech includes all forms of speech prohibited under Art. 4 ICERD, namely: **propaganda**.

HUMAN RIGHTS ENGAGEMENT: PREVENTION OF AND RESPONSE TO RACISM IN THE CONTEXT OF DISPLACEMENT



WHAT CAN CLUSTERS DO TO PREVENT AND RESPOND TO RACISM? WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BEST PRACTICES DOCUMENTS?

Efforts to prevent and/or eliminate racism and racial discrimination towards affected people include:

- Internal discussions on racism and racial discrimination towards persons affected by humanitarian situations, led by offices with responsibilities for emergency operations.
- Roundtables, participatory assessments and regular consultations with affected people.
- Local radio programs, websites and social media, including WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook, to share messages and multimedia content in different languages during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Peaceful coexistence projects and inter-community dialogues to promote cohabitation and prevent and address instances of discrimination, stigmatization and xenophobia.
- A dedicated task force on xenophobia which promotes this area of work supports country and regional offices and coordinates headquarters activities.
- A global anti-xenophobia communications campaign to reverse negative stereotypes directed towards affected people, such as migrants, and to tackle misinformation. In addition, IASC member organizations have disseminated products to address racism and racial discrimination towards affected people, including:
 - Identity markers, overlaid by ethnicity, race, migrant status, minority language, religious or class/caste group, as a means to identify the critical intersecting factors that define each.

Efforts to prevent and/or eliminate racism and racial discrimination towards affected people include:

- Returnee-led peer-to-peer awareness-raising activities to address xenophobia.
- Communication of the relevant key messages and human right charters.



WHAT ARE SOME OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISMS AVAILABLE TO FIGHT AND RESPOND TO RACISM?

- Convention on Elimination of Racial Discrimination and its Committee
- Human Rights Council
- Universal Periodic Review
- Special Rapporteur on Contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance



RESOURCES:

- [UNHCR, Guide on how to address and prevent racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.](#)
- [UN Network on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities webpage](#)
- UN Network on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, [Checklist to strengthen UN work at country level to combat racial discrimination and advance minority rights](#)
- [CERD Committee webpage](#)
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
- CERD Committee, [General recommendation XXII on article 5 of the Convention](#)
- [IASC Compilation of Best Practices to Prevent and Address Racism and Racial Discrimination, March 2021](#)
- [IASC Addressing Racism and Racial Discrimination Action Plan June 2021](#)

