



**OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS**



Recognition of responsibility and reparation for massive and flagrant violations of human rights which constitute crimes against humanity and which took place during the period of slavery, of colonialism and wars of conquest

Sub-Commission on Human Rights resolution 2001/1

The Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights,

Referring to its Decision 2000/114, and drawing the attention of the international community to the cases of massive and flagrant violation of human rights which should be considered as crimes against humanity and which have, to date, benefited from impunity, in spite of the tragic suffering which slavery, colonialism and wars of conquest have inflicted on numerous peoples in the world,

Considering that it is not possible to combat racism and racial discrimination, struggle against impunity or denounce the human rights violations which persist in the world without taking account of the deep wounds of the past,

Considering that, in the framework of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, it is necessary that the international community should consider the causes and consequences of those ills which, historically, have been brought about largely by slavery, colonialism and wars of conquest,

Considering also that the historic responsibility of the relevant powers towards the peoples whom they colonize or reduce to slavery should be the subject of solemn and formal recognition and reparation,

Recalling that this responsibility is all the more well-founded since the periods of slavery and colonialism have brought about a state of economic collapse in the countries concerned, serious consequences in the social fabric and other tragedies which continue even today to affect entire peoples throughout the world,

Considering that the solemn and formal recognition of this historic responsibility towards the peoples concerned should include a concrete and material aspect such as rehabilitation of the dignity of the peoples affected, active cooperation in development not limited to existing measures of development assistance, debt cancellation, implementation of the "Tobin tax", technology transfers for the benefit of the peoples concerned and progressive restoration of cultural objects accompanied by the means to ensure their effective protection,

Considering that it is essential that the implementation of reparations should effectively benefit peoples, notably their most disadvantaged groups, with special attention being paid to the realization of their economic, social and cultural rights,

Convinced that such recognition and reparation will constitute the beginning of a process that will foster the institution of an indispensable dialogue between peoples whom history has put in conflict for the achievement of a world of understanding, tolerance and peace,

1. *Requests* all the countries concerned to take initiatives which would assist, notably through debate on the basis of accurate information, in the raising of public awareness of the disastrous consequences of periods of slavery and colonialism;

2. *Requests* that a process of reflection should be initiated, in a concerted fashion, on appropriate procedures for guaranteeing the implementation of the present resolution;

3. *Decides* to continue its consideration of the question at its fifty-fourth session.

9th meeting
6 August 2001
[Adopted unanimously. See chap. VII.]