



**United Nations**

**Review of measures and mechanisms for  
addressing racism and racial  
discrimination in United Nations system  
organizations: managing for achieving  
organizational effectiveness**

**Note of the Joint Inspection Unit**

**Prepared by Sukai Prom-Jackson**

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*Executive summary***Review of measures and mechanisms for addressing racism and racial discrimination in United Nations system organizations: managing for achieving organizational effectiveness****I. Objectives of the review**

The United Nations has taken a leadership role and has done extensive work in addressing and reporting on racism and racial discrimination among its Member States across the globe. Racism and racial discrimination are against the principles expressed in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international instruments against racism and racial discrimination, injustice and violence, as well as the International Labour Organization Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. Thus, the United Nations system has taken a zero-tolerance stand against racism and racial discrimination.

The present review is about how entities in the United Nations system have upheld, in their own institutions, the provisions in the legal and policy frameworks established under the auspices of the United Nations for addressing racism and racial discrimination in Member States. It provides a description and analysis of the manifestations and configurations of race, racism and racial discrimination across the United Nations system, and of the measures and mechanisms adopted and implemented to enhance effectiveness, coherence, continued relevance and sustainability in preventing and addressing racism and racial discrimination in organizations in the United Nations system.

The findings from the review will help organizations to develop or enhance strategies to prevent and address racism and racial discrimination and advance the goals of diversity, equity, inclusion and equality, as well as justice, honesty and dignity. They will enhance the development of a common understanding and frame of operation, which will, in turn, enhance coherence, collaboration and coordination in addressing racism and racial discrimination across the United Nations system. The findings will also support legislative organs and governing bodies in safeguarding United Nations values and principles, and assist them in carrying out their oversight and accountability responsibilities in an area that is important to the credibility of the leadership role of the United Nations system.

The review takes into consideration the complexity of the subject matter, and there is therefore a need for systems-based thinking and clarity in the use of concepts. This is the first time that the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) has undertaken a review of this subject, so there is a need to establish a benchmarking framework to assess quality and provide a baseline of the current state of racism and racial discrimination in the United Nations system. Consideration is also given to the ongoing evolutionary process in organizations and the stages involved in change and development, as organizations identify, adopt and implement measures and mechanisms to address racism and racial discrimination.

**II. Methods for assessment**

Assessment and analysis involved the use of multiple methods that are systematic and designed to enhance valid and reliable evidence. The assessment of racism and racial discrimination included a common system-wide JIU survey of the personnel of 21 JIU participating organizations. This was complemented by information generated from various other sources, including: (a) the human resources database of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB); (b) interviews and consultations; (c) the

responses of 25 participating organizations to the JIU organizational-level questionnaire; (d) the findings of seven single-organization surveys on racism and racial discrimination; (e) reports on other assessments of racism and racial discrimination; and (f) findings from staff engagement surveys and surveys conducted by staff associations of the United Nations system.

The assessment of measures and mechanisms to prevent and address racism and racial discrimination was based on a benchmarking framework developed by JIU, in which 35 measures and mechanisms are identified that are important for addressing the issue and for which quality criteria are established on the basis of empirical evidence of effectiveness and best practice. The measures and mechanisms fall under nine pillars of performance for institutional development.

The pillars of performance and associated measures and mechanisms for addressing racism and racial discrimination are as follows:

(a) Pillar 1 is focused on the regulatory framework addressing regulations and codes of ethics and codes of conduct. Pillar 1 is also used to assess contextual factors that serve as enablers for addressing racism and racial discrimination;

(b) Pillars 2 and 3 cover the normative system for strategic management, addressing the conceptualization of race, racism and racial discrimination (pillar 2) and addressing leadership, values, goals, outcomes, policies and strategic plans (pillar 3);

(c) Pillars 4, 5 and 6 cover operational management for addressing racism and racial discrimination at the individual level, inclusive of intrapersonal and interpersonal forms of racism and racial discrimination (pillar 4), addressing systemic racism focused on human resources functions, programmatic work and internal control and reporting mechanisms (pillar 5) and the macrostructural form associated with the root foundations and governance structure of the United Nations system (pillar 6);

(d) Pillar 7 addresses conditions for success including aligning or mainstreaming racism and racial discrimination with other forms of discrimination for intersectionality, enhancing organizational resilience, agility and adaptability, providing adequate and appropriate resources and capacities, enhancing governance and accountability, enhancing the empowerment of personnel and the development of networks for safe space and supporting organizations in managing change;

(e) Pillar 8 concerns coherence among United Nations system organizations, alignments in the work of the United Nations and partnerships and alliances;

(f) Pillar 9 concerns future directions for change and transformation.

Organizations are assessed on their stage of development of the measures and mechanisms, from stage 1 (lowest level of performance) to stage 6 (highest level of performance). The assessment is based on three criteria: coverage, quality and level of implementation. Stage 1 indicates no attention to racism and racial discrimination. Stage 2 involves organizations finding out what to do and implementing ad hoc initiatives and starting assessments. Stage 3 involves the adoption of the measures and mechanisms, largely with implementation at the mechanical level. Stage 4 involves more routine forms of implementation and a focus on achieving effectiveness. Stages 5 and 6 are focused on refinement and renewal for impact and sustainability. The review provides a snapshot of the performance of United Nations system organizations based on their assessed stage of development of the measures and mechanisms for addressing racism and racial discrimination.

### **III. Findings**

#### **A. Race, racism and racial discrimination**

The review finds that, while there has been progress in certain parts of the United Nations system, racism and racial discrimination in the system's organizations are major and underrecognized problems that require urgent whole-of-system responses. Racism and racial discrimination are widespread throughout the United Nations system, and the magnitude of these issues, based on evidence of the prevalence, form and effects of racism and racial discrimination, is considerable. Results show that one in every five surveyed respondents has experienced racial discrimination or harassment. Without a clear working definition of race and racism, the system remains unable to undertake the assessment and analysis of the issues of race and racism necessary to deliver effective action and effective oversight and accountability.

Most of the survey respondents who have been discriminated against did not report the situation. This shows that the individual complaint and recourse systems in place are failing, and that there is a lack of confidence among personnel who predominantly choose not to avail themselves of existing recourse mechanisms, which are rarely perceived as delivering satisfactory outcomes when employed.

Racism and racial discrimination affect an organization's health, adaptability, productivity and economic returns and growth. They also affect how people live and work together and how individuals feel. The review finds that racism and racial discrimination generate high stress levels, with effects on health and productivity. It finds unequal representation of the various racial groupings in senior-level positions and different patterns in promotion among those groupings.

#### **B. Measures and mechanisms**

The review finds, based on evidence produced in March 2022, that while there has been progress in parts of the United Nations system in the use of a comprehensive and holistic approach that is important to successfully prevent and address racism and racial discrimination, the coverage and level of performance on the nine pillars of performance and the associated measures and mechanisms are not commensurate with the magnitude of the racism and racial discrimination described above. The system is lagging behind when assessed against the magnitude of the problem and against the quality criteria that define high-level performance. The majority of United Nations system organizations are operating at stage 2 in an ad hoc and experimental fashion. There are, however, four large-sized organizations that are well advanced and are operating at stage 3 and above on the various measures and mechanisms. The differences in the stages of development require urgent collaboration among organizations for a United Nations system operating as one.

In the review, imbalances were identified in the evolution of the dimensions that correspond to the review's adopted pillars and components of performance across the system. These imbalances call for strategic thinking in prioritizing and sequencing the adoption of measures and mechanisms to address racism and racial discrimination. It highlights the fact that a focus on changing systems and structures (under pillars 3, 5 and 7) without an equivalent focus on addressing racism and racial discrimination at the individual level (pillar 4) is not likely to ensure success in managing the change process involved in addressing racism and racial discrimination. In addition, a focus on microaggressions and wrongdoing, and thus on the functions of oversight, fails to recognize the important role played by middle and line managers, including supervisors, and by human resources managers in addressing racism and racial discrimination (components 4.3, 5.1 and 1.1). These managers are the first points of contact in reporting on racism and racial discrimination. The review notes the lack of a defined accountability system for leadership and senior, middle and line management to

ensure that racism and racial discrimination are not part of the workplace, and an overall failure to allocate the necessary resources for the capacity to do so. In the review, the importance of the responsibility of all personnel to address racism and racial discrimination is highlighted. Education and expertise stand out as the most significant factors in enhancing capacities for managerial roles and responsibilities, the oversight function and all personnel. The development of an integrated learning and performance enhancement system is critical to providing a genuine foundation for addressing racism and racial discrimination in a way that has a collective impact and is sustainable.

The equality of opportunity and career progression for key human resources management areas is examined in the review, addressing: (a) data disaggregation; (b) recruitment and selection policies and processes; (c) career advancement, professional development, promotions and professional excellence; and (d) the incentives system for equity and staff empowerment. The analysis indicates that the United Nations system has a long way to go in providing equality of opportunity. The issue is being addressed in seven large-sized organizations operating at stage 4 and stage 3. Again, a major gap between large and small-sized organizations is observed.

### **C. Next steps for change and transformation**

During the review process, it was found that almost all of the United Nations system organizations assessed had reflected on and developed plans for advancing existing work and for achieving high levels of development in addressing all forms of racism and racial discrimination, and for the measures needed to enhance their impact and coherence. It is highlighted in the review that the momentum that has been created for change and transformation in addressing racism and racial discrimination has major pivotal, reverberating and spin-off effects not only for addressing racism and racial discrimination, but also for other forms of discrimination and interlinkages among the various forms, for transformative changes and for the sustainability and continued relevance of United Nations system efforts in addressing racism and racial discrimination. The analysis of the level of effort that is foreseen includes the need for harmonized, integrated and interdependent ways of working across the United Nations system on a wide range of activities to include developing common conceptual frameworks, common system-wide tools, and platforms for assessments, training, learning and exchange of knowledge and expertise for peer-to-peer accountability and support, as well as for building alliances and partnerships. This requires a high-level, system-wide and inter-agency collaboration mechanism; this must be based on a well-defined strategic framework, be fully equipped to carry out collaboration and be able to leverage existing capacities for system-wide development and for developing global partnership and alliances.

## **IV. Recommendations**

The report contains six formal recommendations that can be clustered to address: (a) the development of a system-wide mechanism for harmonization and coherence, including by means of inter-agency collaboration; (b) the development of internal systems to support accountability and transparency; and (c) the implementation of key operational activities, including the development of knowledge and expertise, addressing equality and equity in opportunities for human resources management and the provision of resources for these and other activities to achieve the goals, objectives and plans for addressing racism and racial discrimination within organizations and for system-wide collaboration.



## **A. Support for systems for accountability and transparency**

### **Recommendation 1**

The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should collaborate, in the framework of the CEB, to establish a common set of categories for voluntary self-identification by personnel by June 2024, for the purposes of monitoring, analysing, evaluating and reporting on progress and success in achieving the goals of equality, equity, diversity and inclusion in addressing racism and racial discrimination.

### **Recommendation 5**

The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should establish, by 2024, an accountability framework that sets out the expected results, outcomes and key performance indicators for addressing racism and racial discrimination, and report periodically to their legislative organs and/or governing bodies on progress made in achieving the predefined results.

## **B. Operational activities**

### **Recommendation 2**

The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should direct their respective training and learning units to develop and implement a high-impact and integrated curriculum to improve awareness, learning and performance that responds to the needs of personnel of various functions, categories and levels in order to address all forms and configurations of racism and racial discrimination in the workplace.

### **Recommendation 3**

The executive heads of United Nations system organizations who have not done so should provide sufficient resources to support the achievement of defined results for the implementation of action plans for addressing racism and racial discrimination.

### **Recommendation 6**

The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should strengthen the equal distribution of opportunities in human resources management for all personnel.

## **C. Coherence and collaboration in working towards a common system-wide objective**

### **Recommendation 4**

The executive heads of United Nations system organizations, as members of the CEB, should jointly develop and provide resources to a high-level, inter-agency standing mechanism intended to unite organizations, leverage their existing capacities and comparative added value to collaborate and work together to respond to both immediate and longer-term needs for addressing racism and racial discrimination across the United Nations system, and address the transformative changes needed to enhance the continued relevance and value of the various efforts at both the organizational and the system-wide levels.

In addition to the formal recommendations, there are 15 informal or “soft” recommendations, indicated in bold in the text, which are additional suggestions to the executive heads to further strengthen and enhance the measures and mechanisms for addressing racism and racial discrimination. These soft recommendations are intended to be read in the context of the present review’s findings for each organization. They can be found in the following paragraphs: 53, 54, 59, 71, 76, 94, 113, 116, 117, 132, 134, 140, 153, 154 and 166.

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## Abbreviations

CEB	United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICSC	International Civil Service Commission
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMO	International Maritime Organization
ITC	International Trade Centre
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UN-Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNWTO	World Tourism Organization
UPU	Universal Postal Union
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization



## I. Introduction

### A. Mandate and legal framework for addressing racism and racial discrimination

1. Creating a more inclusive, sustainable, prosperous, stable and peaceful world has proven to be a major global challenge. Critical to achieving this goal is the need to shape the world in line with common human values and develop trust through truth and transparency. Throughout its history, the United Nations has stood up for the cause of global peace and good will among humankind and has promoted human rights for all and the eradication of racism and racial discrimination around the world. The United Nations has held a leadership role and has done extensive work on addressing racism and racial discrimination globally. A total of over 30 mandates and legal instruments have been adopted under the auspices of the United Nations system addressing racism and racial discrimination in countries. These are listed in annex I.

2. They include the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice, the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and the International Labour Organization (ILO) Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. The pertinent content of these legal and policy instruments is described in annex II. They all address the United Nations system intolerance of discrimination, including racism and racial discrimination, and they firmly promote the principles of human rights, truth, trust, transparency and tolerance, as a necessity for peace and for the economic and social advancement of all peoples.<sup>1</sup> The same principles, although developed for Member States, have been inspiring and providing the basis for internal guidance for the United Nations system organizations and institutions.

3. The United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), comprising the leadership of the United Nations system organizations and chaired by the United Nations Secretary-General, states that the United Nations “should and must be the gold standard for an inclusive, open, diverse, participatory, transparent and accountable organisation. The [United Nations] can serve as an example of an empowered organization that establishes, upholds and defends essential values and lives by them. This includes scrutinising, monitoring and evaluating [United Nations] internal practices and addressing and preventing any form of discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment and abuse of authority, whether individual or systemic within the Organization. It is about fostering a culture of respect, zero tolerance and accountability. It means ensuring fair and decent employment for all its personnel, including universal social protection for consultants, individual contractors, [United Nations] Volunteers and interns”.<sup>2</sup> CEB goes further to state that “words must be supported by action. Existing zero tolerance policies and codes of conduct are clear, but there is a need to ensure consequences when values are not upheld in behaviour”.<sup>3</sup> Addressing racism is not just about individual behaviours. Institutional and structural racism must both be tackled, and accountability systems established for necessary change to occur.

4. For the United Nations Secretary-General, addressing racism and racial discrimination means going beyond the current instruments of geographical representation<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Declaration of Principles of Tolerance.

<sup>2</sup> CEB/2020/HLCM/13, p. 4; and Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, *The Art of Leadership in the United Nations: Framing What's Blue* (Uppsala, Sweden, 2020).

<sup>3</sup> CEB/2020/HLCM/13, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup> In Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations it is stipulated that: “The paramount consideration in the employment of the staff and in the determination of the conditions of service shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity. Due regard shall be paid to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible.”

and diversity to focus more on inclusion by creating a workplace culture built on knowledge, truth, trust and transparency. The Inspector submits that equally important in addressing racism and racial discrimination is honesty, which is important for trust. For CEB, diversity is typically viewed through a binary gender and geography lens in many entities. It indicates that a broader and more nuanced understanding focused on valuing differences is necessary to enable a more representative and inclusive approach today.

5. According to ILO, the need to combat discrimination at all levels and in the workforce is even more urgent in the face of a world that is increasingly unequal.<sup>5</sup> It is also submitted that equally urgent in the workplace is consideration of our fast-changing world<sup>6</sup> that now sits on the cusp of the Fourth Industrial Revolution focused on technology, innovation and digitalization and of the Fifth Industrial Revolution with a focus on the use of technologies for the good of mankind. The Fifth Industrial Revolution is less about efficiency and productivity, and more about trust and values to do things better for humanity and with dignity for all in addressing critical factors relating to sustainability.<sup>7</sup> Of critical importance is understanding and addressing how such developments impact, reinforce or reproduce existing or new forms of racism and racial discrimination.

6. This Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) review provides an examination of how the United Nations system has addressed, within its organizations and institutions, the relevant provisions of United Nations legal instruments and guidance against racism and racial discrimination. It assesses the magnitude and nature of racism and racial discrimination in the United Nations system. It is noted that addressing racism and racial discrimination is important for the health,<sup>8</sup> adaptability, productivity, economic returns and growth of an organization. It is important for both peace in living together and peace in oneself, and for prosperity.<sup>9</sup> Selected effects of racism are identified in the review, which also provides an assessment of the measures and mechanisms in place for prevention, mitigation and institutional development in addressing racism and racial discrimination. This is done from the perspective of importance for achieving organizational effectiveness with a focus on value addition, appropriateness, effectiveness, impact, coherence and efficiency, as well as on sustainability and continued relevance in a changing world.

7. The review was initiated by JIU, and it was included in its 2021 Programme of Work. It responds to the need expressed by the General Assembly in its resolution 73/287 for JIU to consider the dynamics and challenges of the environment in which it undertakes its activities, and to focus its programme of work on the priority areas of the participating organizations and the Member States. It was selected as a priority for review by JIU participating organizations, one reason for this being the need to demonstrate the leadership role of the United Nations system in ensuring transparency by revealing the state of affairs and what the organizations in the United Nations system are doing to prevent and address racism and racial discrimination in their own institutions. The review contributes to the JIU strategic goals of enhancing organizational effectiveness by addressing oversight and accountability functions, the functions for the administration of justice, ethics, and integrity, and management and administrative methods and practices in core strategic areas, including results management, risk management and change management. This review is conducted in

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<sup>5</sup> International Labour Organization, *Equality at Work: Tackling the Challenges – Global Report under the Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work* (Geneva, 2007).

<sup>6</sup> Ernst and Young, India, CII Confederation of Indian Industry, Suresh Neotia Center of Excellence for Leadership, “Succeeding in the VUCA paradigm: making change happen” (2016). Available at: [https://www.academia.edu/37253720/Succeeding\\_in\\_the\\_VUCA\\_paradigm\\_Making\\_change\\_happen](https://www.academia.edu/37253720/Succeeding_in_the_VUCA_paradigm_Making_change_happen).

<sup>7</sup> Stephen Gardiner, “How the 5th industrial revolution is advancing humanity at workplace”, Fingent, 21 February 2020; Pratik Gauri and Jim Van Eerden, “What the 5th industrial revolution is and why it matters”, The European Sting, 16 May 2019; and Klaus Schwab and Nicholas Davis, *Shaping the Fourth Industrial Revolution* (World Economic Forum, 2019).

<sup>8</sup> Brigid Trenerry and Yin Paradies, “Organizational assessment: an overlooked approach to managing diversity and addressing racism in the workplace”, *Journal of Diversity Management*, vol. 7, No. 1 (spring 2012).

<sup>9</sup> Vivian Hunt, Dennis Layton and Sara Prince, “Why diversity matters”, McKinsey & Company, 1 January 2015; and World Economic Forum, “Diversity, equity and inclusion 4.0: A toolkit for leaders to accelerate social progress in the future of work” (Geneva, 2020).



parallel with two other JIU reviews that address issues pertinent to this review: mental health and well-being policies and practices and internal pre-tribunal stage appeals mechanisms for justice.

## **B. Definition and explanation of core concepts: discrimination, racism and racial discrimination**

8. The following paragraphs provide brief explanations of the core concepts used in the review. In addition, annex III provides definitions of other concepts related to racism and racial discrimination, such as racial harassment, exploitation and abuse, and definitions of the key concepts of equality, diversity, equity, inclusion and belongingness.

9. Discrimination. Like many United Nations system organizations, the review uses the definition of the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination adopted by Member States in 1969. According to the Convention, the term “racial discrimination” means “any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, 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.” The Convention furthermore stipulates that “discrimination may be an isolated event affecting one person or a group of persons similarly situated or may manifest itself through harassment or abuse of authority”.

10. In considering discrimination in the work force, ILO states that “there is consensus that discrimination at work is a violation of a human right that entails a waste of human talents, with detrimental effects on productivity and economic growth, and generates socioeconomic inequalities that undermine social cohesion and solidarity and act as a brake on the reduction of poverty”. ILO has also indicated that “discrimination is not an exceptional or aberrant occurrence, but a systemic phenomenon, frequently embedded in the way in which workplaces operate and rooted in prevalent cultural and social values and norms.” It has also stated that: “discrimination can be direct or indirect. It is direct when rules, practices and policies exclude or give preference to certain individuals just because they belong to a particular group” (i.e., race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin). In addition, according to ILO, “structural discrimination is inherent or institutionalized in social patterns, institutional structures and legal constructs that reflect and reproduce discriminatory practices and outcomes” And “severe and persistent discrimination at work contributes to poverty and social exclusion. Prejudices based on people’s social and family backgrounds often prevail over their actual skills and aspirations, thus condemning them to social immobility”.<sup>10</sup>

11. Racism and racial discrimination are fundamentally biases and mechanisms of hierarchical differentiation that shape the ordering of social relations, as well as the allocation of life experiences and life chances. They are largely based on a caste system<sup>11</sup> focused on the valuation of human groups and their relative social standing in a hierarchy that has often become entrenched by a continuously reoccurring set of reinforcing factors.

12. Racism is often interchanged with prejudice. However, unlike prejudice, racism is organized and persistent. It is considered not only an individual ideology but an entire system of behaviours, ideas, practices, conditions, structures, policies and processes that create and sustain racial advantage. Racist behaviour often results in racial discrimination with its

<sup>10</sup> International Labour Organization, *Equality at Work: Tackling the Challenges*.

<sup>11</sup> Isabel Wilkerson, *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents* (New York City, Random House, 2020). She describes caste as an artificial hierarchy that helps to determine standing and respect, assumptions of beauty and competence, and even who gets benefit of the doubt and access to resources. Caste, she adds, “is the term that is more precise [than race]; it is more comprehensive, and it gets at the underlying infrastructure that often we cannot see, but that is there undergirding much of the inequality and injustices and disparities that we live with in this country.”

negative consequences, ranging from simple neglect, or the avoidance of those believed to be different and inferior, to more explicit forms of harassment, exploitation or exclusion.<sup>12</sup>

### C. Purpose and objectives

13. The purpose of the present review is to inform legislative organs, governing bodies and executive heads of organizations about the status of racism and racial discrimination across the United Nations system and of the approaches and the practices, measures and mechanisms adopted and implemented. It is also intended to do the following: (a) guide decisions concerning ongoing and future initiatives and change management processes; (b) enhance the relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and coherence of organizations in addressing racism and racial discrimination; (c) enhance integrated, interdependent and collaborative ways of working together on the adoption of measures and mechanisms for addressing racism and racial discrimination on the basis of a common conceptual and benchmarking framework; (d) provide a basis for transparency regarding the status quo across the United Nations system on racism and racial discrimination and on the quality and maturity level of the measures adopted; (e) as the first JIU review on this topic, provide a baseline for the status quo, as well as quality standards or benchmarks that organizations can continue to use and refine for use in assessment, in monitoring, improvement and reporting, as well as for inter-agency cooperation and collaboration.

14. The objectives of the review are:

(a) **To assess the magnitude and the forms and configurations of racism and racial discrimination across organizations in the United Nations system.** The assessment of magnitude is based on the prevalence of racism and racial discrimination and on its effects on personnel. The assessment of forms and configurations is based on the various levels of racism and racial discrimination at the individual, systemic and structural levels, and the variations associated with contextual factors.

(b) **To assess the organizational stage of development in addressing racism and racial discrimination.** This assessment is carried out in relation to the coverage, quality and level of implementation of a set of performance areas and associated measures and mechanisms that are identified as relevant to achieving effectiveness, impact, sustainability and coherence in addressing racism and racial discrimination.

(c) **To assess the dynamism and continued relevance of the work of organizations.** This is done by assessing organizational plans for next steps for improvement and their reflections and actions on a way forward for change and transformation in order to respond to global changes and challenges. In so doing, the review is aimed at heightening organizational readiness, adaptability and resilience to embrace the challenges of a changing and interconnected world with many unknowns but where sustainability is tied to values, goals and mission.

15. In addressing these three objectives, the review identifies significant variations, highlights strengths and identifies weak links, challenges and constraints in management and governance.

### D. Scope

16. The review is focused on racism and racial discrimination within the institutions of the United Nations system. It does not assess the support given to countries by the United Nations system to address racism and racial discrimination. Notwithstanding, the review is guided by the declarations and resolutions promulgated for addressing racism and racial discrimination in Member States and, in one of its components, provides an assessment of the linkage between internal institutional values, principles and approaches and operational activities in carrying out development, humanitarian and normative mandates.

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<sup>12</sup> Ontario Human Rights Commission, *Policy and Guidelines on Racism and Racial Discrimination* (Ontario, Canada, 2009).

17. The review is system-wide and includes 28 JIU participating organizations from the United Nations, its funds and programmes, specialized agencies, and IAEA. Three of the JIU participating organizations took part in the project and in data collection process (both survey, organization questionnaire and interviews) as part of the United Nations Secretariat.<sup>13</sup> The review includes all personnel of organizations (staff, consultants, contractors and interns) in its assessment. It covers both United Nations Headquarters and United Nations country offices, and highlights variations that may exist in the manifestations of racism and racial discrimination in different contexts. As a system-wide report, the presentation of findings is at the aggregate level across United Nations system organizations, while variations associated with the type of organization are highlighted when they are significant.

18. The review covers a broad range of practices or measures and mechanisms addressing prevention, strategic planning, operational management and conditions for success in addressing racism and racial discrimination. The focus is on the coverage and quality of the measures and mechanisms that are identified as important for effectiveness, coherence, impact, sustainability and continued relevance. It provides a snapshot of performance across organizations and across the range of 35 measures and measures mainstreamed in functions, systems and procedures.

19. In the review, variations in performance are indicated among United Nations system organizations and among the various measures and mechanisms with the objective of highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the United Nations system as a whole. This focus on the entire United Nations system is reinforced by the fact that all organizations have been provided with their own assessments and that discussions have been held with many on such findings and on system-wide findings. This approach of engagement in the conduct of the review was guided by the complex nature of the subject matter and the need for a formative approach to enhance mutual understanding, learning about exemplary practices, and actions for next steps by organizations.

20. Of high demand in the conduct of the review is information on lessons learned and exemplary practices. The former is premature at this stage. Performance is considered exemplary practice when it reaches or is close to reaching the highest point (stage 6 in this review), as well as when it empirically demonstrates its effectiveness and impact and thus that it is worth imitating. In the review, types of organizations and types of measures and mechanisms operating at high levels on defined quality criteria are highlighted; JIU did request that organizations highlight and explain exemplary practices but there is little information on this. Limited time for interviews and follow up assessments prevented JIU work on analysis of exemplary high performance. This work has now become one of the next steps for sharing among organizations and through inter-agency bodies, such as the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, region-based networks such as the United Nations People of African Descent and the United Nations Asia Network for Diversity and Inclusion, the Human Resources Network of the CEB High-Level Committee on Management and its multidisciplinary working group on diversity, equity and inclusion, which was mandated in 2022 to develop a glossary with relevant definitions, principles and best practices within 18 months.

## **E. Approach and methods**

### **1. Guiding principles and conceptual frameworks**

21. The approach used for conducting the review is guided by a set of principles that have been developed on the basis of information provided by personnel of United Nations system organizations and experts on what would enhance the value and effectiveness of the review. They include the following:

<sup>13</sup> The three organizations are UNCTAD, UNEP and UNODC. Future JIU reviews, data collections and analysis will include these bodies as self-standing participating organizations rather than as entities under the United Nations Secretariat in JIU.

(a) The importance of anchoring the review in the particularities of the United Nations system and the values upheld by organizations, while considering the knowledge systems developed by scholars;

(b) The need to establish the conceptual frameworks and benchmarks to guide the approach to addressing racism and racial discrimination across the United Nations system;

(c) The importance of assessing not only the conceptualization of what is planned by organizations, but also the quality and level of implementation of measures and mechanism adopted;

(d) The importance of organizing the measures and mechanisms using familiar performance areas useful for assessing organizational effectiveness in the United Nations system;

(e) The importance of framing the review with the perspective of the need for collective action for impact and sustainability;

(f) The importance of examining coherence and harmonization, including alignment and coherence, with other forms of discrimination, across the United Nations system and in both institutional and programmatic work;

(g) The importance of engagement with key stakeholders throughout the review;

(h) The need to be guided by theory and knowledge of organizational change processes and the way people change;

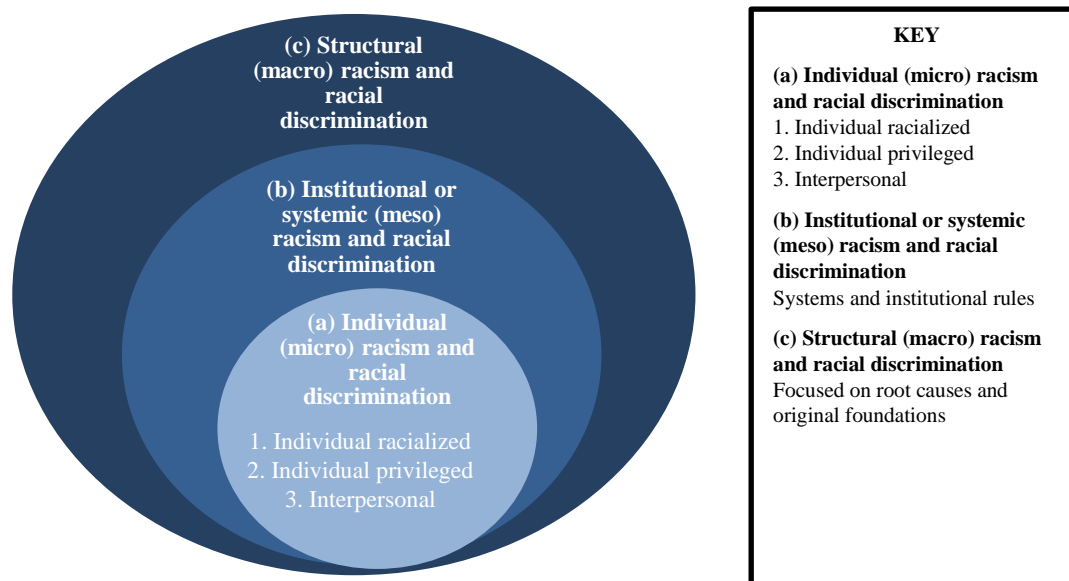
(i) That the outcomes of the change process for racism and racial discrimination are not only related to ethical reasons and questions of dignity and integrity for all parties, but are also aimed at achieving business goals of productivity and innovation for competitive edge and other benefits to the United Nations system as a whole, including the credibility of the United Nations system in global governance (details on these and other guiding principles are provided in the complementary file for this review available on the JIU website).

22. These principles guided the development of the conceptual framework and content that were used to assess racism and racial discrimination and to assess the performance of organizational measures and mechanisms. All the relevant documentation was saved in a complementary file that was sent to the JIU participating organizations for knowledge-sharing, as appropriate. The documentation in the complementary file is organized into four chapters, as follows: (a) the review frameworks; (b) the survey instrument, concept notes, methodological issues and analyses; (c) measures and mechanisms; and (d) cross-cutting areas, and is available on the JIU website.

23. The assessment of racism and racial discrimination and its forms and configurations was done at three levels; (a) the individual level (both intrapersonal and interpersonal racism are described as micro-level form of racism); (b) the institutional or systemic level, described as meso-level racism; and (c) the macrostructural level. This conceptual frame of reference is illustrated below in figure I.

Figure I

**Conceptual framework for assessing and addressing racism and racial discrimination at the individual (micro), systemic (meso) and broader structural and foundations of the United Nations system (macro)**



24. The assessment of organization practices in addressing racism and racial discrimination uses a holistic and whole-of-organization approach based on 35 measures and mechanisms identified as relevant and critical to addressing racism and racial discrimination. Based on a benchmarking framework specifically developed in this review for addressing organization performance on racism and racial discrimination in the United Nations system, the measures and mechanisms are organized under nine performance areas or pillars (1–9). The pillars fall under six main management areas that are typically used for assessing performance in the United Nations system to achieve organizational effectiveness. These management areas and the pertinent pillars and associated measures and mechanisms are highlighted in box 1 below.

## Box 1

**Performance areas or pillars under management areas for organizational effectiveness****I. Regulatory framework**

- Pillar 1 provides the constitutive and regulatory framework, as well as the enablers or authorizing factors that facilitate the uptake and adoption of measure and mechanisms.

**II. Strategic management**

- Pillars 2 and 3 provide the normative framework for strategic management. Pillar 2 is focused on the conceptualization and assessment of race, racism and racial discrimination.
- Pillar 3 is focused on the measures in place: values, goals, outcomes, policies and strategic plans. Pillar 3 also includes senior level and middle management leadership in addressing racism and racial discrimination.

**III. Operational management**

- Pillars 4, 5 and 6 address operational management and are focused on the direct mechanisms for addressing racism and racial discrimination at three levels:
- Pillar 4 – the individual/micro level, with measures and mechanisms or components addressing: (a) intrapersonal dimensions for racialized and privileged personnel; and (b) interpersonal racism and racial discrimination.
- Pillar 5 – the systemic or institutional/meso level with three components: (a) opportunities for recruitment, performance management, career development and professional advancement; (b) embeddedness in service delivery; and (c) internal controls and response mechanisms.
- Pillar 6 – structural/macro dimensions addressing root causes and constraints, including power asymmetries and dominance in structures and knowledge systems of the United Nations system, and other global factors that generate or reinforce racism and racial discrimination in the United Nations system.

**IV. Conditions for success and management of commitment, risks, and the change process**

- Pillar 7 provides the institutional means or conditions for success for demonstrating commitment and sustainability, including resource provision and accountability systems.

**V. Coherence and relationships**

- Pillar 8 is about coherence in addressing racism and racial discrimination among United Nations system organizations, and coherence in their work for development and in their partnerships. This includes integrated and interdependent ways of addressing racism and racial discrimination.

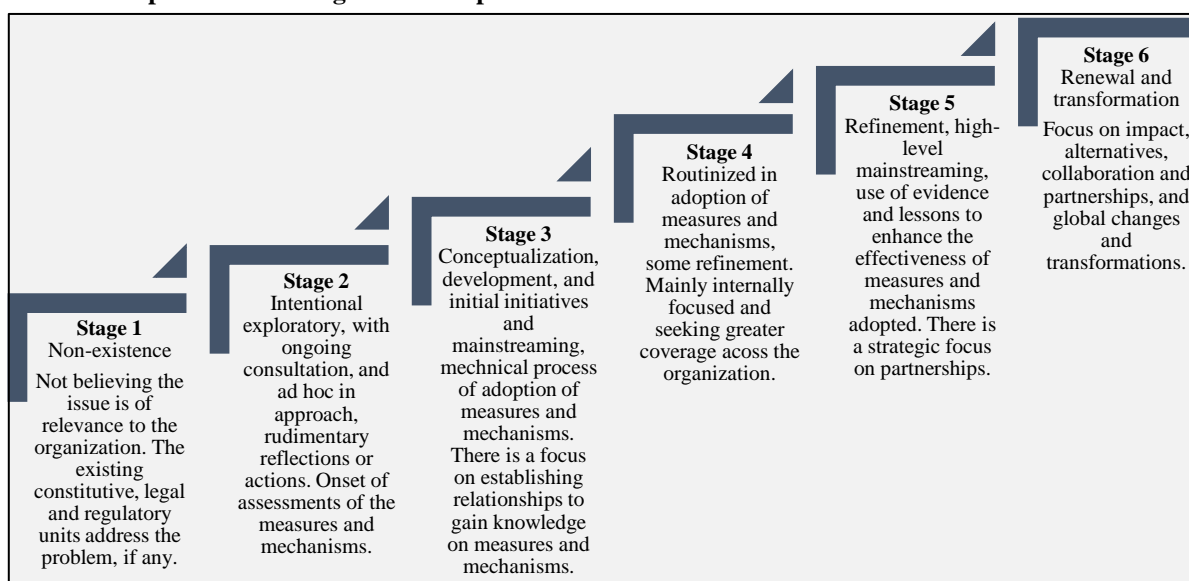
**VI. Dynamic growth and transformation for continuous relevance in a changing world**

- Pillar 9 is focused on the next steps for advancing an organization's stage of development, and the reflections and plans for making transformative changes for continued relevance, impact and sustainability.

25. Each measure and mechanism (identified as components) has a set of quality indicators. The indicators were generated from empirical evidence of effectiveness and exemplary or best management practices in addressing racism and racial discrimination. They are to be found in the benchmarking framework and the assessment framework and tool developed for the review (see the complementary file for the JIU benchmarking framework, available on the JIU website).

26. An organization's performance on the measures and mechanisms is assessed based on six stages of development, as illustrated below in figure II. Each stage denotes a progression towards a higher level in the organization's coverage of the pillars and components, in meeting quality standards and in achieving a desired maturity level either in conceptualization or in the adoption and implementation of measures and mechanisms. The theory behind the use of stages is that organizations move progressively through various stages as they meet the desired highest level of development in adoption and maturity in implementation where it is most effective in achieving the desired outcomes and impact. Stages of development in the adoption of measures and mechanisms or components under each pillar are assessed based on three main criteria: (a) the existence of the measure and mechanisms or component and scope of content coverage; (b) the quality of the component based on empirical evidence of effectiveness and exemplary practices; and (c) the level of adoption and implementation or maturity level.

Figure II  
Depiction of six stages of development



27. Details about the stages and the application of the quality criteria for each component are provided in the project assessment framework and tool that was used to assess the performance of each organization (see the complementary file, available on the JIU website).

## 2. Data sources and analyses

28. The review used multiple methods for data collection and for the validation and analysis of both the quantitative data and qualitative information generated. To assess racism and racial discrimination and its forms and configurations, a JIU common system-wide survey assessing racism and racial discrimination at the individual and systemic levels was conducted as part of the review. Twenty-one JIU participating organizations administered the survey. Other data sources used to assess racism and racial discrimination included the data of the CEB human resources network, which have variables for gender, nationality, duration and grade level. The assessment also included the responses of organizations to a corporate JIU organization-level questionnaire on the conceptualization of race, racism and racial discrimination in organizations, and responses to interviews and consultations conducted with a wide range of personnel and interest groups in the United Nations system. The review applied rigorous methods to enhance the objectivity, accuracy and reliability of the evidence provided. This included multiple confirmatory analyses, analysis of confidence levels, and triangulation with other surveys on racism and racial discrimination. Annex IV provides an outline of the various methods used to enhance the validity and accuracy of the finding on the manifestation of racism and racial discrimination.

29. For assessing organizational performance and the stage of development of the measures and mechanisms, the primary data source consisted of organizational ratings of the

stage of development on the basis of the three criteria noted above for assessing the various measures and mechanisms adopted: coverage, quality and level of implementation. Ratings were produced by trained assessors. The primary data source for the ratings was the response of 25 JIU participating organizations to a corporate organization-level questionnaire.<sup>14</sup> Other data sources included the responses of personnel in the common system-wide survey, a desk review, interviews with senior executives and pertinent business process holders, and consultations with various personnel.

30. To assess the next steps and transformative changes to respond to global changes, data were generated from: (a) responses provided by participating organizations to the corporate JIU organization-level questionnaire on next steps for the various measures and mechanisms, and on future directions and changes needed; (b) information provided during the validation of findings with organizations; and (c) interviews conducted with senior executives and managers of organizations.

### **3. Challenges and limitations: managerial and technical**

31. The scope of several aspects of the terms of reference was narrowed owing to constraints associated with the staffing of the review and the time for completion. This included conducting deep analyses of findings, including those at country office level, and on the nature and management of intrapersonal forms of racism (both racialized and privileged groups). For the later, ad hoc and opportunistic methods were used, as opposed to systematic methods. Another limitation is that the process for the validation of findings and engagement was curtailed for some organizations. In addition, interviews with senior executives were limited to a representative group of organizations from large, small and medium-sized organizations. The use of a representative group nevertheless provided a good basis to enhance understanding for the various types of organizations.

32. A limitation to the response rate in the JIU common system-wide survey is associated with the following factors about the administration of the survey. The use of a large number of demographic factors, included to understand forms and configurations for various subgroups, proved to be obtrusive in a context where trust is a major issue in organizations. The administration of the survey via JIU focal points in organizations raised questions about anonymity. The survey was administered to all personnel and completion was voluntary. The potential for selection bias and the absence of representativeness from the respondents was thus a technical concern. However, the representativeness of the respondents has been validated<sup>15</sup> as sufficient to enhance validity and confidence level in the findings. More important for a review of this type is that the sample is highly representative of United Nations personnel. The analyses across all data sets show a high level of representativeness of gender and of the various racial groupings in the analysis. The validity of the evidence provided in the review is enhanced by the high level of consistency with the findings from other organizational assessments of racism and racial discrimination.

33. The assessment of the organizational performance of the measures and mechanisms uses a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to rate organizations on their stage of development and is thus prone to subjectivity in assessment. To best mitigate the potential subjectivity and to ensure the robustness of the assessment of organizational performance, the methods used to enhance objectivity, validity and reliability included the following: (a) the training of assessors to establish inter-rater reliability or consistency in ratings; (b) inter-rater reliability assessment among main assessors and for a sample of organizations; (c) adjusting the assessment instrument before and during use to enhance objectivity and consistency; (d) assessment of internal consistency and coherence among the various measures and mechanisms when preparing summaries for each organization; (e) the assessment of content and criterion validity via interviews and other desk reviews; (f) the validation of the JIU ratings by organization, and, as needed, follow-up discussions with

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<sup>14</sup> Three of the JIU participating organizations submitted information under the umbrella of the United Nations Secretariat.

<sup>15</sup> See the JIU concept notes on representativeness and sample size in the complementary file, available on the JIU website.



various business process holders of organizations; and (g) the validation of the overall patterns of findings during interviews with senior executives and managers.

## **F. Report structure**

34. Following this chapter, chapter II is focused on objective 1 of the review and provides the findings on the manifestations, forms and configurations of race, racism and racial discrimination across the United Nations system. Chapter III covers objective 2 and provides findings on the organizational performance of the measures and mechanisms of the review. Chapter IV covers objective 3, which is focused on next steps and future directions for the United Nations system and suggestions by organizations for transformations needed to address racism and racial discrimination.

## **G. Acknowledgements**

35. JIU would like to thank the many people who were involved with the review for their expertise, the time they provided for consultation and dialogue, and their extensive engagement in the development of the various concepts, conceptual frameworks and tools used in the review. The review benefited from the involvement of many United Nations system personnel from diverse backgrounds and with varied perspectives and from wide-ranging consultations with personnel and personnel resource groups, communities of practice, inter-agency anti-racism groups, thematic groups addressing racism and racial discrimination and a wide range of external experts addressing racism and racial discrimination. The review also benefited from extensive collaboration with the CEB in the use of its human resources database. Most significant was the role played by a multidisciplinary group of experts who served as members of an advisory group for the review and provided substantial, strategic and technical advice to the team; this included brainstorming on conceptualization, providing advice and comments on the quality indicators and comments on the preliminary findings and the draft note. Members of this advisory group were selected from among senior experts dealing with racism and racial discrimination, gender equality and evaluation in United Nations system organizations, as well as from academic and management institutions. They acted in their personal capacity. The list of the advisory group members involved in the review in various capacities is contained in annex V. The persons listed in the advisory group and the file on consultations does not include those who were contacted but who did not respond, did not provide input or opted not to be included.

## **II. Race, racism and racial discrimination in the United Nations system**

### **A. Introduction**

(a) This chapter includes a description and an analysis of the manifestations, forms and configurations of race, racism and racial discrimination that exist across the United Nations system. The main question and sub questions raised are as follows: What is the magnitude of racism and racial discrimination with magnitude defined in terms of prevalence and effects or outcomes?

(b) What are the forms and configurations of racism and racial discrimination?

(c) What are outcomes or effects of racism and racial discrimination on personnel?

### **B. Race and racial identifiers: conceptual challenges and the importance of definitions and identifiers for effective management and accountability**

36. A fundamental first step towards addressing racism is defining race and identifying racial categories or groupings that would allow for effective measurement and assessment. In the absence of measurement, it is difficult to accurately estimate the prevalence of racism, to assess the magnitude of its impact, or to track progress in confronting racism and in supporting accountability for the achievement of the objectives for racial equality, equity, inclusion and belongingness. There are, however, conceptual challenges as well as political, social and psychological sensitivities.

37. Race has a multifaceted and complex nature. It is described as a socially invented or constructed fictional form of identity imposed on a group that is distinct based on phenotype (what one looks like) and on descent or cultural or ethnic origin. The construction is used as a way of judging, categorizing, casting, and creating differences among people. Even though there are no biological “races”, the social construction of race is noted to be a powerful force with real consequences for individuals. The assignment of value and meaning to it have concrete ramifications on people’s lives.

38. Race has been defined as “the historically contingent social systems of meaning that attach to elements of morphology and ancestry”.<sup>16</sup> This approach rejects the notion of biological races but recognizes that the construction of race is informed by physical features and lineage, not because they are a product of racial variation but because societies invest them with social meaning. In her 2019 report, the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance has stated that “everywhere in the world, physical features, including skin colour, shape the way that people are treated by other people, and by the law itself. At the same time, race is by no means merely about physical attributes, such as colour, nor is it merely about lineage. It is centrally about the social, political and economic meaning of being categorized as black, white, brown or any other racial designation”. The Special Rapporteur thus submits that “blanket denials of the existence of race (as a social construction) or the relevance of race in shaping day-to-day experiences, including the enjoyment of rights, are disingenuous”. She goes on to say that “in fact, what is sometimes termed a “colour-blind” approach itself produces and sustains prohibited racial discrimination in the extractivism economy”.<sup>17</sup> This analysis matches the one prepared for this JIU review by the lead expert consultant for the review.<sup>18</sup>

39. The absence of racial identifiers or groupings in United Nations system databases is a challenge for reporting on racism and racial discrimination. Many United Nations system

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<sup>16</sup> Ian Haney López, *White By Law: The Legal Construction of Race* (New York, New York University Press, 1996).

<sup>17</sup> A/HRC/41/54, para. 13.

<sup>18</sup> JIU concept note by Derek Avery on the race question (see the complementary file, available on the JIU website).

organizations have used the issues associated with race as a social construct as grounds for not assessing and reporting on racism and racial discrimination. In its resolution 53/221, the General Assembly requested the United Nations Secretary-General, as a matter of priority, to ascertain whether racial discrimination existed in recruitment, promotion and placement, in order to ensure full compliance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, the regulations and rules of the Organization and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. The working group that was established to address this issue reported that it “found it problematic to establish the parameters of such a review for a number of reasons. A primary reason is the fact that the Secretariat does not record the ‘race’ of individual staff members. Therefore, it is impossible to generate meaningful statistics based on race or to make even general observations which are supported by firm statistical evidence. Furthermore, if nationality were to be used as the basis for the review of career progression patterns, staff members of the same nationality might be of different ethnic/racial backgrounds”.<sup>19</sup>

40. Based on this report, the United Nations Secretary-General concluded that “the Secretariat is not in a position to conduct a comprehensive review of the issue of racial discrimination due to the limitation of the current information systems”.<sup>20</sup> This conclusion no longer holds, and the United Nations Secretary-General and the heads of several other organizations have become a strong force in addressing racism and racial discrimination, beginning, most notably, in 2020.

41. High-quality, timely, disaggregated and readily available data and statistics are crucial to tracking progress in achieving racial equality and equity. Enhanced data analysis capabilities enable the United Nations system to strengthen evidence-based policy, transform decision-making, communicate the impacts and results better, and substantiate advocacy and fundraising efforts. As noted in the paragraph above, a key challenge in generating meaningful statistics for the United Nations Secretariat was in defining race and in providing meaningful racial identifiers or groupings. It is also noted that nationality, information on which is collected in the human resources databases, is not an effective proxy indicator of race. The General Assembly resolutions do not provide a definition of race. The process of identifying racial groupings is left to countries to develop and report or use it for their own policy formulation, implementation, and accountability. At present, the human resources databases of United Nations system organizations do not include a category for race or racial identification or one for ethnicity.

42. The evidence from the JIU organization-level questionnaire for this review indicates that, by March 2022, over 56 per cent of the participating organizations submit that race must be defined and racial identifiers must be developed for self-identification, while respecting the rights of those who do not wish to self-identify. By November 2022, almost all organizations, with two exceptions, supported the development of categories for voluntary self-identification. Organizations have indicated that its absence perpetuates ambiguity in management, limits the capacity of governing bodies to carry out their oversight duty, and also implies a lower priority or disregard for understanding inequalities. They have highlighted a focus on this issue as most important for the United Nations system. Various personnel resource groups and inter-agency groups that have been established to address racism and racial discrimination in the United Nations system have reached similar conclusions.

43. One reason offered for not defining race and not allowing for self-identification is that it will raise problems that would exacerbate conflict and division, stigmatize groups and bolster concepts of differences tied to prejudice. As well-intentioned as they may be, fears that definition and measurement will foster greater division are difficult to substantiate with empirical evidence. In the absence of uniform definitions of race and corresponding measurement, there is already well-documented extensive division, stigmatization and

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<sup>19</sup> A/55/427.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

prejudice. Moreover, people do not have to explicitly identify their race for others to do so and use it against them.<sup>21</sup>

44. With this understanding of the importance of identifying race and racial groupings, there are nine United Nations system organizations that have dedicated time to the conceptualization and development of identifiers that incorporate: (a) phenotype and descent; and (b) region, culture, heritage and ethnicity as the basis for identification. They have used such identifiers to request self-identification in personnel surveys, including some on personnel perceptions of racism and racial discrimination. There are six organizations that have a very advanced stage of development and use information generated from using self-identification for reporting and for accountability to their governing bodies. However, organizations have used varying types of categorizations, making comparability of results difficult for system-wide considerations. This is an issue that needs to be addressed to facilitate coherence in addressing racism and racial discrimination as a common system-wide issue.

45. A definition of race and providing racial identifiers is necessary for respecting the United Nations system principle of transparency and accountability. The Inspector and the project team developed a set of racial groupings for self-identification tied to phenotype, descent and ethnicity, and used these in its survey. The list is based on extensive consultations on the most accurate and culturally sensitive categories, responses from organizations to the corporate JIU organization-level questionnaire, consideration of the groupings used by different United Nations system organizations in their surveys, and analysis of the scholarly literature. The racial groupings are similar in many ways to those used in surveys by the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). The groupings developed and used for voluntary self-identification in the JIU survey are provided in box 2 below.

Box 2

**Racial groupings used in the JIU common system-wide survey on racism and racial discrimination**

- Black or African descent (origins in sub-Saharan Africa and the groups of the black African diaspora, e.g. Afro-Caribbean, Afro-Latino, Afro-European or African American)
- Central Asian (origins in Central Asia or the Caucasus)
- East Asian (e.g. origins in China, Japan, Republic of Korea)
- South Asian (origins in the Indian sub-continent, e.g. Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka)
- South-east Asian (e.g. origins in Cambodia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam)
- White/Caucasian (origins in any of the original peoples of Europe)
- Hispanic, Latino/Latina/Latinx descent (origins in Latin America, e.g. Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, El Salvador, Mexico, Peru, Puerto Rico)
- North African/Middle Eastern (e.g. Algeria, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Lebanon, Morocco, Syrian Arab Republic)
- Indigenous Peoples (peoples with social, cultural, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from those of the dominant societies in which they live)

<sup>21</sup> Derek Avery, “The dilemma of defining race in organizations”, concept paper prepared for JIU (see complementary file available on the JIU website).

- Mixed origin (identify with two or more origins)
- Other (specify)
- I prefer not to say

46. **The Inspector suggests the use of the racial groupings for voluntary self-identification developed for this review as well as use of the lesson learned about self-identification<sup>22</sup> from the reactions of personnel based on the analysis of responses to the JIU common system-wide survey.** This suggestion does not limit the use of other categories, lessons learned from other organization surveys or information that is pertinent for different United Nations organizations personnel or contexts, including in country offices. What is important is a good basis for definition and identification of the racial groupings. Using a common set of core identifiers to which all organizations have agreed, as opposed to a set of different identifiers for each organization, will enhance coherence in assessing and monitoring progress in addressing racism and racial discrimination across the United Nations system. Once established, such categorization should be used for organizational actions and for reporting to legislative organs and governing bodies on recruitment, rank or grade level, promotion and other factors important to achieving objectives of racial equality, equity, inclusion and representation based on well-defined key performance indicators. As is the experience in many countries, the categorization can be updated on a periodic basis in accordance with changing social and political dynamics and on the basis of reasonable consensus.

47. The basis or source for generating information based on racial groupings at this stage may be periodic organization-wide surveys on racism and racial discrimination and on staff engagement, other inter-agency or network surveys, surveys by the CEB Human Resources Network, information provided to that Network on staff profiles where possible,<sup>23</sup> and information from ethics and audit departments. One thing that is certain, taking into consideration difficulties in reporting on race and racial discrimination in 2000,<sup>24</sup> is that neither the United Nations Secretariat nor any other United Nations system organization can deny Member States information on racism and racial discrimination.

48. The following recommendation is intended to strengthen coherence and harmonization, as well as transparency and accountability with regard to personnel statistics that are important to addressing racism and racial discrimination across the United Nations system.

#### **Recommendation 1**

**The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should collaborate, in the framework of CEB, to establish a common set of categories for voluntary self-identification by personnel by June 2024, for the purposes of monitoring, analysing, evaluating and reporting on progress and success in achieving the goals of equality, equity, diversity and inclusion in addressing racism and racial discrimination.**

49. It is submitted that this common base for reporting provides an opportunity for the CEB High-Level Committee on Management to use data generated by organizations to study and analyze system-wide progress made in addressing racism and racial discrimination.

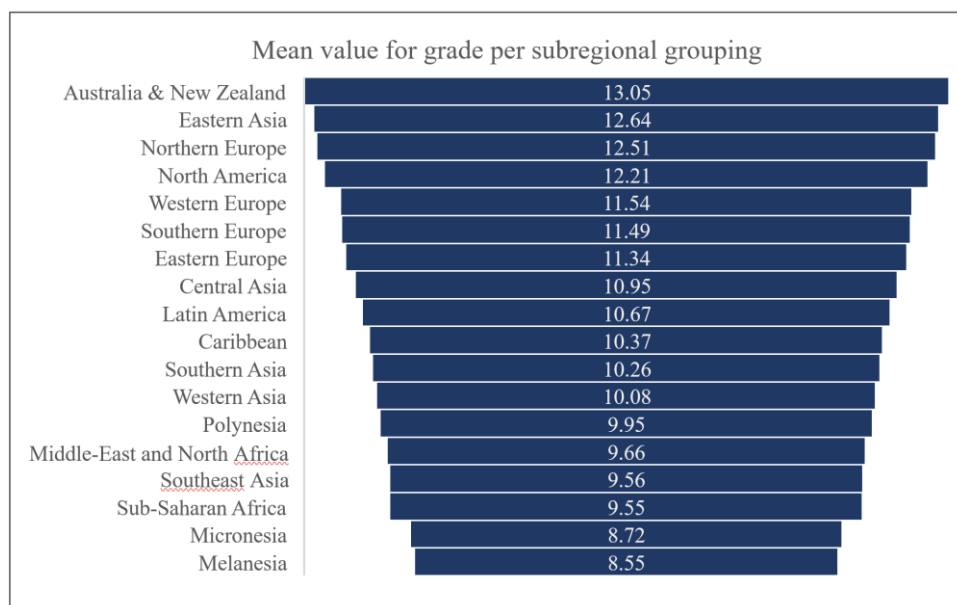
<sup>22</sup> See the complementary file available on the JIU website for lessons learned from the conduct of the JIU common system-wide survey on racism and racial discrimination.

<sup>23</sup> Keeping in mind that it is no longer permitted for either the United Nations Secretariat or any other United Nations system organization to inform the General Assembly or their respective legislative/governing bodies that there is no basis for reporting on racism and racial discrimination in their annual report on human resources management.

<sup>24</sup> Avery, "The dilemma of defining race in organizations".

50. As an interim measure, many organizations appreciated the use of the human resources database maintained by the CEB secretariat<sup>25</sup> to carry out an analysis of racial discrimination using the proxy indicators used in this review. The database, which is limited to staff, includes information on staff categories, grade level or rank, gender, nationality and duration in all United Nations system organizations. As part of an exploratory process, the review used the sub-region of country of nationality as a proxy indicator for racial groupings, as outlined in figure III below. These proxies predict personnel rank within the United Nations system. The pattern of group differences is consistent with evidence of racism and racial discrimination, predicting a higher rank for white/Caucasian personnel or those hailing from subregions with predominantly white populations. To assess the validity of this approach to capturing information on race, the review compared the self-identified racial groupings in the common system-wide survey to the subregions and found similar patterns.

Figure III  
**Mean value for grade per subregional grouping**



51. It is important to note that the Inspector is not advocating that this be used to replace the demand for racial identifiers discussed above and in recommendation 1. The Inspector, however, recognizes the value of using the existing human resources database and racial proxies used above, in order to, in the immediate term, provide information useful for addressing racism and racial discrimination. This is a starting point for reporting on representation, placement or rank, and rate of promotion, limited to staff personnel.

52. The review had access only to part of the CEB human resources database. This did not include the duration of appointments that would have allowed for an analysis of the relationship between duration and grade level in order to determine the rate of career progression by racial groups. This is another important variable that should be analyzed and reported on when using the existing human resources data for various regional groupings. This suggestion is strongly supported by the analysis done in this review on differential returns on human capital investment based on the responses of personnel in the JIU common system-wide survey. This indicates that while personnel who self-identify as black or of African descent, South Asian, or Middle Eastern/North African spend more time in their rank before advancing, a different ad hoc pattern holds for those personnel who self-identify as white.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Charts that display the personnel of the United Nations system by category, grade and gender are posted on the CEB secretariat website. The data only include personnel with staff contracts or on staff appointments for one year or more. See <https://unsceb.org/hr-composition>.

<sup>26</sup> Derek Avery, “Examining racism and racial discrimination in the United Nations: a status report as of May 1 2022”, (see the complementary file available on the JIU website).

53. **The Inspector suggests that the executive heads of United Nations system organizations should authorize the CEB secretariat to use, as a matter of immediacy, the proxy indicators to conduct statistical analyses of variables important to addressing racism and racial discrimination, and to report on this, starting in its next annual note on personnel statistics for year 2024.**

54. This recommendation is important for system-wide reporting. It is recognized that many organizations can carry out this analysis for their own organizations and take the necessary actions. **It is thus recommended that executive heads also use their own human resources data to carry out analyses using the proxy indicators of racial groupings used in this review.**

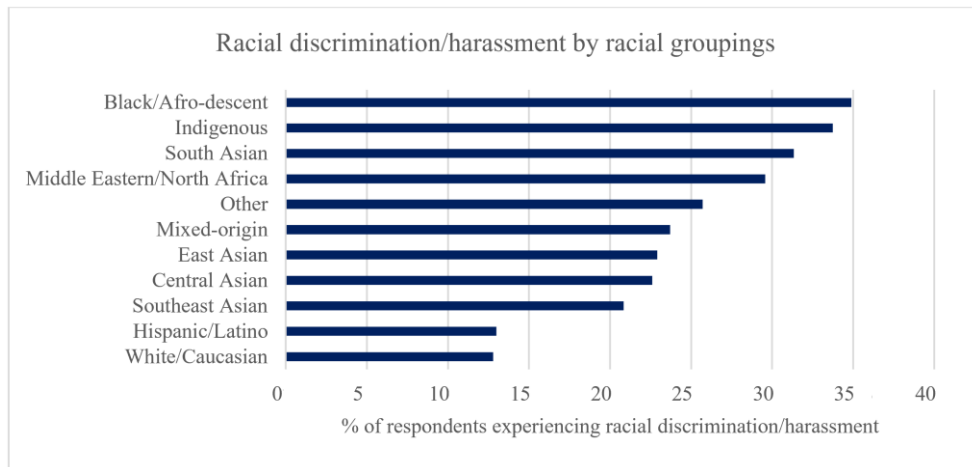
### C. Racism and racial discrimination

55. In this review, the analysis of the magnitude of racism and racial discrimination considers two factors: (a) their prevalence; and (b) the effects on health and economic returns. The JIU common system-wide survey produced several key findings, the most notable being that 21 per cent of respondents indicated that they had been personally racially harassed or discriminated against by work colleagues. This means that one in every five respondents has faced racism and racial discrimination in the United Nations system.

56. Some organizations in the United Nations system conducted their own surveys with questions about discrimination based on race, and their findings are that the percentage of personnel who have faced racism and racial discrimination range from 6 per cent to 33 per cent. These variations are associated with the structure of the questions, with some being more precise or restrictive than others (e.g. limiting the racism and racial discrimination incident to the past year or to the workplace and not to interaction with colleagues outside the workplace). For instance, a United Nations Secretariat survey, administered in 2020, found that 33 per cent responded “yes” when asked if they had experienced discrimination at their current workplace, of which 38 per cent specified that the discrimination was based on their racial identity. At the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the 2020 survey results showed that 1 in every 10 staff members had personally experienced an act of racism over the previous year. Moreover, the 2021 Global Staff Survey of the World Food Programme (WFP) found that 8 per cent of total respondents to the survey had experienced racial discrimination or racism in their office within the previous year. In spite of the variations in the questions posed, the evidence across several surveys indicate that racism exists in the United Nations system. When the time span for assessment is small (within a one-year period), the figure is between 6 and 10 per cent. When the assessment is over a longer time period and concerns working with colleagues both in and outside the workplace, the scale seems to increase.

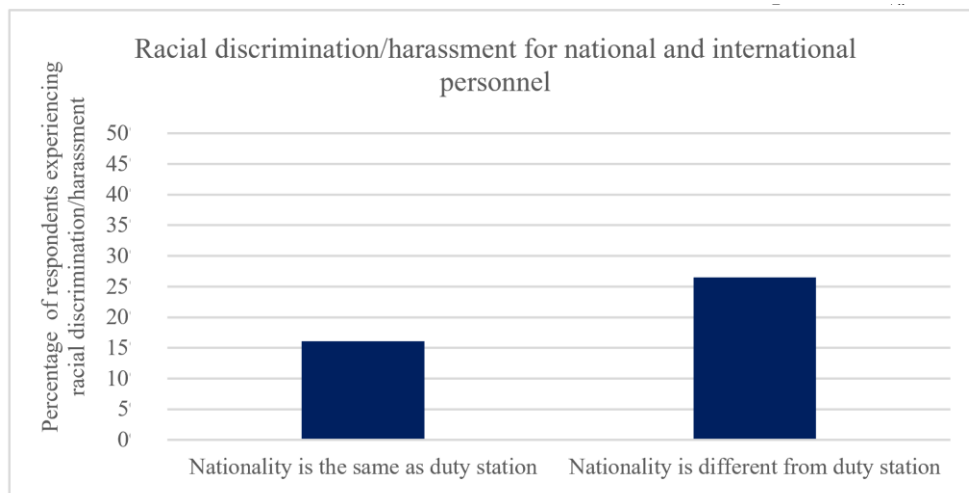
57. The results of the JIU common system-wide survey show that members of some racial groupings are more likely to indicate that they have experienced racial discrimination than others. In fact, the likelihood of experiencing racism and racial discrimination is higher among black/African descent, Indigenous, South Asian and Middle Eastern/North African respondents, to the extent that members of all of these groupings are at least three times more likely than their white counterparts to have faced it. The survey responses illustrate the considerable disparity in exposure, as shown in figure IV below.

Figure IV  
**Percentage of respondents who faced racial discrimination/harassment by racial groupings**



58. In analysing the race-based differences in the likelihood of experiencing discrimination, the context appears to be a significant factor as well. In other words, the chance of encountering racism and racial discrimination in the workplace is affected by both race and location. The data indicate that 16 per cent of respondents who work in their home countries reported experiencing racism and racial discrimination, whereas the figure was 27 per cent for those working in a country other than their home country. For Hispanic/Latinx personnel, the difference is even greater, with 23 per cent working in a country other than their home country reporting racism or racial discrimination, compared to 5 per cent reporting similar experiences while working in their home country. This partially explains why the reported prevalence of racism and racial discrimination among Hispanic/Latinx personnel is more similar to white/Caucasian personnel than in most organizations, especially in the light of the fact that approximately 64 per cent of those who identified as Hispanic/Latinx work in Latin American countries.

Figure V  
**Racial discrimination/harassment for national and international personnel**

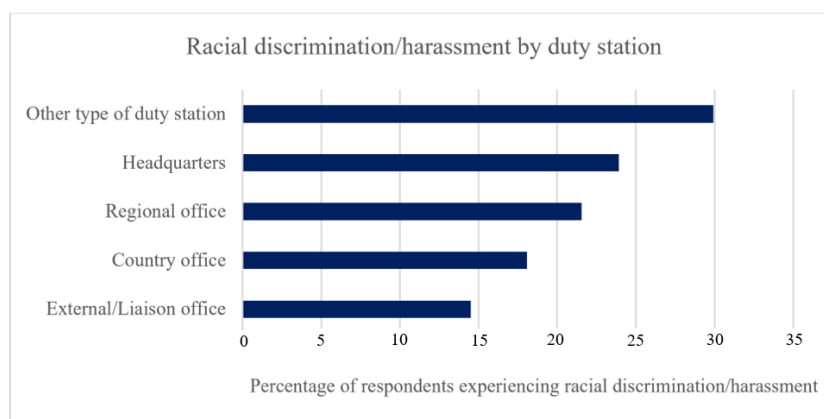


59. Considering the importance of the context, for this review, further analyses were conducted with a focus on the place of work. In country offices, the percentage of respondents who have been racially harassed or discriminated against is slightly lower than the average (18 per cent compared to 21 per cent). This is partially explained by the configuration in country offices compared to headquarters, where there are differences in demographic profiles (e.g. approximately 50 per cent of personnel at country offices are nationals of the host country). These findings have implications for the management reform objectives of



moving staff to the point of service delivery and staff mobility, for diversity, inclusion and geographical representation at all levels, and for the multicultural strategy of the United Nations system. **The Inspector suggests that, where appropriate, the executive heads of United Nations system organizations should ensure that a more in-depth study focused on country office settings is conducted to follow up on the findings of the JIU common system-wide survey.**

Figure VI

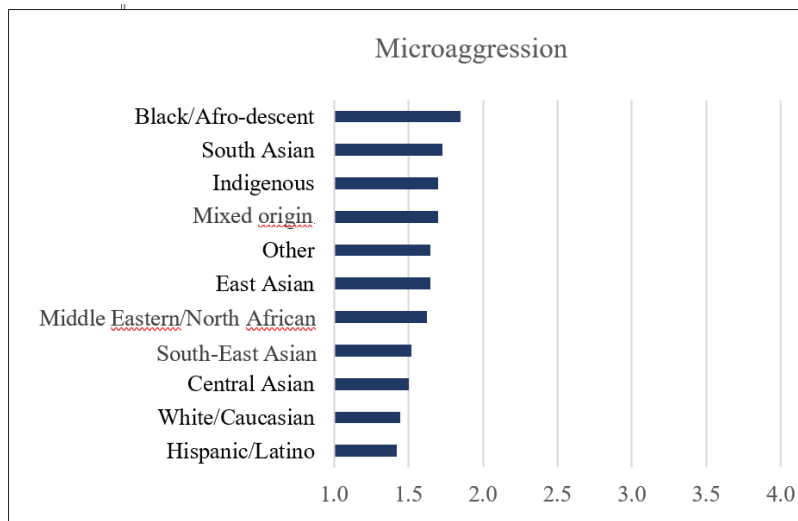
**Percentage of respondents who faced racial discrimination/harassment by duty station**

*Note:* “Other type of duty station” include peacekeeping missions, political missions and project field offices.

60. Apart from the above-mentioned question on whether respondents have experienced racial discrimination or harassment, respondents were also asked approximately 70 questions measuring different forms of racism. An exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis showed that the respondents’ experiences correspond to five broad constructs: microaggression, belongingness/visibility, equality of opportunity, support from senior leadership, and organizational intolerance of racism and racial discrimination.

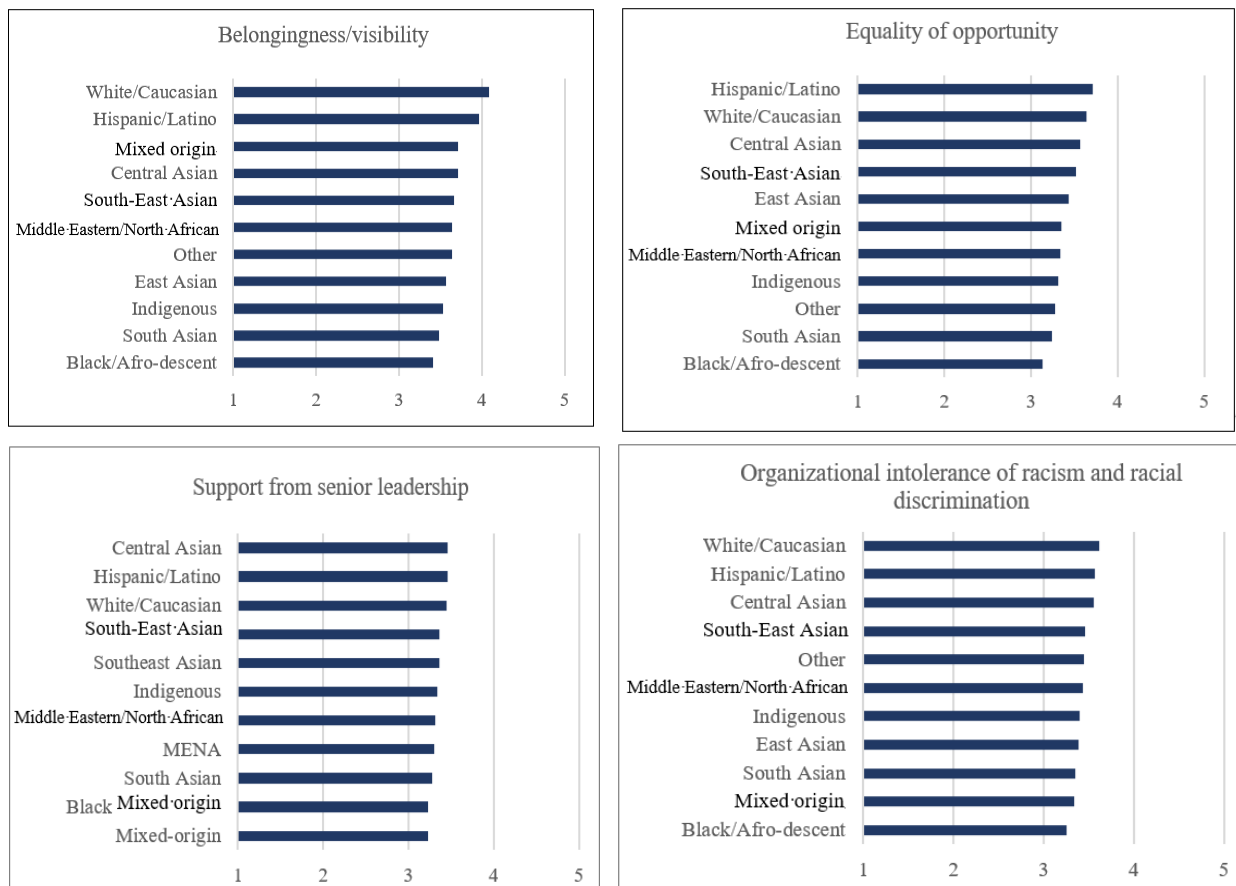
61. While the percentage of personnel who have experienced racism and racial discrimination is alarming, a key question is how often personnel believe they are exposed to this form of misconduct. These may seem to be related, but they are independent in that it could happen to a select few people all the time or to a much larger group of personnel infrequently. Any occurrence of racism and racial discrimination is bad, but the absolute worst-case scenario is to have it happening regularly to a large number of personnel. Regarding the first construct, it was observed that across the United Nations system, on a four-point scale where 1 means never and 4 means frequently, the mean score for the occurrence of a microaggression is 1.6, falling between never and rarely. As with exposure, the frequency of microaggressions also varies by race, with black/African descent and South Asian personnel at 1.85 and 1.73 respectively, and white personnel at 1.42. Though this suggests that microaggression is not necessarily happening to the same personnel often, it is not supposed to be happening at all (see annex VI).

Figure VII  
**Occurrence and frequency of microaggression (racial harassment, exploitation and abuse) by racial groupings**



62. As for the other four constructs (belongingness/visibility, equality of opportunity, support from senior leadership, and organizational intolerance of racism and racial discrimination), the mean values range between 3.3 and 3.8, suggesting mostly neutral perceptions and leaning slightly towards positive assessments. Analysing forms for differences by race and other demographic characteristics indicated some key differences. For instance, every other group reported significantly lower scores for racial belongingness/visibility than white respondents. The same was true for the construct of equal employment opportunities, apart from Hispanic/Latino personnel, whose perceptions did not differ greatly from those of white personnel. Racial differences in perceived support from senior leadership and organizational intolerance of racism and racial discrimination were slightly smaller, but the pattern is consistent with those in perceived equal employment opportunity and belongingness/visibility. These differences are illustrated in the charts below (figure VIII).

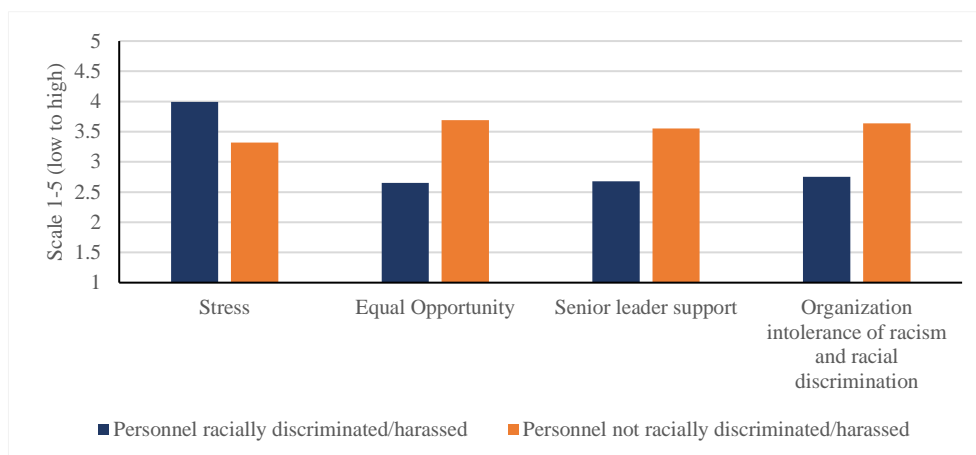
Figure VIII  
**Occurrence and frequency of four constructs by racial groupings**



63. Ideally, there should be data available to link perceived racism and racial discrimination with performance, allowing for statistical calculation of the “costs” associated with the various forms of mistreatment. However, it is often difficult to assemble the data needed to examine this association because surveys on the issue of discrimination are mostly anonymous, which makes it impossible to link them to human resources records. The available studies that have been able to examine this connection suggest that racism and racial discrimination trigger negative reactions that spill over, leading to diminished performance.

64. Although the JIU common system-wide survey did not provide an opportunity to link racism and racial discrimination to performance, it does allow for other ways to model the impact of racism and racial discrimination. Most notably, a comparison can be made between the perceptions of those who did and did not report having experienced racism and racial discrimination. The outcome of this comparison is unambiguous, as illustrated in the figure below. Personnel who reported personal experiences of racism and racial discrimination had lower perceptions of equality of opportunity, support from senior leadership and organizational intolerance than those who did not. The average difference was roughly a point on a five-point scale, which is the difference between a neutral response and disagreeing that opportunity levels are equal, that leaders support racial equity and that the organization is intolerant of racism and racial discrimination. Moreover, those that experienced racism and racial discrimination also reported higher levels of stress. The difference roughly corresponded to a change in response from average to moderately high (3.32 to 3.99).

Figure IX  
**Ratings on a five-point scale for stress, equality of opportunity, support from senior leadership and organizational intolerance of racism and racial discrimination**



65. Another important finding to emerge from the data involves the proportion of respondents who indicated having experienced racism and racial discrimination but did not report it. In fact, only about a quarter of those who experienced it said they reported it to the organization (27 per cent). The two dominant reasons indicated for not reporting are: Fear of retaliation and little confidence in institutional processes. These two were cited more than twice as often as any other reason and are consistent with evidence from other organizations within and outside the United Nations system regarding why personnel are reluctant to submit a claim to seek a remedy after being mistreated.

66. When trust is lacking, it becomes difficult (if not impossible) to get personnel to report any instance of misconduct involving racism and racial discrimination. This undermines any investments the organization might make in remediation protocols because such resources can only help if personnel are willing to use them. A lack of trust in the institution and a fear of retaliation threaten the accountability of United Nations system organizations and of the United Nations system as a whole. Trust develops when systems and people are predictable, reliable and honest. A major challenge for organizations is thus to develop trust in their existing institutional systems, which exist to safeguard their people and provide justice for all.

67. The data analysis also indicates that of the personnel who experienced and reported incidents of racism and racial discrimination, the overwhelming majority (73 per cent) indicated that the receiver of the complaint had failed to take the appropriate actions. This means that most personnel did not believe that the situation had been addressed to their satisfaction. Analysis of the person to whom the complaint was reported was carried out, and indicates that the most frequent receivers of reports were supervisors or line managers and middle managers, followed by senior leadership and managers, human resources services and ombudsman and mediation services. Ethics and oversight offices were third in terms of frequency of reporting.

68. The review did not carry out case studies to enable full understanding of the nature of the reported cases and thereby derive explanations for the poor response to reported incidents of racism and racial discrimination. One factor that stands out from the responses of personnel in terms of suggestions of the most critical measures to take is the need for awareness, knowledge, education and expertise in addressing racism and racial discrimination. When participants were asked what three actions their organization and the United Nations system as a whole should take to better handle racism and racial discrimination, the most common reply to both was an increase in knowledgeable personnel in the workforce. A strategic priority for the United Nations system is to enhance the knowledge, competencies and expertise of its personnel at all levels of management, as well as in the oversight and internal justice system.

69. This response about the need for knowledge and expertise, and the level of objectivity of personnel with roles in key functions, as outlined above, also stood out in interviews,

consultation and dialogue as part of the validation of the findings of this review with United Nations system personnel. Several organizations within the United Nations system have initiated a number of seminars and training sessions with senior leadership and various process holders. It is most important that such mechanisms become systematized and that there is alignment and coherence across the United Nations system. Having expertise and knowledge is critical as a first level in enhancing credibility and trust. Other factors of equal importance in enhancing trust in such business functions lie in addressing issues of independence, the existence of key traits and competencies in the leadership and middle management including ethical leadership. The JIU benchmarking framework identifies such traits in assessing high quality senior leadership and middle management important for addressing racism and racial discrimination. Annex VII contains this list and a description of the senior leadership competencies needed to address racism and racial discrimination. Some of the traits can also be found in the CEB High-Level Management Committee's senior leadership competencies.<sup>27</sup> Organizations have indicated that such attributes and competencies are also relevant for middle and line management. These are reported among the mechanisms discussed in chapter III.

70. In addressing the broad-based need for knowledge and expertise, a strategic priority of all organizations is to establish, carry out and ensure the impact of an integrated training, learning and performance enhancement curriculum or programme. A high impact and integrated curriculum is performance-based, and links training and learning with required skills and competencies for addressing racism and racial discrimination on the job. It has the following features: (a) it defines the expected performance and the competencies required of personnel at all levels and for their roles and responsibilities; (b) it defines the core and the targeted levels of knowledge, skills, abilities and competencies required for the expected performance of various subgroups; (c) it develops and implements core mandatory training that addresses foundational knowledge and abilities, as well as specific training, learning and performance enhancement modules targeted at all personnel performing various roles and functions and with certain needs; (d) it links the training of personnel with that of supervisors or managers; (e) it identifies the nature of support on the job for follow to training to enhance transfer of learning for performance improvement; and (f) it applies various modalities for training and learning (i.e. seminars, workshop, dialogue sessions, meta-cognitive exercises, coaching and mentoring) that are appropriate for personnel. It is accompanied by monitoring and evaluations of the outcomes and impact of the curriculum, and the use of results to make improvements at all levels. It ensures alignment of the curriculum across United Nations system organizations and with system-wide training institutions (such as the United Nations System Staff College and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research) and the learning platforms they provide. It uses various appropriate modalities or platforms for learning, transfer of learning and performance enhancement.<sup>28</sup>

### **Recommendation 2**

**The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should direct their respective training and learning units to develop and implement a high-impact and integrated curriculum to improve awareness, learning and performance that responds to the needs of personnel of various functions, categories and levels in order to address all forms and configurations of racism and racial discrimination in the workplace.**

71. A number of factors that should be considered in the development and implementation of this integrated curriculum include the following: (a) alignment with other mandatory training addressing discrimination, harassment and exploitation, while ensuring full coverage and relevance to racism and racial discrimination; and (b) linkages with any other ongoing

<sup>27</sup> CEB/2017/1, annex.

<sup>28</sup> Robert O. Brinkerhoff and Anne M Apking, *High Impact Learning: Strategies For Leveraging Business Results From Training* (New York, Basic Books, 2001). See also *Bank Operations and Portfolio Management: For Staff in Operations*, Learning Guide (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 1996).

work with the United Nations System Staff College and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research on training and learning. There is evidence that governing bodies appreciate seminars and dialogue sessions that enhance their knowledge of various topics important to the United Nations system and of global significance. Such informal platforms, when available, would enhance mutual understanding of the complexities and complications involved in addressing racism and racial discrimination. This could facilitate their role for policymaking and oversight. **It is suggested that, in carrying out recommendation 2, executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should create a platform that would allow Member States and delegates of their respective governing bodies or legislative organs to engage in informal dialogue and exchanges about racism and racial discrimination to address all three levels of racism – individual, systemic and structural.**

72. Racism and racial discrimination have been shown to lead to massive losses for individuals, as well as for organizations and economies. Often cited for personnel is the loss of income, health, morale, enthusiasm and job satisfaction during their careers, while organizations suffer with the loss of time, resources, talent, committed personnel, quality of work, innovation, timely delivery and reputation. The dialogue on negative economic effects, including on innovation and productivity, has intensified. This is well demonstrated in a series of blog posts from the International Monetary Fund and from the Department of the Treasury of the United States of America on the individual and economic cost of racism and racial discrimination.<sup>29</sup> Consistent with the approach of the review in setting down a broad framework for understanding racism and racial discrimination, attention was paid in the review to the outcomes of efforts to address racism and racial discrimination in relation to credibility in global governance, and moral and human-centred effects, as well as on the business, financial and economic effects. These outcomes and gains, based on consultations with United Nations system organizations, are highlighted in pillar 3 of the benchmarking framework. The review limited its assessment of the effects of racism and racial discrimination on two factors: (a) stress; and (b) the differential returns of human capital investment in labour.

73. Racism and racial discrimination have negative effects on health and well-being owing to stress, and empirical evidence in the scholarly literature indicates that microaggressions are a major cause of stress. The evidence from the JIU common system-wide survey shows that United Nations personnel who experience racism and racial discrimination and harassment also reported higher levels of stress, which exerts a negative impact on personal well-being with effects on productivity.<sup>30</sup> The loss of productivity has major cost implications, and the absence of an appropriate system to address stress should be of concern. The United Nations system organizations are now dedicating attention to addressing mental health issues, and work in this area should provide a system-wide common platform and basis for addressing stress associated with racism and racial discrimination. UNDP has recently adopted an occupational health, safety and well-being at work strategy in the framework of its People for 2030 Strategy which is intended, among other things, to ensure the provision of sufficient psychosocial support to personnel.<sup>31</sup> The United Nations Secretariat has produced the United Nations Workplace, Mental Health and Well-being Strategy. Organizations such as WFP and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) are among those that have also developed wellness and mental health strategies as part of their strategic approaches to human resource management, which puts people at the centre of planning for success and developing a competitive edge or comparative added value. The ongoing JIU review of mental health and

<sup>29</sup> Joseph Losavio, “What racism costs us all”, International Monetary Fund, September 2020; and Janis Bowdler and Benjamin Harris, “Racial inequality in the United States”, United States Department of the Treasury 21 July 2022.

<sup>30</sup> See Yin Paradies, “Colonisation, racism and indigenous health”, *Journal of Population Research*, vol. 33, No. 1 (February 2016); Molly Hunt and Moataz Hamde, “How does racism impact on mental wellbeing”, ABC Everyday, 1 October 2021; and Priest and others, “A systematic review of studies examining the relationship between reported racism and health and wellbeing for children and young people”, *Social Science and Medicine*, vol. 95 (October 2013). See also Vault, “The trust gap: expectation vs reality in workplace misconduct & speak up culture”.

<sup>31</sup> See <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/People%20for%202030%20Phase%202%20Strategy.pdf>.

well-being policies and practices in United Nations system organizations would provide information on the successes and challenges of the United Nations system in addressing racism and racial discrimination.

74. On economic returns, based on the CEB human resources data studied as part of the review, it was found that staff from countries of the global South, where the population is predominantly of colour, tend to be in lower, less well-paid grades and, therefore, hold less authority in decision-making than those from countries where the population is predominantly white and from the group of Western European and other States. This finding was corroborated by the JIU common system-wide survey using self-reported race as the predictor. In dialogues with organizations, interviews and consultations. This issue of discrimination in seniority and authority for decision-making in the United Nations system emerged as a major macrostructural issue to be addressed.

75. The review takes note of the recommendations made in the JIU reports to enhance diversity and representation in senior level positions, to take actions consistent with the Charter of the United Nations and General Assembly resolutions, and to move away from a politics-driven process.<sup>32</sup> As far back as 2000, JIU had recommended that governing bodies should allow for impartiality in the recruitment of senior level personnel and for the application of the principle of recruiting or selecting candidates to the most senior positions on as wide a geographical basis as possible. Identical recommendations for gender and geographical representation to be aligned with the peoples served by the United Nations system were made in a more recent JIU report in 2012.

**76. The Inspector suggests that the executive heads of United Nations system organizations authorize the CEB secretariat to use human resources data to carry out an analysis of diversity in senior-level positions, as well as analysis of the speed of career advancement using data on the length of appointments. Executive heads of organizations should report on the equity and equality of opportunity in appointments at senior-level positions (grade P-5 and above) and on career advancement and mobility by racial category. This report should be done as part of the overall reporting on results in addressing racism and racial discrimination in human resources management.**

## D. Structural racism

77. Macrostructural issues are highlighted as being of great significance in addressing racism and racial discrimination in the United Nations system. Macrostructural racism and racial discrimination reside in the structures that have been developed to guide how business is conducted, and include associateship or cost-sharing, partnerships, proprietorship, having a company for services or trade, and other factors that govern the nature of business processes. For the United Nations system, these have been developed since its creation in 1945. They have been found to play a major role in racism and racial discrimination or are identified as the root causes or enablers of them. The failure to address these issues limits the impact and sustainability of the measures and mechanisms being put in place at the individual, systemic and institutional levels.

78. The box below provides the set of issues and factors that have been identified as playing a role in causing racism and racial discrimination. The data sources for this includes; (a) information arising from personnel in town hall meetings, webinars and seminars (compiled as part of organizational ethnography work conducted at time of scoping of the review); (b) information provided by members of various networks, groups and anti-racism task forces; (c) responses provided by JIU participating organizations to the JIU organization-level questionnaire about the forms of racism and racial discrimination; (d) the system-wide discussions among United Nations organizations on issues such as the general service and professional staff grades, and changes and transformation needed to address systemic constraints; and (e) information from interviews with United Nations system senior executives and middle management on cross-cutting issues and how to enhance success in

<sup>32</sup> JIU/REP/2000/3 and JIU/REP/2012/4.

addressing racism and racial discrimination and achieving the changes and transformations needed.

Box 3

**Macrostructural dimensions of racism and racial discrimination**

- Disconnect between the foundations of the United Nations system and modern times: The foundation of the United Nations and its funds, programmes and specialized agencies was built in 1945, a different era from the current one. There have been geopolitical changes and advances in the level of capacity (that the institution itself developed) of countries of the global South, many of which are former colonies and populated predominantly by people of colour. However, the institution has not taken this into consideration and has not genuinely changed the structure of representation in its decision-making. Examples quoted included: (a) the structure of the Security Council; (b) the separation of opportunities into general service and professional staff, and between locally recruited staff, including national officers, and internationally recruited staff; and (c) opportunities for Junior Professional Officers and internship policies that favour young people from the global North in the pipeline for entry to the United Nations.<sup>a</sup>
- Conceptual lacunae in defining race: Reference is made to race in the Charter of the United Nations and the statutes and declarations of other United Nations system organizations, as well as in international conventions adopted by Member States, but there is no definition of race and thus no basis for policy or decision-making. It is left to Member States to define it. Racism is addressed through the lens of human rights and gender equality. However, addressing forms of racism goes beyond such tenets. As noted above, not defining and not developing racial identities to support management and improvement promotes management by ambiguity and limits transparency on equality of opportunity.
- Power asymmetries, or the lack of equality or equivalence between donor countries and recipient/programme countries owing to donor country power and control, affect the manifestation of racism and racial discrimination in many forms, including the following ways:
  - (a) hiring at senior level and for decision-making posts;
  - (b) unfair staff recruitment and assignment and the granting of positions based on politics instead of merit;
  - (c) the nature of secondments, including the revolving door created by the rotation of personnel between United Nations offices and delegates of Member States;
  - (d) the focus of organizations on accountability and value for money to the detriment of a focus on the development of a learning system and a culture for development outcomes;
  - (e) a focus on gender equality with a resulting imbalance in the attention paid to other forms of discrimination;
  - (f) a United Nations leadership that is responsive to the demands of Member States but not responsible for development goals in a meaningful manner;
  - (g) a paternalistic culture of obedience and loyalty instead of performance, merit and results.
- Structure for funding and financing, including issues with core versus non-core funding, exacerbate the power and control of donors, which has the following effects: (a) responsiveness to the needs of the donor community providing the financing, with subsequent distortions to the mandate and development results; and (b) posts being developed on the basis of funding sources or non-core resources with a subsequent overrepresentation of donor countries among personnel.



- The dominance of the Western philosophy of reality and thought in the conceptual frameworks used to drive the work of the United Nations system (for example, in research, evaluation, policies and programmatic work).
- Racism in the world and in duty stations affecting the well-being and performance levels of staff in various duty stations in carrying out the mandate of the United Nations system and in travelling around the world to support the convening role of the United Nations system. Support systems for this are lacking or non-existent.
- Limitations in knowledge and understanding of the histories of various civilizations, and of the philosophies and cultures of the peoples of the world among personnel is a drawback for a multicultural and multilingual organization, given the connection between thought, language and culture.

<sup>a</sup> Acknowledged are ad hoc efforts by selected Member States such as Italy, the Netherlands and Norway that fund interns and Junior Professional Officers from selected developing countries. See <https://www.un.org/development/desa/jpo/donor-countries/>.

79. Macrostructural racism typically falls outside the direct control of organizations. The evidence from the analysis of the relationship between the various pillars of performance used in this review to assess organizational performance indicates a high correlation between the nine pillars, with the exception of pillar 6, which is focused on macrostructural issues. The analysis of data based on both the JIU common system-wide survey and the performance assessment ratings for organizational actions to address macrostructural factors indicated a strong association between addressing macrostructural issues and senior leadership support for addressing racism and racial discrimination, reflecting a strategic focus on the part of personnel as to the important attributes of senior leadership that could mitigate or enhance success in addressing racism and racial discrimination. It indicates that effective leaders are able to see beyond their own situations and make hard choices. This point is picked up in chapter III, which provides information on organizational reflections about macrostructural issues.

### III. Measures and mechanisms for addressing racism and racial discrimination: harnessing organizational performance to achieve effectiveness

#### A. Introduction

80. This chapter contains descriptions and analyses of the performance of United Nations system organizations in addressing racism and racial discrimination. The main questions raised about organizational performance fall under three main areas, which are outlined as follows:

(a) **Approach and coverage:** what are the approaches being used to address racism and racial discrimination? Does the United Nations system apply an ad hoc or a whole-of-system and holistic, comprehensive and coherent approach, which is important to ensuring organizational effectiveness? What is done to establish priorities and sequencing in the adoption of various measures and mechanisms? What are the challenges and constraints?

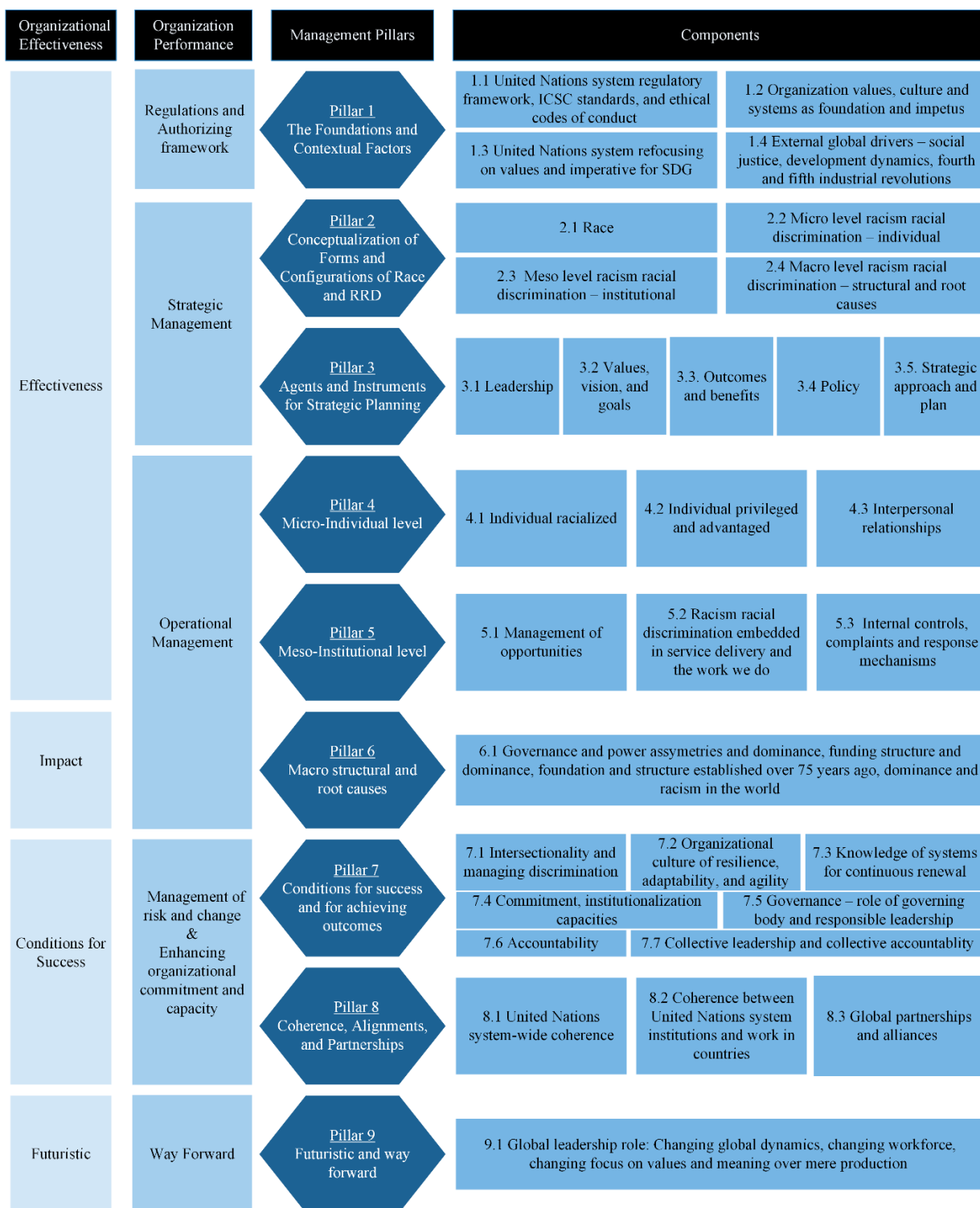
(b) **Overall system-wide performance, and differences in the performances of United Nations system organizations in terms of their measures and mechanisms:** what is the level and quality of performance of United Nations system organizations in adopting and implementing measures and mechanisms? What differences exist among organizations?

(c) **Overall and individual performance of the nine pillars of performance and their respective 35 components or measures and mechanism based on the benchmarking framework:** what is the level and quality of the various measures and mechanisms adopted? What variations exist in the level of development and what accounts for these variations?

81. As highlighted in chapter I, the review provides a snapshot and broad overview of the performance of the United Nations system in addressing racism and racial discrimination in nine performance areas characterized by a set of interrelated and interdependent measures and mechanisms identified as important for addressing racism and racial discrimination to enhance organizational effectiveness. The performance areas are called pillars of performance, henceforth referred to as pillars. The measures and mechanisms that represent constituent parts of the pillars are referred to as Components. The pillars and associated measures and mechanisms or components are outlined in figure X below, which also shows their alignment with key domains in management used in assessments of United Nations system organizations to achieve organizational effectiveness. As noted in chapter I, performance is assessed on the basis of the stage of development that denotes progression towards higher levels of coverage of the pillars and components, meeting quality criteria and achieving the desired maturity level in either the conceptualization or the adoption and implementation of measures and mechanisms. Details on the quality criteria for each component are found in the assessment tool developed for assessing organizational performance. The assessment tool has its origins in the benchmarking framework developed for this review. This is too long to include as an annex to this review, but is presented as the accompanying complementary file on the benchmarking framework, available on the JIU website. The information in this file has been shared and discussed with organizations since 2021, with the development and administration of the JIU corporate organization-level questionnaire.

82. It is important to note that in presenting a broad overview of racism and racial discrimination, the presentation of findings will not provide details about each measure, mechanism or component, but about the outcomes for the stage or level of development from the assessment carried out for each component. Concrete details about the content and quality of the measures and mechanisms can be found in the benchmarking framework and assessment tool for assessing organization level of development. The report does, however, contain a focus on the significant features or logical effects and implications, and explanations based on analyses of relationships among the various measures, mechanisms or relationships with findings from the common system-wide survey presented in chapter II.

Figure X  
Pillars of performance and associated components



**B. Approach and coverage across the United Nations system**

83. Achieving effectiveness, impact, coherence and sustainability in addressing racism and racial discrimination requires a comprehensive and integrated or whole-of-system strategic approach, as illustrated by the measures and mechanisms articulated in the nine pillars of performance and the 35 associated components that provide operational definitions of the pillars. A whole-of-system and integrated approach is different from a piece-meal, mechanical, ad hoc, tactical and reactive or reductionist approach. This latter type of

approach has been found to have limited effectiveness in addressing the ever-increasing complexity of the problems and uncertainties faced by organizations.

84. In the United Nations system, there is recognition that success is guaranteed by addressing a set of interrelated factors relevant to racism and racial discrimination (at the individual, systemic and structural levels) and related management domains for achieving the effectiveness, impact, coherence and sustainability of efforts in these areas. These factors define the content and structure of the pillars of performance and associated components, or the measures and mechanisms of the benchmarking framework used for assessment in this review (as outlined in chapter 1 and in figure X above). As already indicated, the assessment of organizations includes regulatory, strategic, operational, coherence and relationships, and the cognitive/behavioural dimensions of institutional development used in the United Nations system to assess organizational effectiveness.<sup>33</sup>

85. The findings on the approach and coverage indicate that the United Nations system has moved from an initial state of ad hoc approaches, starting in 2020, to a whole-of-organization approach covering the nine pillars as presented in figure XI below (pillars 1 to 9). Figure XI shows that when viewed across the system, there is conceptualization, adoption and implementation of all 9 pillars and the supporting 35 components. The coverage is, however, uneven as evidenced by several variations in the stage of development of the various pillars among the United Nations system organizations, and indicated in figure XI.

86. What is of significance when reviewing the pattern of performance across the various pillars is whether it represents a static model or a dynamic process of movement and commitment to achieving higher levels of development. The findings on the next steps and plans for change and transformation indicate a continuous effort being directed at advancing work that has already started. This is covered in greater detail in the next chapter.

87. Three main factors have been driving this process to advance to higher levels of performance in addressing racism and racial discrimination: (a) an increase in relevant activities across the United Nations system since the start of a dialogue between the organizations with their respective legislative organs/governing bodies; (b) the creation of inter-agency groups, thematic networks and anti-racism groups and task forces in organizations to address racism and racial discrimination; and (c) the JIU review and its common system-wide survey, which provided the impetus for organizations that have not yet carried out their own internal performance assessments to use the findings provided by JIU to initiate reflections and action. As part of a validation of these findings, JIU provided all 25 organizations with a preliminary analysis of both the system-wide findings and the findings from the responses of their own personnel to the survey on the magnitude of racism and racial discrimination and their performance with regard to the measures and mechanisms in place. This tailor-made information is being used for internal reflection and action pertinent to each organization. This validation process forms part of the formative approach of this review and the intention to contribute concretely to ongoing efforts by United Nations system organizations to address racism and racial discrimination.

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<sup>33</sup> This includes assessments carried out by JIU for the mainstreaming of results-based management for organizational effectiveness and by the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network in its performance assessment of organizations.

Figure XI

**Illustration of the coverage and performance of 25 assessed organizations: number of organizations at various stages of development under the nine pillars of performance**

	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5	Stage 6
Pillar 1: Regulative and Enablers	0	4	10	7	3	0
Pillar 2: Conceptual – Race Micro, Meso, Macro	8	9	8	0	0	0
Pillar 3: Normative – Values, Goal, Outcomes, Policy Strategy	6	12	6	1	0	0
Pillar 4: Mechanisms – Individual	10	10	5	0	0	0
Pillar 5: Mechanisms – Systemic	9	9	4	3	0	0
Pillar 6: Mechanisms – Structural	15	7	3	0	0	0
Pillar 7: Institutionalization and Commitment	8	8	7	2	0	0
Pillar 8: Coherence	9	12	1	1	2	0
Pillar 9: Futuristic	7	8	7	1	1	0

**C. Performance of the 25 organizations assessed, their similarities and differences, and the importance of collaboration for coherence and collective impact**

88. There has been progress in addressing racism and racial discrimination in the United Nations system, with variations among the different organizations. Progress has been made over the two-year period reviewed, dating back to mid-2020, when various heads of organizations and senior leaders made statements against racism and racial discrimination (see annex VIII). At that time, there were various ad hoc and tactical, but necessary actions for getting started that operated in the absence of a well-defined and coherent strategy for addressing racism and racial discrimination. At that time, the only group operating to promote dialogue and action was the United Nations People of African Descent, created in 2006. This inter-agency group has spurred interest in the development of other personnel resource groups, a significant one being the United Nations Asia Network for Diversity and Inclusion.

89. Progress for the United Nations system as a whole is, however, slow relative to the magnitude of the problem and its urgency, driven by a growing demand for action, transparency and accountability, and a changing culture of intolerance of injustice. development performance is skewed toward the lower stages of development, as shown in figure XII, with no organizations having yet achieved the top two stages of development (stage 5 and stage 6).

Figure XII  
**Number of organizations at the various stages of development**

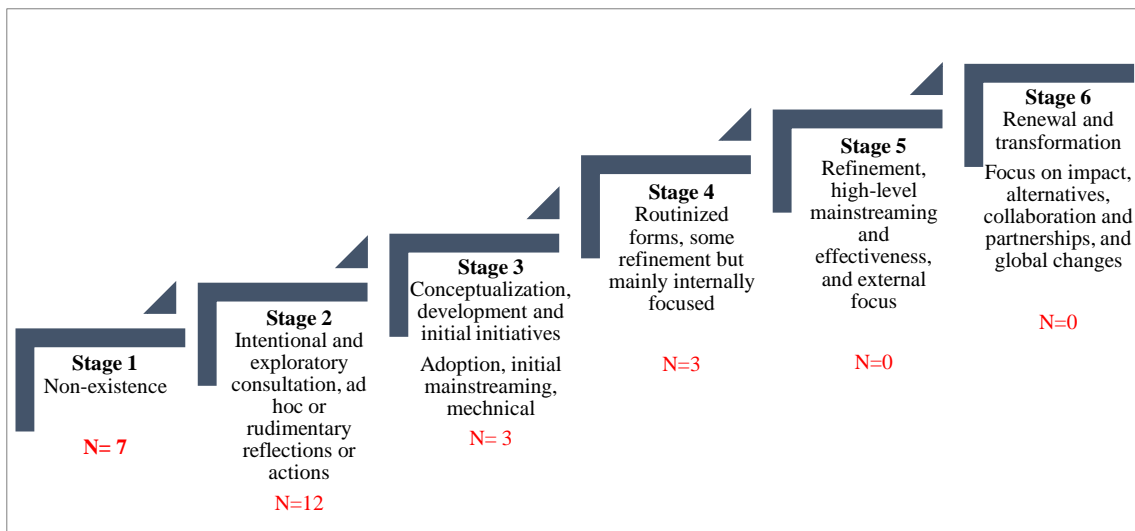
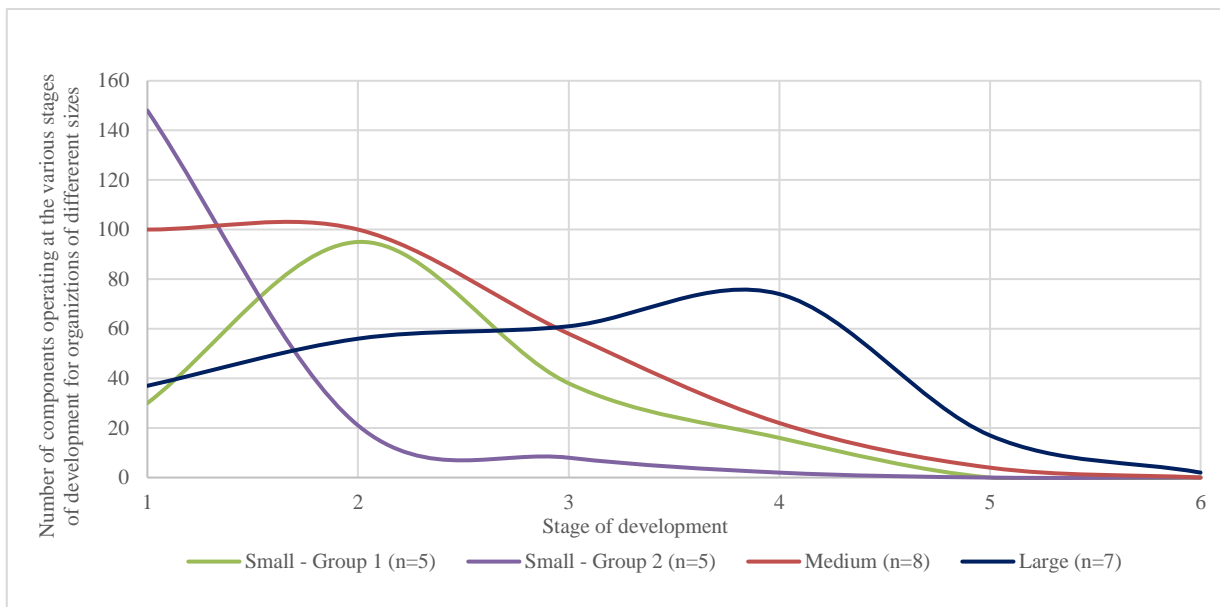


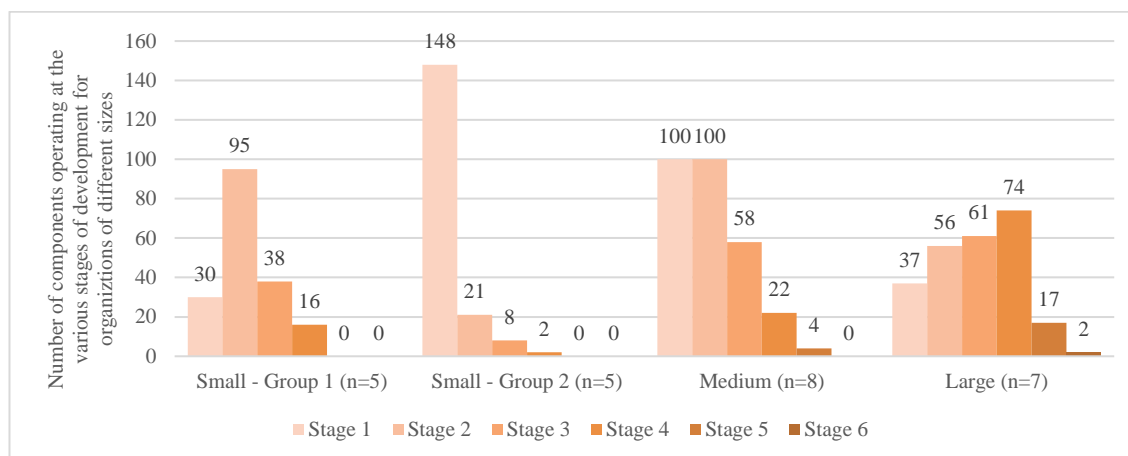
Figure XIII  
**Pattern of performance by organization size (large, medium-sized and small organizations, with the latter further divided into group 1 and group 2)**



90. Figure XIII shows this effect, with the large organizations skewing towards stages 4 and 5. Performance is characterized by significant differences among organizations' stage of development in addressing racism and racial discrimination with the quality needed for effectiveness, impact, coherence and sustainability (see figure XIV below).

Figure XIV

**Differences among organizations (size) in stage of development in addressing racism and racial discrimination**



91. The findings indicated that there is a statistically significant difference in performance between large, medium-sized and small organizations in terms of the scope, depth and quality of the adoption and implementation of key measures and mechanisms. The size of the 25 organizations assessed was determined on the basis of an analysis of the revenue and number of personnel, as shown below in table 1.

Table 1

**List of large, medium-sized and small JIU participating organizations (based on revenue and number of personnel)**

Assessed size	List of JIU participating organizations
Large (N=7)	United Nations Secretariat, UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNRWA, WFP, WHO
Medium (N=8)	UNOPS, UNFPA, FAO, IAEA, ILO, UNESCO, UNIDO, WIPO
Small (N=10)	UNAIDS, ITC, UN-Habitat, UN-Women, ICAO, IMO, ITU, UNWTO, UPU, WMO

92. The results of the performance assessment of four of the seven organizations regrouped as large (see table 1, first row) have placed them as operating at stage 4, which indicates an advanced level of implementation and the start of use of lessons learned for improvement and refinement. For the 10 organizations assessed as small (see table 1, third row), the findings indicate large variability in performance and reveal 5 small-sized organizations operating predominantly at stage 2 like the medium-sized organizations; the other 5 organizations in this group, which are the smallest ones, operate predominantly at stage 1 (see figure XIV). At the time that data were collected for this review, which ended in March 2022, the latter group had not yet begun to conceptualize the problem, and some organizations indicated a lack of awareness of the existence of racism and racial discrimination in their organization. One reason for this is reported to be that they lacked reported cases of racism and racial discrimination. On the other hand, the other five small organizations (shown as small group 1 in figure XIV), have started to reflect, are exploring what to do (stage 1 and 2 mode of operation) and are experimenting or taking initiatives on an ad hoc basis, meaning that they are operating at same level as the medium-sized organizations (See figure XIV).

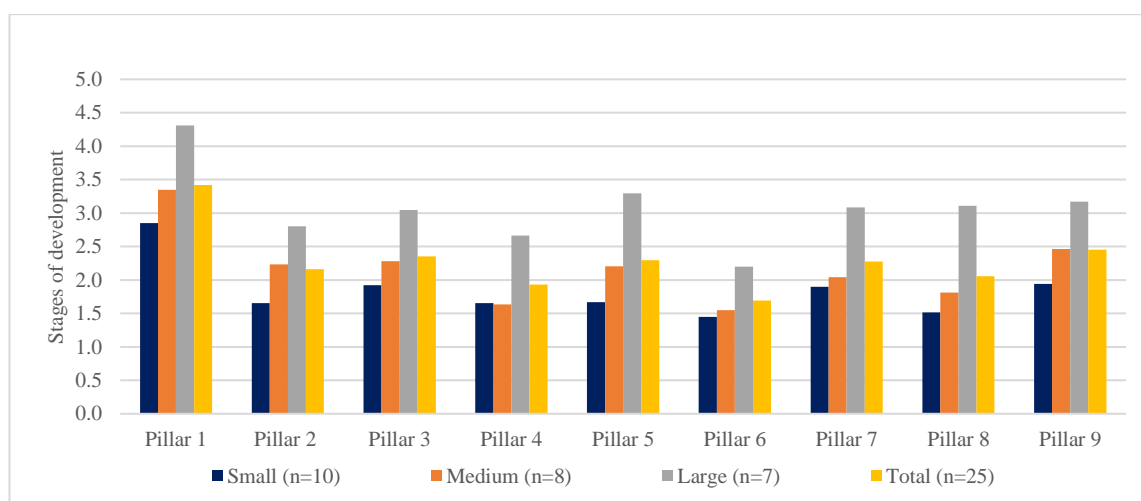
93. Follow-up interviews indicate that most small-sized organizations appear intent on exploiting the summary of findings and information received from JIU to consider a strategic approach in the immediate and long term. The evidence from large-sized organizations indicates that having a strategic approach and plan is important for prioritization and having

the organization work around a common vision and plan that is transparent. It also provides an important basis for leveraging partnership and collaborations in the context of limited resources and capacities. This finding, including the plan being based on a sound assessment and diagnosis for the organization, is an important lesson for all organizations operating at stage 2 and exploring how to initiate an effective process to address racism and racial discrimination.

94. **The Inspector suggests that the executive heads of United Nations system organizations assessed as operating at stage 2 carry out an assessment and diagnosis to determine the state of affairs in their respective organizations, and use their findings to develop a strategic approach and actions for addressing racism and racial discrimination.** Opportunities for doing this include using the organization-specific results provided by this JIU review, based on assessment of the magnitude of racism and racial discrimination and on the assessment of the level of performance of measures and mechanisms. The existing strategic plans of various organizations and lessons learned from their development and adoption also present an opportunity for development. In an exemplary fashion, the report of the United Nations Secretary-General’s Task Force on Addressing Racism and Promoting Dignity in the United Nations Secretariat (Strategic Action Plan) has been widely disseminated and debated, and provides a good example for other organizations in developing strategic plans. At its spring session, the CEB High-Level Management Committee agreed to take a common approach to addressing racism and racial discrimination in the United Nations system, using the Strategic Action Plan as a baseline for coordination and collaboration among the organizations. It directed the Human Resources Network to establish and lead a time-bound multidisciplinary working group of focal points on diversity, equity and inclusion composed of diversity experts to deliver a glossary, principles and best practices. UNICEF, the Universal Postal Union (UPU) and the United Nations Secretariat volunteered to co-lead this group.

95. Under the nine pillars, there are notable qualitative differences among the assessed organizations depending on the size of organization.<sup>34</sup> As illustrated below in figure XV, medium-sized organizations are rated and placed higher than small organizations under six of the nine pillars and are equivalent under the other three pillars. More noticeable, however, is that large organizations are rated and placed significantly higher than medium and small organizations under all nine pillars.

Figure XV  
**Illustration of the 25 participating organizations categorized by size based on ratings given by JIU for all nine pillars, including all components of each pillar**



96. The larger organizations of the 25 JIU participating organizations assessed all have an average performance (rating score of 3) or higher performance under six out of nine pillars. They also typically perform at stages 3 and 4 in 75 per cent of the 35 components. There is a noticeable concentration of high-level performers under pillars 7, 8 and 9. It is stated that a

<sup>34</sup> On average, size accounted for 35 per cent of the variance in the scores under each pillar.



real challenge for United Nations system organizations is not figuring out what can be done to redress racism and racial discrimination but rather whether they are willing to do it and are committed to doing it. The high-level stage of development for pillar 7 suggests a focus on institutionalization,<sup>35</sup> resourcing, knowledge development for impact, the development of a system for reporting and engagement with governing bodies, addressing interlinkages and partnerships for coherence, and a focus on empowering personnel to develop resource networks to drive and maintain the change process.

97. For example, the analysis of data from the JIU organization-level questionnaire shows that the three top performing JIU participating organizations have dedicated extensive resources to preventing and addressing racial discrimination. This includes: having dedicated staff at senior levels; the use of dedicated task forces and working groups; the use of external expert consultants on racism and racial discrimination, some of whom work with various business process holders while others provide specific thematic support; and the use of regular budget as opposed to extrabudgetary resources. The Inspector submits that this prioritization of institutionalization is a demonstration of commitment in a context where there is an absence of trust and a need to build confidence in the long term, or for organizations to establish a continued and concrete commitment to prevent and address racism and racial discrimination. This is an important consideration for the provision of resources that are not only adequate but also stable. Clarity on the part of United Nations system organizations in relation to costed plans and the associated results to be achieved is important for the credibility of budget submissions.

98. However, the evidence in this review indicates that this focus on the systems and institutional rules of the game is done at the expense of the critical factor for success in change management: a focus on the people or personnel. This dilemma between establishing systems and focusing on the people to change is discussed further in the findings for racism at the individual level under pillar 4.

99. It is important to note that large organizations operating at the top level make up 80 per cent of personnel and 80 per cent of revenue of the United Nations system. This finding, when viewed from the perspective of the reach and capacity of the United Nations system, would lead to the conclusion that the level of effort of the United Nations system in addressing racism and racial discrimination over a two-year period is commendable. The three top-performing organizations, compared to other organizations, have also dedicated extensive and stable resources to addressing racism as a focused activity and not as an addition to functions related to diversity, equity and inclusion. Given the linkage between resourcing and performance, one can conclude that this provides value for money.

100. The following recommendation is intended to improve the performance of all organizations in addressing racism and racial discrimination, and enhance the effectiveness of their efforts.

### **Recommendation 3**

**The executive heads of United Nations system organizations who have not done so should provide sufficient resources to support the achievement of defined results for the implementation of action plans for addressing racism and racial discrimination.**

101. Notwithstanding this valuation, what prevails is the view that the United Nations system “is as strong as its weakest link” and that the whole is larger than the sum of the parts. Bringing all organizations to a decent level of operation is critical to the overall integrity and credibility of the United Nations system. One important consideration in this regard is collaboration among all United Nations system organizations at various levels of performance. This has the potential to move United Nations system organizations to higher stages of development as they need to seek to operate with coherence as an integrated and interdependent system for collective impact.

<sup>35</sup> The action of establishing something as a convention or norm in an organization or culture.

102. The analysis of pillar 8 on coherence among United Nations system organizations in preventing and addressing racism and racial discrimination indicates that this is the focus of six large organizations at an advanced stage of development. Several medium-sized organizations have begun to reflect on how to enhance collaboration with other United Nations system organizations. Interviews with officials from small organizations also indicate increasing collaboration with large organizations to use existing knowledge, training programmes and expertise to enhance their development. This is to be applauded as a good practice.

103. Coherence in preventing and addressing racism and racial discrimination has been the focus of several informal inter-agency groups that share and exchange information. The CEB High-Level Committee on Management has now included racism and racial discrimination in its agenda and has endorsed the establishment of a formal inter-agency working group of its Human Resources Network that will be mandated to bring all CEB member organizations to work together for collective impact. While it is true that small organizations might not have the capacity for comprehensive approaches, it is important for them to consider applying the principle of mutual recognition when preventing and addressing racism and racial discrimination, and establishing collaborative agreements with other United Nations system organizations. The principle of mutual recognition allows a United Nations agency to use or rely on another United Nations agency's policies, procedures, processes and tools without a requirement for further evaluation, checks or approvals. Interviews indicated that there is a great interest among organizations in knowing what other organizations are doing and what practices should be emulated. A platform needs to be established with great immediacy, at the system-wide level, to facilitate dialogue and information-sharing on ongoing efforts related to the various components and examples of good practice, challenges and resolutions. This platform for sharing exemplary approaches to the various management practices or components will enable organizations to work together to develop their own conceptual frameworks, including using those presented and used in this review, to enhance coherence across the United Nations system.

104. The following recommendation is intended to enhance coordination, cooperation and collaboration to address the immediate needs of organizations for information and support in assessments, the development of plans, training, and personnel development and expertise, as outlined above. The recommendation for coherence also covers the longer-term needs for change and transformation described in chapter IV.

#### **Recommendation 4**

**The executive heads of United Nations system organizations, as members of the CEB, should jointly develop and provide resources to a high-level, inter-agency standing mechanism intended to unite organizations, leverage their existing capacities and comparative added value to collaborate and work together to respond to both immediate and longer-term needs for addressing racism and racial discrimination across the United Nations system, and address the transformative changes needed to enhance the continued relevance and value of the various efforts at both the organizational and the system-wide levels.**

## **D. Differential levels of performance on pillars, measures and mechanisms**

105. United Nations system organizations recognize that they are embarking on a reform process that affects all systems and operations, and all types and levels of personnel. The effort includes mainstreaming existing policies, systems and structures, and initiating specific measures and mechanisms that are necessary and appropriate for addressing racism and racial discrimination. There are variations in the stage of development and level of effort directed at the various pillars and components.

106. The system's strongest performance is under pillars 1, 3, 5 and 7, while the weakest performance is under pillars 4 and 6. This is shown in figure XV. The results show that the focus of United Nations system organizations has been primarily focused on the regulatory

elements, codes of conduct and mechanisms for reporting (pillar 1, component 1, and pillar 5, component 3), and secondly on the normative elements of institutional development (i.e. on goals, results frameworks, policy, and strategic action plans and functions for the broad-based institutionalization of pillars 3, 5 and 7). There has been less focus on cognitive and behavioural insights into the people who bind the system as a whole together and who carry out the changes or reforms aimed at addressing racism and racial discrimination. This is defined and assessed under pillar 4.

107. The evidence from interviews indicates that building up systems is important for demonstrating commitment, and for building and maintaining trust and credibility in a context lacking such attributes, and ensuring faith in the processes started by organizations. On the other hand, not fully addressing the micro-level issues people face raises concerns about the success of all efforts addressing racism and racial discrimination. Strong empirical evidence on the effectiveness of organizational change management highlights the critical importance of addressing the human side of the change process in a systematic fashion.<sup>36</sup> Many have indicated that of equal importance to developing systems is making timely and tangible progress that can affect people and the changes they must make for themselves and the organization. This includes a willingness “to be brave ... to take bold steps ... To take deliberate and affirmative steps as done for gender parity ... to focus on addressing equity, enhancing belongingness, ... to ensure balance by addressing power, privilege and entitlement in ways that would enhance coherence among personnel and prevent backlash and effectively engage all parties together around the values and vision for change in the organization”.<sup>37</sup> These points are addressed further when presenting the findings on the organizational stage of development in addressing racism at the personal, individual level.

108. There has also been little attention paid to understanding and addressing the macrostructural factors of pillar 6, many of which deal with issues associated with domination, power, privilege and the larger global context in which the United Nations system operates. In complementary fashion, less attention has been paid to understanding and addressing power, privilege and entitlement among personnel, as defined under pillar 4 for individual-level racism and privileged groups. The evidence from interviews and the responses of personnel in the common system-wide survey to the question of how personnel are contributing to organizational efforts indicate that there is also a growing level of stress from cognitive dissonance<sup>38</sup> among, in particular, white and other personnel who are privileged in numerous ways. The open-ended responses indicate an individual search for answers among the privileged group with little indication of support. Many are reading various books<sup>39</sup> but indicate that answers to their questions have not been addressed. A failure on the part of organizations to fully understand and take action to address this factor is likely to have an adverse effect. Training, learning and performance enhancement programmes need to fully take into account the needs of all groups beyond the current focus on unconscious bias.

109. The Inspector submits that addressing racism without understanding and directly tackling the issues of power dominance and entitlement in relationships in the United Nations system does not lead to sustainable results. A focus on racialized groups as victims without a balanced focus on privileged groups implies a lack of understanding that both groups are victims of the root causes of racism.<sup>40</sup> Similarly, a focus on wrongdoing and measures to address racism without a systematic focus on the macro root causes and widespread help to understand and address these denies personnel the opportunity to develop a stable and healthy work environment and increases the risk of a backlash.

<sup>36</sup> See JIU/REP/2019.

<sup>37</sup> Comments made by the organization in the JIU corporate organization-level questionnaire.

<sup>38</sup> Cognitive dissonance is used to describe the mental discomfort that results from holding two conflicting beliefs, values or attitudes. People tend to seek consistency in their attitudes and perceptions, so this conflict causes feelings of unease or discomfort.

<sup>39</sup> The most quoted book is Robin DiAngelo, *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism* (Boston, Beacon Press, 2018).

<sup>40</sup> Heather McGhee, *The Sum Of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together* (New York, One World, 2021); and Frances E. Kendall, “Understanding white privilege” (2002). Available at <https://www.american.edu/ocl/counseling/upload/understanding-white-privilege.pdf>.

110. The following sections provide details on the performance of organizations under the various pillars and components, and contains suggestion and recommendations. Findings are presented on a thematic basis, while all pillars and components are covered in an integrated fashion to present a coherent picture of the performance of organizations.

### **E. Regulatory framework for addressing wrongdoing, including racial harassment, exploitation and abuse, and personnel support systems**

111. The regulatory system of United Nations organizations is quite robust, but not adequate for preventing and addressing racism and racial discrimination. The existing regulatory frameworks, codes of ethics, codes of conduct, and regulations against harassment, exploitation and abuse of United Nations system organizations provide the basic foundation for the prevention of racism and racial discrimination. The United Nations system has a well-defined regulatory framework and standards of behaviour for the prevention of discrimination that is enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the foundation documents of other United Nations system organizations, the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service, and in codes of conduct and codes of ethics or rules against harassment, including sexual harassment, and against sexual exploitation and abuse.

112. Almost all organizations have developed general codes of ethics and codes of conduct that prohibit discrimination of various types, including racial discrimination. However, while the existing frameworks are quite robust in preventing and addressing discrimination or violations of human rights and in tackling gender issues, including sexual harassment, exploitation or abuse, analysis indicated that racism and racial discrimination are mentioned or often implied as wrongdoing and acts of injustice. They are seldom fully conceptualized or operationalized. The mechanisms in place therefore end up having limited capacity to provide guidance that would facilitate prevention or enforcement.

113. The findings of the JIU review show that all organizations except one have been reflecting on how to adjust existing regulatory and ethical frameworks and codes of conduct, or have been active in making adjustments to those instruments. These organizations have been engaged in developing knowledge and expertise on racism and racial discrimination, and have carried out a comprehensive assessment of existing frameworks, codes of conduct and enforcement systems. They have engaged other organizations in reflecting on the changes needed and three organizations have examined the issue by taking on a broader approach and considering what is being done at a system-wide or external level. **The Inspector encourages the executive heads of United Nations system organizations to continue the work started to revise the legal and regulatory frameworks and codes of conduct or ethics of their respective organizations in order to effectively address racism and racial discrimination.** This would be in line with the review of the ICSC Standards of Conduct, which was launched by that entity in November 2022.

114. The reporting and response mechanisms defined under component 5.3 suffer from a lack of trust and credibility in capacity and procedures. The enforcement of the above-mentioned regulatory frameworks requires a high-quality internal control system, and reporting and response mechanism. Quality criteria for this component include the existence of mechanisms for preventing and addressing discrimination and harassment through training, for example, as well as mechanisms for reporting prohibited conduct, from early intervention to the receipt of complaints to the implementation of decisions, thereby ensuring accessibility, access to justice and protection from retaliation. A proper analysis of complaints and cases is also needed.

115. The analysis of organization performance on component 5.3 on internal control and response mechanisms indicates that 35 per cent of organizations (9 large and medium-sized and 1 small organization) are at an advanced stage for this component (i.e. at stages 3 and 4), meaning that they have carried out an assessment of the system in place, completed reflections on how to address racism and racial discrimination, and developed a strategy or approach and plan with due regard to the quality criteria significant for racism and racial discrimination. Some have started to implement on a tactical basis and others are securing

endorsement of the changes, while a few have begun implementation, although this is principally mechanical at this point in time. Overall, 35 per cent of organizations are at an exploratory, rudimentary stage, figuring out what to do. They could benefit from the work and the lessons learned by the nine large and medium size organizations at an advanced stage. Moreover, small organizations seem to have more difficulties, as evidenced by the four small organizations that testified to not having specific measures or mechanisms in this regard.

116. As a result, while 35 per cent of United Nations system organizations are at an advanced stage in preventing and addressing racism and racial discrimination in their reporting and complaints mechanisms (10 organizations), this remains a work in progress for the remaining 60 per cent (15 organizations). The majority of organizations need to significantly enhance both their regulatory frameworks and their reporting and response mechanisms for racism and racial discrimination. A lack of trust in the institution and a fear of retaliation, which are the main causes of underreporting of incidents of racism and racial discrimination, threaten the accountability of both United Nations system organizations and the United Nations system as a whole. The Inspector considers that the publicity of the accountability aspect in reported cases of racism and racial discrimination, such as the posting of administrative actions, sanctions and disciplinary measures taken against perpetrators of such acts or omissions, is an important factor in encouraging more victims to come forward and report their cases. **The Inspector therefore reiterates recommendation 9 of the JIU report on whistle-blower policies<sup>41</sup> and requests that the executive heads of United Nations system organizations who have not yet done so, ensure the public posting of an annual report, with all due consideration to confidentiality, on the details of misconduct/wrongdoing and retaliation cases. Moreover, the Inspector recommends that the executive heads who have not yet done so specifically emphasize and single out cases related to racism and racial discrimination when publishing such reports on the allegations, findings and outcomes of investigations.**

117. Trust arises when systems and people are predictable, reliable and honest. A major challenge for organizations is thus to develop trust in their institutional systems, which exist to safeguard their personnel. A first point of order in addressing trust, as noted in the previous chapter, is to develop the knowledge and expertise of personnel charged with such functions. To enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the existing reporting and response mechanisms used to handle and investigate allegations of racism and racial discrimination. **The Inspector suggests that, as part of recommendation 2 on training, performance enhancement and accountability, the executive heads of United Nations system organizations should direct the heads of their organization's respective internal oversight services to ensure that, by 2024, their personnel are adequately trained to appropriately respond to and handle reports related to racism and racial discrimination.** One important consideration in enhancing performance is providing a pertinent expert consultant on racism and racial discrimination as a resource to work in-house with personnel in various functions. This occurs in organizations with high performance that can also provide lessons on best practices on how to effectively work with expert consultants.

118. In a context where there are various constraints to reporting, the case in the United Nations system, it is typical for individuals to develop various coping mechanisms and survival skills to manage and control their environment. This includes building resilience, which is defined as the capacity of a system or person to absorb disturbances and reorganize while undergoing change, so as to retain or adapt what are essentially the same function, structure, identity and feedback systems. In relation to racism, resilience refers to the ability "to persevere and maintain a positive sense of self when faced with omnipresent racial discrimination. If, when confronted with racism, a person can maintain pride and strong self-esteem, and avoid or manage harmful outcomes such as depression and social dislocation, they can be said to exhibit resilience".<sup>42</sup>

<sup>41</sup> JIU/REP/2018/4.

<sup>42</sup> Danice Brown and Tracy Tylka, "Racial discrimination and resilience in African American young adults: examining racial socialisation as a moderator", *Journal of Black Psychology*, vol. 37, No. 3 (August 2011).

119. Others have identified other mechanisms that encompass the development of high-level forms of social and contextual intelligence, such as the acknowledgement of racism, emotional distancing, staying calm and positive, having a strong sense of identity, seeking support from friends and family, and finding safe avenues to challenge racism.<sup>43</sup> Others still have highlighted that effective coping is achieved by developing an internal sense of control over one's experiences, the maintenance of which requires minimization of the role of external forces, which may limit their negative impact but also lead to the denial of influences such as discrimination. The latter can have the same set of disadvantages associated with an internal locus of control<sup>44</sup> among marginalized groups.

120. Several mechanisms for addressing such intrapersonal effects for mastery and management of the organizational environment are identified in the JIU benchmarking framework under pillar 4 and pillar 7 for building resilience (see annex IX on resilience indicators). The stage of development of organizations in addressing these effects is discussed below.

121. One encouraging finding from the JIU common system-wide survey is, that with increasing knowledge of racism and racial discrimination, a large number of personnel indicate that they are now more likely to take action than they were before. This applies to both personnel who experience racism and bystanders with a third-party role and responsibility. This suggests either increasing confidence in existing systems or an increase in the voices of personnel being heard. The latter is addressed in paragraph 125 on the international civil servants standing up for truth and transparency.

## **F. Strategic management: leadership, values, goals, outcomes, policies and strategic plans**

122. This management domain is focused on the “thought leadership” that has been used in addressing racism and racial discrimination. This phrase is used to refer to the normative system, which includes the foresight, insights and in-depth thinking that guide organization vision and goals, the identification of outcomes or benefits developed to address racism and racial discrimination, and the policies, strategic approaches and plans. The conditions for success include the key instruments that create boundaries and provide direction, such as the development of knowledge about what works and of the accountability system for policy, changes and the implementation of strategic plans. “Thought leadership” also refers to the inclusive or collective leadership (involving all parties) that drives the process of change and the conceptualization of the values, visions, goals and outcomes that are formulated to drive change. See table 2 below for the factors of “thought leadership” and the pillars and components that provide the basis for assessment in this area.

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<sup>43</sup> See <https://ethicxcenter.gatech.edu/>.

<sup>44</sup> Internal versus external locus of control: if you believe that you have control over what happens, then you have what psychologists refer to as an internal locus of control. If you believe that you have no control over what happens and that external variables are to blame, then you have what is known as an external locus of control. People who develop an internal locus of control believe that they are responsible for their own success. Those with an external locus of control believe that external forces, such as luck, determine their outcomes. In external control, one starts from outside and tries to determine the environment completely, while with internal control, one's own aspirations are taken as a starting point, and useful synergies with the environment are sought. Gabriel Lopez-Garrido, “Locus of control: definition and examples”, *Simply Psychology*, 13 September 2020.

Table 2

**Key dimensions of thought leadership with key elements of the normative system and collective leadership**

<i>Normative systems in place goals, objectives, policy and strategic plans</i>	<i>Collective leadership</i>
<b>Pillar 2</b>	
Conceptualization of race, racism and racial discrimination	
<b>Pillar 3</b>	<b>Pillar 3</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Values, vision, goals (3.2)</li> <li>• Outcomes or benefits (3.3)</li> <li>• Policy (3.4)</li> <li>• Strategic plan (3.5)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior leadership (3.1.1)</li> <li>• Middle management (3.1.2)</li> </ul>
<b>Pillar 7</b>	<b>Pillar 7</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge and learning system that generates truth and also continuous learning about race, racism and discrimination (7.3)</li> <li>• Accountability system for policy and organizational effectiveness (7.6)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personnel resource groups (7.7)</li> <li>• Governing body (7.5)</li> </ul>

123. The development of the normative framework – comprising vision, goals, outcomes, policy and strategic plans – is the focus in the majority of organizations, which explains the high levels of performance in these areas. Clarity on values, purpose, goals and outcomes is critical to getting all personnel to work around a common framework and direction. Similarly, a policy and strategic plan provide further concrete guidance for realization of the vision, values, goals and outcomes in addressing racism and racial discrimination. An organization without a clear purpose or goals and without clear guidance will begin to drift and its work becomes disorganized. Incoherence sets in and trust gets eroded. The evidence shows that the normative area is a particular focus and enjoys a comparatively high level of performance in most organizations. The exception here is pillar 2 on the conceptualization of race, racism and racial discrimination, which is inadequate, as highlighted above, and organizations still have a lot of work to do in that area. Twenty organizations, or 80 per cent of those assessed, give due consideration to the development of values, vision, goals, outcomes and strategic plans, and are operating between stages 2 and 6 (pillar 3 in aggregate). Twelve organizations, or 50 per cent, are at stages 3 and 4.

124. This performance area is one that is also prioritized by small and medium-sized organizations, and is second in line after the due regard paid to adjustments that need to be made to the regulatory framework and codes of conduct to address racism and racial discrimination. The evidence shows that having a strategic plan is the most significant aspect in providing a platform to engage an entire organization in working together. It also provides a basis for monitoring and accountability. Some organizations (of all sizes) are examining their newly-developed staff policies and policies for diversity, equity and inclusion to ensure the effective coverage of pertinent strategies for addressing racism and racial discrimination within the framework of strategic human resource management.

125. Senior leadership drives the organization in the right directions and in strategic ways that are credible and significant in the success of all parties. Critical, however, is a guiding coalition for collective leadership roles from various parties. Evidence of successful change management indicates that while leadership from the top is necessary, it alone is not sufficient to drive success. It is important to have a coalition of people working together throughout an organization to engage the process and support the delivery of the intended reform.

126. The inspiration for collective leadership is the CEB leadership framework,<sup>45</sup> which indicates that “[the] challenges that confront us in the twenty-first century will not be met by mere deference to power, reliance on a shaky status quo or operation in old silos. Rather, they demand a model of leadership that is norm-based, principled, inclusive, accountable, multidimensional, transformational, collaborative and self-applied. That is, a United Nations leadership model”-. The review contains an examination of the quality of the exercise of leadership by senior officials, middle management, personnel resource groups or communities of practice, and by governing bodies wherein all parties play interdependent roles to achieve a collective impact. It also presents the level of development of the key instruments that support decision-making: the accountability system, and the knowledge and learning systems.

127. The results show that the United Nations is in the early stages and has a long way to go to develop the kind of effective leadership coalition that is critical to driving reforms to address racism and racial discrimination.

#### Box 4

##### **Leadership for collective responsibility**

The desired results are as follows:

- Senior leadership is of high quality and able to address racism and racial discrimination, and measures and mechanisms are in place to: (a) enhance leadership abilities to address racism and racial discrimination; and (b) hold leadership accountable.
- Middle management is of high quality and its capacity is enhanced, and there are systems to hold middle managers accountable.
- Personnel inclusion: Staff are empowered and able to play an independent professional role. There is a high level of support for personnel resources and special interest groups, and such groups are able to leverage support for actions to address racism and racial discrimination.
- Governing body: High quality governance systems for addressing racism and racial discrimination are in place. The governing and legislative bodies provide direction, and hold organizations accountable for policy implementation and for reporting on progress and changes on key indicators for racism and racial discrimination. The governing bodies change behaviours that perpetuate inequity and discrimination and that limit the capacity of organizations to establish and implement effective rules. The senior leadership of organizations exercises responsive and responsible leadership in working with Member States and governing bodies.
- Tools that support governance are of high quality. These include: (a) an institutional results framework with defined goals and outcomes with performance indicators (components 3.2 and 3.3); (b) policies and strategic plans (components 3.4 and 4.5); and (c) an accountability framework (component 7.6) and systems for accountability and transparency that offer annual reporting and analysis of the state of affairs of racism and racial discrimination and the improvements and advances made (component 7.6).

128. Annex VII provides the senior leadership attributes derived from empirical evidence of elements important to addressing racism and racial discrimination and of exemplary management practices. Based on assessment of these attributes by organization, the results show that the following number of organizations are assessed to be average and above average in the demonstration of the attributes (i.e. at stages 3, 4 and above).

(a) For 12 (or 48 per cent) of the organizations, senior leadership responsible for addressing racism and racial discrimination is at an average or high stage of development,

<sup>45</sup> CEB/2017/1, annex.



and operating at stage 3 or stage 4. The remaining 13 organizations assess senior leadership as operating at lower end of stages 2 and 1 in this area.

(b) For 10 (or 36 per cent) of the 25 organizations, the leadership demonstrated by personnel (i.e. leadership from the bottom up) through networks and interest groups is at stages 3 and 4.

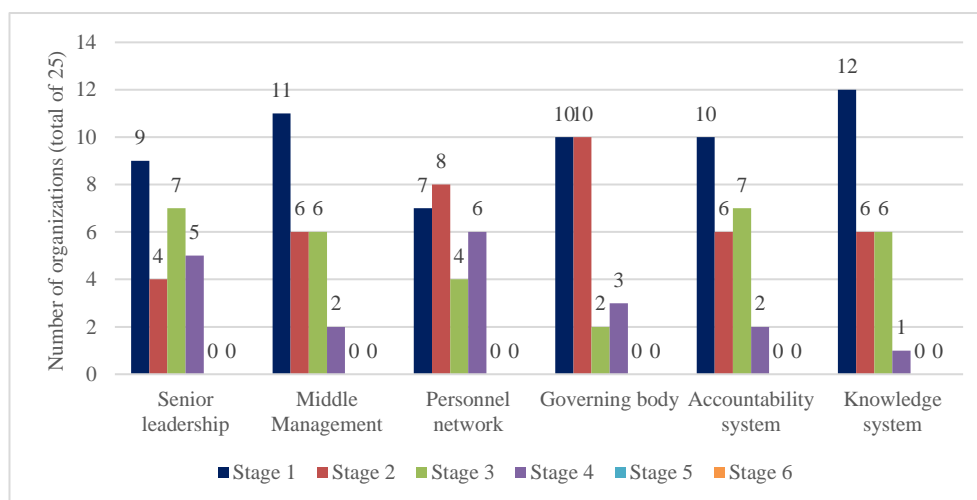
(c) Middle management has some way to go. There are 7 organizations (43 per cent) that assess it as operating at stage 3 or 4. A significant majority (18 organizations) rate it as a low stage 2 or 1.

(d) Performance in the areas of governance and the role of governing and legislative bodies is low. There are four large organizations where these bodies are active and operating at stage 3 and 4.

(e) In terms of systems to support strategic decision-making (systems for accountability and annual reporting and for knowledge management and learning), nine organizations (36 per cent) have thought about systems to put in place and are beginning to implement accountability measures. The knowledge and learning systems are lagging behind. They are important considerations in addressing racism and racial discrimination for only seven organizations at stage 3. They are under consideration in six organizations operating at stage 2.

Figure XVI

**Number of components operating at various stages of development for senior leadership, middle management, personnel resource groups, governing bodies, personnel resource groups and support systems, such as knowledge and accountability systems**



129. The analysis of findings indicated that the existence of senior leadership meeting high quality criteria and the adoption of effective standards for racism and racial discrimination is observed in 12 (or 49 per cent) of the assessed organizations. Interpretation of this level of effort should take into consideration the evidence from the JIU survey, which indicates that personnel who experience racial discrimination perceive lower mean values of senior leadership support than other personnel. Senior leadership drives the vision, tone, climate, organizational culture of transformation and the strategic direction of the organization in addressing racism and racial discrimination. Direction-setting and accountability must be visible at the top in the form of responsive, responsible, accountable and inclusive leadership. Leadership affects outcomes directly through the behaviours of leaders and indirectly through the behaviours it rewards, encourages, ignores or sanctions. Important leadership attributes that are critical for addressing racism and racial discrimination have been identified in the literature on best practices. These attributes are highlighted in annex VII. There is a need for senior leadership to consider and adopt the attributes and competencies of the benchmarking framework of this review, as listed in annex VII, and ask the personnel affected what would make a difference for them.

130. The analysis indicates that support for anti-racism and inter-agency groups operating as change agents is key to supporting effective senior leadership and bringing about change throughout the organization. Such groups are assessed at a higher stage of development compared with middle management and governing bodies. Personnel resource groups are voluntary, personnel-led groups that are organized around a shared identity or mission, and whose activities are often aligned with the organization's mission and business objectives in some way. Personnel leadership from highly proactive and empowered personnel who form special interest groups, communities of practice and thematic networks is indicative of how the change process can occur from the bottom up, in addition to the more traditional top-down efforts. Personnel anti-racism networks, thematic groups, inter-agency groups and region-specific groups have been self-directed in playing a highly proactive role. This grass-roots engagement of personnel and the creation of networks is most significant in enhancing institutionalization and sustainability.

131. The evidence from the JIU common system-wide survey indicates that some personnel members are taking a proactive role including self-directed activities to enhance their awareness, knowledge, and understanding of racism and racial discrimination. Personnel members also indicated a range of roles they are playing in helping to address racism and racial discrimination, such as participating in anti-racism groups, creating change in their functions, teams, and work environment, reflecting on changes need in project and programmes, both in conceptualization and in procedures, and actively promoting intolerance of racism and racial discrimination. It is important that such groups be supported as part of institutional or enterprise change management, are provided safe space but also provide an informal setting for open dialogue and mutual understanding. Empirical research has shown that such resource groups may indeed be valuable for promoting more inclusive perceptions about the organizational culture, comfort in disclosing stigmatized identities and the development of supportive social networks.<sup>46</sup>

132. Points worth considering with this trend are that: (a) they represent a realization of the CEB leadership framework that requires all personnel to be involved with due regard to the respective roles to be played; (b) even small organizations recognize the importance of the role to be played by such groups; this is one of few components being addressed by small organizations (two small organizations even represent examples of best practice); and (c) they represent the emergence of what is described as the new breed of public servants, described as explorers commissioned by society to search for public value.<sup>47</sup> Documentary evidence from other multilateral organization speak to the same subject: that staff working in a multilateral institution have a moral duty to speak out against racism and discrimination. The JIU review team interacted with a number of these groups as they emerged in 2021. Their presence is felt in the organizations where they operate, and they represent a powerful force. **The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should continue to empower existing anti-racism networks and communities of practice to carry out their established goals and objectives as they drive and support the organizational changes needed to prevent and address racism and racial discrimination.**

133. Middle management plays one of the most important roles in creating a culture where everyone can thrive. Middle managers are described as the linchpin for success in the implementation of organizational policies including those for diversity, equity and inclusion, and racism and racial discrimination.<sup>48</sup> The items of the JIU common system-wide survey addressing equality of opportunity, belongingness/visibility, intolerance of racism and racial discrimination, and microaggressions relate to the managerial and supervisory role of line and middle managers in direct contact with staff and responsible for the daily operation of carrying out policies. Organizations have indicated that many of the inclusive leadership attributes identified for senior leadership are equally valid for middle managers. The review

<sup>46</sup> Lisa H. Nishii and others, "A multi-level process model for understanding diversity practice effectiveness", *Academy of Management Annals*, vol. 12, No. 1 (2018), pp. 37–82.

<sup>47</sup> Bruce Jenks, "On leadership: the art of creating public value in the United Nations", *100 Years of International Civil Service*, No. 5 (Uppsala, Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, 2019).

<sup>48</sup> Blair McPherson, "Are middle managers the problem?", the HR Director, 5 March 2022; and Kevin J. Delaney, "Middle managers and CEOs are key to pursuing racial equity at work", *Charter*, 30 December 2020.

finds that 52 per cent of organizations are at stages 1 and 2, and are not examining or exploring how to enhance the role of middle management. There are two organizations operating at stage 4, which may exhibit exemplary practices on the effectiveness of the role of middle managers.

**134. The Inspector suggests that the executive heads of United Nations system organizations, in operationalizing the United Nations system leadership framework endorsed by the CEB, should introduce in their respective organizations the attributes that are critical for leaders in addressing racism and racial discrimination, and hold senior and middle personnel accountable for continuous learning and performance improvement through the annual organization performance evaluation system.**

135. The consultations, dialogue and information generated from interviews all highlight the importance of accountability as an important factor in creating trust and ensuring the transparency of the leadership role exercised in organizations. It is one of the key instruments to be used by the leadership to indicate progress in intervention and the changes in results that are identified in organizational strategic plans and action plans.

136. The analysis in this review of the existence of an accountability framework for addressing racism and racial discrimination, and for reporting on progress in achieving the objectives and outcomes established to that end shows that nine organizations have established some form of accountability system. The scope and level of development of such systems vary in their configurations and specifications. As expected, the nine organizations with an accountability framework also have developed an overall strategic approach, desired results and action plans, and this provides the basis for the development of an accountability framework. There are seven organizations that are examining existing accountability frameworks, including the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, as they at the same time are also starting to develop their strategic plans.

137. The following recommendation is intended to enhance accountability in addressing racism and racial discrimination within United Nations system organizations.

#### **Recommendation 5**

**The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should establish, by 2024, an accountability framework that sets out the expected results, outcomes and key performance indicators for addressing racism and racial discrimination, and report periodically to their legislative organs and/or governing bodies on progress made in achieving the predefined results.**

138. Governing bodies, through their oversight role, enhance enforcement and accountability in progress made in addressing racism and racial discrimination. The review finds that the role played by governing bodies is a major factor in development of the adoption process. A key discovery is that the large organizations operating at stage 4 for most components all have active governing bodies that are regularly involved in guiding decisions, and are periodically informed of progress through updates in annual reports. It is, however, not clear why some governing bodies do not apply the same requirements for reporting and compliance to all of the organizations they oversee.

139. During the course of the review, personnel had said that they expect governing bodies to exercise the same type of reporting and resolutions in establishing an identical accountability framework as was done for gender equality, sexual harassment, and sexual exploitation and abuse. During data collection, which ended in March 2022, governing bodies had not engaged 80 per cent of the organizations on racism and racial discrimination and had instead seemingly assumed the role of silent partners in many organizations. The strong positive relationship observed between the engagement of governing bodies and organizational performance signals the value and need for the greater involvement of Member States in authorizing organizations and requiring reporting and accountability. The evidence from interviews indicates that when the issue is raised or presented to governing

bodies, it is taken up and there are requests for information from members of the governing body.

140. In order to enhance transparency and accountability across the system, the Inspector recommends that the **legislative organs and governing bodies of United Nations system organizations request the executive heads of their respective organizations to establish a framework for accountability that sets expected outcomes and key performance indicators in addressing racism and racial discrimination, as well as modalities for reporting on the progress made in achieving predefined results.**

141. Besides the critical role played in oversight and accountability. The governing bodies play an important role in addressing macrostructural forms of racism and racial discrimination, as defined in pillar 6. In rating the performance of the organizations in the dimensions under pillar 6, this review included an assessment not only of whether these dimensions are being addressed by the respective governing bodies, but also of how the senior leadership of each United Nations system organization plays a proactive and responsible role in engaging Member States. Only three large organizations are at stage 4 in this area. Six other organizations (of all sizes) have started to reflect on how to address the external constraining factors associated with macro forms of racism and racial discrimination.

142. The Inspector submits that not addressing macrostructural factors is understandable given the early and novice stage of many organizations that are starting to adopt the various measures and are internally focused. There are, however, some organizations at a very advanced stage of development that are not addressing such macrostructural issues. These organizations also tend not to address issues associated with the challenges of the groups identified as privileged under pillar 4. This suggests that issues of power and privilege in the United Nations system are being avoided.

143. For those organizations assessed as being at the most advanced stages on macro issues and privilege, addressing such constraints is seen as an integral part of their overall strategic approach. Interestingly, analysis of the JIU common system-wide survey data indicates that personnel perceive there to be a strong relationship between the level of senior leadership support and the level of organizational performance in addressing macrostructural issues, including working with governing bodies. This suggests that work with governing bodies to address macro issues relating to racism and racial discrimination, in particular, could be one of the key drivers for the relatively high performance of large organizations in broadly addressing racism and racial discrimination. For many organizations, addressing macrostructural conditions is identified as having a transformative effect for the entire United Nations system. This is covered in chapter IV on transformative changes to address racism and racial discrimination.

## **G. Racism at the individual level**

144. The summary above indicates that organizations have given priority to systems and structures under pillars 3, 5 and 7, and have focused less on how to support people and address both internalized forms of racism – that affect racialized and privileged groups –, as well as interpersonal dimensions, as defined under Pillars 2 and 4. Micro-level racism refers to private and internalized beliefs and an individual's capacity for power, control and influence; it occurs when individuals act on stereotypes, prejudices or unconscious bias, whether or not this is intentional, visible, verbal, and can be directed against oneself. These beliefs and assumptions govern one's own behaviours. They affect interpersonal relations when private negative beliefs about race become public when interacting with others, as is the case with microaggressions. They affect intrapersonal cognitive and behavioural attributes that are manifested in how racialized and privileged groups internalized "subordination" or "superiority" respectively within a system wrought by racism. Micro level or internalized racism (or internalized racial oppression) serves as a powerful phenomenon in itself and leads

to racialized persons continuing to feel powerless in a system that does not value them, their contributions or the contributions of their racial/ethnic groups.<sup>49</sup>

145. The review process began with an assessment of how United Nations system organizations have understood and conceptualized these forms of racism and racial discrimination (under pillar 2), and how organizations assessed the above dimensions in their own organization using surveys, focus groups, safe space platforms and other assessment methods. This was followed by an examination of how these dimensions and forms are being addressed using the measures and mechanisms in place. The latter step is carried out in line with a set of quality standards for addressing internalized forms of racism and their social, psychological and economic effects on both individual and organizational culture and productivity.

146. The analysis indicates that there are major challenges in conceptualization under pillar 2, and commensurate challenges in the adoption and implementation of measures and mechanisms for racism at the micro level – relative to actions for promoting more egalitarian systems and structures to address meso/institutional forms of racism – under pillar 4. The work of conceptualizing, identifying, defining and diagnosing various forms and patterns of racism and racial discrimination is generally found to be at the very preliminary stages of development across the system. Only 5 organizations have made substantial progress in this regard, while 12 organizations are still at stage 2 and are exploring how to assess and diagnose; 8 organizations are at the stage of non-conceptualization.

147. For many United Nations system organizations, the JIU organization-level questionnaire, which contained definitions and a range of questions about racism and racial discrimination, provided a good educational tool for conceptualization. It is therefore noted by many as helpful in encouraging examinations of organizational functions and systems in relation to racism and racial discrimination. The JIU terms of reference for this review provided a compendium with details about the various forms of racism and racial discrimination. Furthermore, for most organizations, the findings from the JIU common system-wide survey have provided a basis for the provision of details about treatment and experiences of the various forms of racism and racial discrimination. This is the case for all JIU participating organizations, except for the six of them that had already conducted their own surveys in 2021, and had thus already collected data and knowledge that supported and guided the development of relevant action plans or interventions.

148. Regarding the adoption and implementation of measures and mechanisms for the three micro-level dimensions of racism and racial discrimination, organizations have made more progress in addressing the interpersonal dimension and visible acts of misconduct and wrongdoing. The evidence shows the following:

- For mechanisms conceptualized and adopted for the racialized group: five organizations are at stages 3 and 4.
- For mechanisms conceptualized and adopted for the privileged group: three organizations are at stage 3 while the rest of the organizations assessed are at stages 1 and 2.
- For addressing interpersonal racism, including microaggressions: nine organizations are at stages 3 and 4.

149. The focus in addressing individual level racism under pillar 4 is on addressing microaggressions and misconduct, and, in some ways, is commensurate with ongoing interventions to assess systems for ethics and investigation under pillar 1 (component 1.1) and pillar 5 (component 5.3). Interventions to address racialized and privileged groups require understanding of the intrapersonal, psychological, cognitive, cultural and behavioural factors involved. It is true that many organizations have provided safe spaces to allow staff to voice their views on racism and racial discrimination. Providing the space and dialogue

<sup>49</sup> E. J. R. David, Tiera M. Schroeder and Jessicanne Fernandez, “Internalized racism: a systematic review of the psychological literature on racism’s most insidious consequence”, *Social Issues*, vol. 74, No. 4 (September 2019). For a full listing of special issue papers, see <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/josi.2019.75.issue-4/issuetoc>.

without the creation and adoption of a commensurate appropriate plan leaves the organization open to several risk factors.

150. Addressing individual-level racism involves changing mindsets and attitudes. One important tool is training. Empowering the development of communities of practice is also useful, if all personnel are involved and developmental initiatives follow best practice. This is where informed and empowered diversity, equity and inclusion staff and human resources management personnel can make invaluable organizational contributions. Doing so requires an understanding of behavioural insights, culture and cognition, and the capacity to leverage the competitive edge of the multicultural nature of the United Nations system organizations.

151. Emerging strategic human resources strategies and personnel policies that are focused on solving organizational challenges with people-centric solutions need to be cognizant of the two main outcomes and benefits of addressing racism and racial discrimination: (a) the business, financial and economic value or benefits, and value creation for intellectual capital; and (b) human-centred values and capabilities. Nine organizations operating at stages 3 and 4 have comprehensive values and goals that drive them, and emphasize the ethical imperative of addressing racism and racial discrimination. The comments offered by personnel in the JIU common system-wide survey on steps they have taken to enhance their own awareness or mindset, address underlying assumptions based on bias and prejudice, or to tackle belittlement and denial show a range of very healthy self-directed approaches and mechanisms for survival or the mastery of the environment, knowledge and understanding of racism and racial discrimination in all of its forms. The range of self-development initiatives undertaken by personnel is provided in annex X.

152. The comments by personnel in the JIU common system-wide survey indicated that the most significant shortcoming in the United Nations system is the lack of expertise in addressing racism and racial discrimination. This finding was also clear in the interviews conducted. It is important that the executive heads of organizations include in their human resources and diversity, equity and inclusion units, experts with backgrounds in psychology, culture, and behavioural and cognitive sciences with a knowledge of racism and racial discrimination who would contribute to the development of measures and mechanisms that support people in understanding and addressing racism and racial discrimination.

153. The following soft recommendation is intended to contribute to the creation of adequate, effective and efficient professional teams that would enhance the effectiveness of the services that address racism and racial discrimination across the system. **The Inspector suggests that the executive heads of United Nations system organizations should ensure that the human resources and diversity, equity and inclusion services of their respective organizations include experts who can support organizations in addressing racism and racial discrimination at the individual level, including both intrapersonal and interpersonal aspects.**

154. It is acknowledged that the effectiveness of the latter goes beyond the role of experts on racism, racial discrimination and counselling psychology. The evidence indicates that changing hegemonic assumptions, which are considered the ultimate source of values, is difficult. Several factors stand out in the scientific literature as important in influencing mindset changes and transformative learning. They include: a well-developed vision and strategy accompanied by the use of a high-impact strategic communication approach; a well-defined change management strategy tied to a sound understanding of how people change and transfer knowledge in varying contexts; a good understanding of culture and thought for a multicultural population; strategic leadership and an appropriate tone at the top, defining a commitment to being honest, ethical and transformative in making efforts to address difficult situations, including at the individual level; a well-developed accountability system for transparency and enforcement; and the development of a learning organization that engages staff in critical enquiry and transformative learning as a generic competency required in current times. **In order to adequately equip personnel across the system to fight racism and racial discrimination at the individual level, the Inspector suggests that, as part of recommendation 2 on training, performance enhancement and accountability, the executive heads of United Nations system organizations should also provide mandatory training for all personnel to enhance their knowledge of the various forms of racism and racial discrimination and their effects, and apply relevant quality criteria that are**

**important to enhancing effectiveness in addressing racism and racial discrimination in their respective organization.**

## **H. Systemic and institutional racism and racial discrimination**

155. Systemic and institutional racism refers to a system of racial inequity within institutions and systems of power, such as places of employment, government agencies and social services. It can take the form of unfair policies and practices, discriminatory treatment, and inequitable opportunities and outcomes. The concentration of racial groupings in certain tasks or locations or at certain grade levels, providing limited opportunities for access and progression, are examples of institutional or systemic racism. Systemic racialization refers to a dynamic in a system that produces and replicates racial ideologies, identities and inequities. It is the well-institutionalized pattern of discrimination that cuts across major political, economic and social organizations in a society. In general, public attention to racism is generally focused on the symptoms (such as the use of a racist slur by an individual) rather than the system of racial inequality.

156. The review has identified the following three areas or components for focus on functions and systems for assessing systemic racism in the United Nations system organizations:

(a) Management of opportunities and progression in recruitment, selection, pipeline development, talent management, staff assignments, promotions, performance assessment and professional development (component 5.1).

(b) Racism and racial discrimination embedded in the work of United Nations system organizations and operational activities in countries or globally, or in service delivery and for development results: such as in policies, strategies and approaches, programmes, projects, and other operational or normative activities (component 5.2).

(c) Internal controls, complaints and response mechanisms for addressing racism and racial discrimination (component 5.3).

157. The latter area (component 5.3) is covered above in the discussion of the regulatory framework. The second area (component 5.2) on racism and racial discrimination embedded in existing operational activities and work in countries reflects macrostructural issues and addresses the need for coherence between institutional and programmatic functions and service delivery. It is covered in the section on coherence (see section below). This section is dedicated to the management of equality of opportunities and career progression among United Nations system personnel. This function falls principally under human resources management and new initiatives for people-centred policies tied to goals for strategic human resources management.

158. The review includes an examination of what United Nations system organizations are doing to address equality of opportunity in human resources functions. The stage of development, including the quality and level of implementation of measures and mechanism adopted to address racism and racial discrimination, was addressed. Table 3 provides the list of areas examined for equality of opportunity in human resources functions. The component on the incentive system is focused on addressing equity. Data sources for the findings included the corporate JIU organization-level questionnaire, the CEB human resources database and the JIU common system-wide survey. The analysis of organizational performance on the stage of development indicates that the United Nations system has a long way to go in addressing equality of opportunity. The analysis shows that only five large organizations are addressing racism and racial discrimination in the human resources function areas listed in table 3. Three large organizations have done extensive work and are operating at stage 4. The analysis of diversity (using Blau's index)<sup>50</sup> also indicates greater diversity from recruitment among large organizations than among medium-sized and small

<sup>50</sup> Blau's index of diversity captures the heterogeneity of the population being studied. The index quantifies the probability that two members randomly selected from a group would be in different categories.

organizations. Some of these organizations have formed task forces to address what should be done in various human resources functions. Two large organizations are operating at stage 3. It is encouraging that 13 organizations are exploring and assessing what to do, and 5 organizations of these 13 are experimenting with ad hoc initiatives.

Table 3  
**Key dimensions for assessing equality of opportunity in United Nations system organizations**

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Objectives</i>
Data management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disaggregation of human resources data to show patterns of racial discrimination and guide policy and accountability. Clarification: this includes showing patterns for various racial groupings and racial identifiers, including information on universities attended and other demographic information that is indicative of inequalities and inequities to be addressed in the human resources function and in personnel management initiatives.</li> </ul>
Recruitment, selection, and pipeline development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment policies.</li> <li>Selection processes, including the use of appropriate and unbiased criteria and instruments.</li> <li>Pipeline development for recruitment including internship programmes and programmes for Junior Professional Officers.</li> </ul>
Career progression, professional development, promotions and professional excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff progression to higher ranks.</li> <li>Staff assignments to tasks that are important for promotion/moving up to higher ranks.</li> <li>Career development and promotions.</li> <li>Staff rotation and mobility.</li> <li>Performance management.</li> <li>Staff development from various learning opportunities to include mentoring, coaching, training, secondments and membership of professional organizations.</li> </ul>
Incentive system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reparation, compensation and justice for equity.</li> <li>Reasonable accommodation to address equity, including using information on predictors for successful performance for various groups in tests and selection criteria.</li> <li>Work life benefits, well-being and flexibility.</li> <li>Recognition and rewards.</li> </ul>
Personnel empowerment and people management	<p>This can enhance mutual trust and respect in order to drive partnerships with personnel, high performance and enhance comparative added value. This includes support for anti-racism resource groups, thematic groups on racism and racial discrimination, inter-agency groups and all forms of communities of interest or networks that provide a safe space and opportunities for sharing and developing knowledge, such as The JIU common system-wide survey.</p>

159. The analysis indicates that the five top performing organizations give priority to addressing equality of opportunity in the following areas: (a) recruitment policies and procedures; (b) staff assignments; (c) career development and promotion, including to senior level positions; (d) development of staff capabilities for tasks; and (e) recognition and rewards. Some organizations have developed subgroups that are examining key issues on recruitment and actions to be taken. In its benchmarking framework, JIU has provided quality indicators pertinent to addressing racial discrimination in the areas listed. Organizations can use and expand on the JIU indicators of quality and references identified as important to



addressing racism and racial discrimination, and ensure that appropriate methods are used in achieving objectives set to ensure equality of opportunity, including equity. It is indicated in the scholarly literature that the most important factor in managing human resources functions on racism and racial discrimination is providing key performance indicators that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART).

160. The following recommendation is intended to enhance transparency and accountability with regard to racism and racial discrimination to prevent and remedy inequalities in the equal distribution of opportunities and in career progression across the system, with respect to the factors listed in table 3.

#### **Recommendation 6**

**The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should strengthen the equal distribution of opportunities in human resources management for all personnel.**

161. In so doing, consideration should be given to the following: defining strategies, priority areas and expected results, with key performance indicators for equality of opportunity; and developing a well-defined plan for the annual reporting of performance and the evaluation of the appropriateness, value and effectiveness of the initiatives adopted. Ultimately, this work of organizations in addressing equality of opportunity should be part of a broader system-wide accountability framework for addressing racism and racial discrimination.

### **I. Coherence: relationships, synergies and alignments**

162. Coherence lies in the quality of being logical and consistent, the quality of forming a unified whole and the integration of values and relationships. In table 4 below, the stage of development of organizations on five components is highlighted, addressing coherence to be developed from collaboration among organizations, from consistency in applying values and principles in tackling racism at the institutional level, to working in countries and in the operational activities for development, and in integrating aligning work on racial discrimination with other forms of discrimination typically described as intersectionality.

163. Coherence among United Nations system organizations working from the same values and conceptual framework, and collaborating and working together in integrated and interdependent ways for collective impact is a great focus of organizations. Eight organizations are operating at stage 3 and above. This is indicative of ongoing collaboration with some organizations, while showing outreach and work with other organizations. Details about have already been provided in relation to the need for collaboration between high-performing organizations and all other organizations. This section will contain a report on the stage of development of organizations in preventing and addressing racism and racial discrimination embedded in programmatic and operational activities, and on the stage of development in addressing intersectionality.

Table 4

**Number of organizations at various stages in achieving results for coherence, based on all components across the three pillars considered to enhance coherence**

	<i>Stage 1</i>	<i>Stage 2</i>	<i>Stage 3</i>	<i>Stage 4</i>	<i>Stage 5</i>	<i>Stage 6</i>
<b>Pillar 8: Coherence – relationships, alignments and partnerships</b>						
Component 8.1: United Nations system collaboration in working together in integrated and interdependent ways	8	9	3	3	1	1
<b>Total</b>						<b>8 organizations</b>

	<i>Stage 1</i>	<i>Stage 2</i>	<i>Stage 3</i>	<i>Stage 4</i>	<i>Stage 5</i>	<i>Stage 6</i>
Component 8.2: Alignment of values and actions in working with countries and addressing human rights, equality, decent work and discrimination against minorities	13	7	2	2	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5 organizations</b>					
Component 8.3: Global partnerships sharing the same values and objectives	16	5	2	2	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 organizations</b>					
<b>Pillar 5: Measures and mechanisms for institutional forms of racism</b>						
Component 5.2: Embeddedness in operational activities and service delivery (tied to epistemologies)	12	9	1	3	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 organizations</b>					
<b>Pillar 7: Institutionalization and commitment</b>						
Component 7.1: Intersectionality with other forms of discrimination	6	8	3	5	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>10 organizations</b>					

164. The review contained an assessment of efforts to prevent and address racism and racial discrimination embedded in the programmatic work, normative work, operational activities and service delivery that govern international development paradigms (component 5.2). At issue here is that racism takes the form of the dominance of Western epistemologies and is embedded in the philosophical foundations, principles and models used, as well as in the policies, strategies and approaches used in operational activities, service delivery and the evaluation and oversight functions of the United Nations system. Of equal importance is examining what has been done to mainstream human rights, gender equality and decent work principles in activities for development (8.2). Component 8.2 examines the linkage between the institutional focus to address racism and racial discrimination and support for countries in addressing racism and racial discrimination and responding to the Sustainable Development Goals, in international conventions and declarations for racism and racial discrimination, human rights, decent work and gender equality (component 8.2).

165. These two components reflect the lowest score for coherence. For the former (component 5.2), the results indicate that there are four organizations operating at a high stage, while four organizations are at stages 1 and 2. For the latter (component 8.2), there are three organizations performing at stage 4 and 5, and two organizations at stage 3. These high performers are not necessarily the organizations that have the areas of interest as part of their core mandate. An illustration of the absence of consideration of racism and racial discrimination in the work of the United Nations system is in the recent report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance entitled “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sustainable Development Goals and the fight against racial discrimination”, in which it is stated that the 2030 Agenda fails on racial equality and non-discrimination.<sup>51</sup>

166. For many organizations, the focus on these areas is generally perceived as a second priority and given the need to first enhance knowledge about racism and racial discrimination. It must however be emphasized that the work in these areas is one that would engage the professional and technical personnel in thinking through their methods and approaches and the need to be inclusive and innovative in considering different epistemologies and paradigms of the world. Doing this is likely to enhance United Nations system contributions to development results. This area has been the focus of a network on decolonizing aid, the

<sup>51</sup> A/HRC/50/60.

agenda of which includes enhancing knowledge and understanding among its members to develop alternatives in conceptual paradigms that could benefit programmatic work. **The Inspector suggests that the executive heads of United Nations system organizations should engage and give a lead role to professional technical personnel to assess the systemic and structural dimensions of racism and racial discrimination that are embedded in programmatic and operational activities for development in their respective organizations, and use epistemologies that would benefit their work in support of countries.** This is noted by many as key to the transformative changes needed for achieving development results, as highlighted in the next chapter.

167. Intersectionality and coherence in addressing discrimination, harassment and abuse is prominent in efforts directed at addressing racism and racial discrimination. A guiding principle of the review is to place racism and racial discrimination in the context of the larger framework of discrimination and the associated effects of abuse, harassment and loss. Adopting an intersectional approach is important because all forms of oppression are connected. There is consensus that one cannot fight against one form of injustice without also fighting against others. The review allowed for assessment of organizations in line with the following indicators that are important for enhancing intersectionality.

(a) The intersectionality of race and gender as part of the work of a dedicated office or officers (e.g. Diversity Officers) or for established diversity, equity and inclusion offices (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion/Belongingness and Dignity).

(b) The indicators for diversity, equity and inclusion address all forms of discrimination, including racism and racial discrimination.

- Existing strategies, accountability frameworks and training for all forms of discrimination (gender, sexual orientation, disability, etc.) provide information common across the various forms, while being focused on their core dimensions.

(c) Existing systems for abuse and harassment, such as sexual harassment, provide core or common information on all forms of harassment, as well as information specific to each form of discrimination.

(d) Existing units and functions set up for addressing discrimination examine the various forms of discrimination and the common and differentiated outcomes of abuse, harassment and loss.

(e) Consideration of how existing accountability frameworks provide alignment for all forms of discrimination.

168. The results are very encouraging and show that addressing intersectionality is a focus for all types of United Nations system organizations: large, medium-sized and small organizations. Besides the rationale provided above, that one cannot fight one form of discrimination without addressing all forms, other reasons provided for addressing intersectionality in the United Nations system include avoiding operating in silos to address all forms of discrimination by limiting overlapping frameworks, and, in particular, accountability frameworks, limiting transaction costs, enhancing efficiency, improving the effective use of expertise, and restricting competition for limited resources for the various forms of discrimination. For many, in a context of limited resources, there are greater gains to be made through unity, while respecting the commonalities and the differences of the various types of discrimination and avoiding using a one-size-fits-all approach. Coherence does not mean doing all of the same things, but rather aligning component parts for greater gain. For many, consideration of intersectionality starts by addressing it in all policies and strategies for discrimination, in particular existing ones on gender equality, the inclusion of persons with disabilities, and harassment, including sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and abuse. Many organizations are examining how to prevent and address racism and racial discrimination by examining the United Nations System-wide Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women as an accountability framework and its linkages with racism, racial discrimination and other forms of discrimination.

169. The analysis of stages of development indicates that 20 of the 25 United Nations system organizations assessed are involved in developing and adopting measures and mechanisms for intersectionality, operating at various stages of development, from stage 2 to

stage 6. Eleven (or 44 per cent) organizations are operating at stages 3 and 4. There are two organizations operating at stages 5 and 6. Eight organizations are considering potential actions and experimenting with ad hoc approaches. The sharing of experiences and lessons learned among organizations is an important step forward. Similarly, the development of the lessons from successful management practices in this area could perhaps be used to develop principles and guide work on mainstreaming efforts to combat racism and racial discrimination in other functions. The recommendation made above on support to enhance the capacity of the newly formed Working Group of the Human Resources Network of the CEB High-Level Committee on Management and other thematic networks is relevant to addressing intersectionality.

## IV. Way forward for the United Nations system

### A. Main questions

170. The two previous chapters provided information on the manifestation of racism and racial discrimination and a snapshot of the level of development and maturity of organizations in adopting and implementing a wide range of measures and mechanisms significant to preventing and addressing racism and racial discrimination. United Nations system organizations must consider not only what is of immediate value for effectively addressing racism and racial discrimination, but also the continued value and relevance of what it is doing and what it needs to do, in view of global changes and challenges. This chapter is about organizational plans for the next steps for changes needed to advance or improve existing work to address racism and racial discrimination. Providing this information is important as this review is being conducted concurrent with ongoing or emergent institutional changes or initiatives for addressing racism and racial discrimination. The chapter also is on the forward-looking stance or positioning of United Nations system organizations for transformations to enhance the sustainability of ongoing efforts and respond to global changes and challenges in ways that are of continued relevance to addressing racism and racial discrimination.

171. There are two main questions: (a) what are the next steps to initiate or take to improve and to advance ongoing work to address racism and racial discrimination, as per the domains of the JIU review? And (b) what are the reflections and actions that need to be taken for transformative changes in addressing racism and racial discrimination, in view of global changes and challenges and the imperatives of a world characterized as volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous?

### B. Next steps, trends and trajectory for development

172. The evidence from the JIU participating organizations' responses to the corporate JIU organization-level questionnaire shows that almost all of the organizations reviewed have plans to advance work that they have started to prevent and address racism and racial discrimination. This includes the smallest organizations operating at stage 1. Table 5 provides the specific types of actions planned by the organizations reviewed. This is organized under the various measures and mechanisms that emerged from the review. This evidence, as well as findings from interviews with senior executives and managers, all indicates a dynamic process of development for all JIU participating organizations. It has been remarked by many that the momentum that currently exists for change in addressing racism and racial discrimination needs to be fully utilized. The stages of development used in and suggested by this review provide a good basis for guiding the process within organizations, and would lead them towards higher stages of development. It also provides a common basis for system-wide analysis.

Table 5

**Summary of the next steps and actions for improvement and advancement by planned by organizations**

<i>Performance areas</i>	<i>Next steps and objectives: organizations' responses</i>
Regulatory framework and internal oversight and control functions (component 1.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update codes of conduct and codes of ethics</li> <li>• Review the implementation process and the results of existing codes of conduct in order to avoid having regulations that are no more than pro forma</li> <li>• Launch training on ethics and integrity</li> <li>• Develop skilled and diverse talent in investigative and audit functions. These are based on a combination of academic knowledge, and knowledge gained through practice and apprenticeship. Consideration should be given to continuous training throughout the career of such personnel.</li> </ul>

*Performance areas*

*Next steps and objectives: organizations' responses*

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The pool of personnel with the competencies necessary for audit and investigation functions is not equally available in all regions. This should be developed taking into consideration that takes time and focus to grow talent.</li> </ul>
Protection against retaliation (whistle-blowing) (component 5.3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an organizational culture that supports colleagues in speaking up and being protected from retaliation, and that fosters psychological safety and transparency in order to increase a sense of accountability and belonging</li> <li>• Update policies on protection against retaliation</li> <li>• Continue to raise awareness of the information and mechanisms available to all personnel to address discrimination, including policies on the prevention of harassment, including sexual harassment, in the workplace, and abuse of authority, as well as protection against retaliation and the available internal justice mechanisms provided for under staff rules and regulations</li> </ul>
Senior leadership (component 3.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take part and deliver training</li> <li>• Enhance skills and capacities for inclusive leadership and intrapersonal mastery and leadership</li> <li>• Enhance leadership role to develop an effective organizational culture</li> </ul>
Strategy and plan for addressing racism and racial discrimination and implementation of plans (component 3.5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use data and information to develop an effective approach and plan for preventing and addressing racism and racial discrimination</li> <li>• Endorse and implement adopted plans</li> <li>• Establish an anti-racism task force to support the implementation of plans</li> <li>• Conduct evaluations of the effectiveness of the implementation of the plans</li> </ul>
Micro-level and intrapersonal dimensions (components 4.1 and 4.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance understanding of manifestations of racism and racial discrimination within the organization, including microbehaviours and implicit biases</li> </ul>
Intersectionality (component 7.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having an integrated approach in addressing all forms of discrimination</li> <li>• Examine existing data and develop plans for intersectionality</li> <li>• Enhance the development of integrated or aligned accountability frameworks on the various forms of discrimination</li> </ul>
Embeddedness in all operations and service delivery (component 5.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the diversity, inclusion and equity principles are strategically embedded in policies and practices in all operations across the organization in order to sustain efforts and impact</li> </ul>
Collective awareness and understanding of the complexities of racism and racial discrimination, and diversity, equity and inclusion (components 7.7 and 1.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with organizations to enhance collective awareness and understanding of the complexities of diversity, equity, inclusion and belongingness</li> </ul>
Training and development of the competencies of managers and human resources staff (component 3.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver ongoing and targeted training programmes, such as for managers and human resources staff involved in recruitment and disciplinary/non-disciplinary processes</li> </ul>
Accountability of managers (component 3.1 and 7.6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure clear accountability for managers in responding to racist behaviours both the micro and macro levels</li> </ul>

<i>Performance areas</i>	<i>Next steps and objectives: organizations' responses</i>
Empirical evidence on exemplary practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct research analysis and evaluation to enhance knowledge of what works and what constitutes a best practice in the organization that could be emulated across the United Nations system</li> </ul>
Communication and organizational culture (component 7.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roll out an anti-racism and diversity dialogue plan across the organization</li> <li>• Develop an organizational culture that supports colleagues in speaking up and being protected from retaliation, and that fosters psychological safety and transparency (this is key to supporting anti-discrimination in any form and in developing a sense of belonging)</li> </ul>

### C. Making transformative changes in addressing racism and racial discrimination

173. While making the changes noted above to advance to higher stages of development is important for organizational effectiveness, making transformative changes is of equal importance for impact and sustainability. Transformative change means making changes, beyond simply doing a little more of what is good. It is strategic and at times a departure from what is typically done. Transformative change therefore goes beyond incremental change and implements changes that can alter the context in which the change is taking place. Transformative changes alter the way we think, especially our understanding of the world we live in. It involves looking at all possibilities for the future and harnessing the collective mind.<sup>52</sup>

174. Examples of transformative change include: building the collective mind by bringing all players together in a collective transformation process to address complex or conflicting agendas; having different people think together, across our wide diversity and differences, to deal with the great challenges facing us all; use of a set of new knowledge systems and paradigms; and use different ways of thinking, multiple intelligences for mastery of challenges and different epistemologies.<sup>53</sup> It is submitted that “such understanding of complex social phenomenon is important to propel us to the next phase of human existence”.<sup>54</sup> It is also noted that handling global challenges involves managing volatility with values and vision, the unpredictable with understanding, complexity with clarity, and ambiguity with adaptability, agility and resilience.

175. The United Nations system must consider how to position efforts to address racism and racial discrimination in a world where changes, disruption and shifting global dynamics are constantly occurring. Organizations must also continue to prevent and address racism and racial discrimination as a phenomenon that is complex in many ways, having changing forms that make it difficult to predict. It is an embodiment of current challenges and thus provides a platform and opportunity for enhancing the capacity of the United Nations system to be transformative.

176. In assessing these key elements that define transformative change, the analysis included information provided from assessment under pillar 9 on future direction, complemented by pertinent information from the other pillars and components of the assessment framework. The key indicators for pillar 9 that were assessed in the review are listed in the box below. They were developed on the basis of scholarly research and empirical evidence focused, in particular, on the transformation needed to prevent and address racism and racial discrimination and on internal consultations in developing the JIU benchmarking

<sup>52</sup> See, for example, the works of Valerie A. Brown and John A. Harris.

<sup>53</sup> Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *Epistemologies of the South: Justice Against Epistemicide* (London, Routledge, 2016); and Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *The End of the Cognitive Empire: The Coming of Age of Epistemologies of the South* (Durham, North Carolina, Duke University Press, 2018).

<sup>54</sup> Oliver Mack and Anshuman Khare, eds., *Managing in a VUCA World* (Heidelberg/New York, Springer, 2016). See also <https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/managing-vuca-world.htm>.

framework. Also listed are other components for which the indicators are aligned with the pillar 9 key indicators.

Box 5

**Pillar 9 – Key indicators for change and transformation for sustainability and continued relevance**

Indicators developed on the basis of the JIU benchmarking framework, with information derived from consultations and from expert and empirical information.

Focus on removing blinders and passivism, and focusing on the origins and root causes as the most important way of developing solutions.

- Also addressed in pillar 4 and pillar 6.

Shift attention away from how people become racist, and toward the contextual influences, psychological processes and developmental and intrapersonal mechanisms that help people to become anti-racist.

- Also addressed in pillar 4, components 4.4, 4.2 and 4.3.

Follow global trends set by digitalization from the Fourth and Fifth Industrial Revolutions, requiring more of a focus on humane values, truth and ethics, and less of a focus on production.

- Also addressed in pillar 1, component 1.4, and pillar 3, component 3.1.

Focus on how to manage the future workforce and build a more just future in recruitment and in providing equitable opportunities and outcomes for all, with a clear inclusion of racism and racial discrimination.

- Also addressed in pillar 5, component 5.1.

Reflect on how to manage volatility, unpredictability, complexity, ambiguity, change and transformation, and how to build a more just future in recruitment and in providing equitable opportunities and outcomes for all, with a clear inclusion of efforts to address racism and racial discrimination.

- Also addressed in: managing volatility with values and vision (component 1.2, component 3.2); managing the unpredictable with understanding (component 3.1); managing complexity with clarity, and managing ambiguity with adaptability, agility and resilience (component 7.2).

Focus on building resilience, adaptability and agility for organizations and individuals, including resilience in addressing racism and racial discrimination. For organizations, this means structural support and agility. It means continuous assessment and evaluation of initiatives, and the identification of successful actions and exemplary practices in addressing racism and racial discrimination in the context of the United Nations system.

- Also addressed in pillar 7, component 7.2.

Understand how change happens when addressing racism and racial discrimination and how to make change a collective engagement process, no matter the extent of the changes.

- Also addressed in pillar 7, components 7.4 and 7.7.

Work to enhance coherence and collaboration in addressing racism and racial discrimination across the United Nations system and reflect on how to make use of this for greater efficiency and impact.

- Also addressed in pillar 8, component 8.1.

Build or make global alliances with other corporations and organizations to bring about changes and implement transformations that would collectively impact leadership in global governance.

- Also addressed in pillar 8, component 8.3.



177. The findings presented in table 6 below indicate that 10 organizations (36 per cent) of the 25 organizations assessed as operating at stages 3, 4, 5 and 6 have reflected on and adopted measures that address the transformative changes needed, and are implementing these measures at varying levels of depth and quality. This includes four large, three medium-sized, and three small organizations. There are also eight organizations, most prominently medium-sized organizations, that show a very high level of reflection on the transformative changes needed, with an attempt to being to implement reflections and plans of a less ad hoc nature.

178. It is a natural progression for large, high-performing organizations that are at an advanced stage of implementation or with a high maturity level to focus their attention on transformative changes. However, both small and medium-sized organizations, including those at a low stage of development, pay attention to the transformative changes needed and see this as an important part of how to strategically address racism and racial discrimination and develop innovative or alternative ways to stay aligned with global changes and challenges. The Inspector submits that this is a commendable way of enhancing the relevance of preventing and addressing racism and racial discrimination.

Table 6

**Coverage and depth of responsiveness of United Nations system organizations to a transformative agenda important for addressing racism and racial discrimination, based on pillar 9 indicators**

<i>Areas important for addressing change and transformation</i>	<i>Number and percentage of United Nations system organizations at various stages of development</i>					
	<i>Stage 1</i>	<i>Stage 2</i>	<i>Stage 3</i>	<i>Stage 4</i>	<i>Stage 5</i>	<i>Stage 6</i>
	No reflection	Reflection and exploration	Advanced in reflections and taking action with increasing scope and quality			
<b>A: Pillar 9 (Critical dimension for change and transformation)</b>						
(See list above for indicators included in pillar 9)	7 (28%)	8 (32%)	7 (24%)	2 (8%)	1 (4%)	0 (0%)

179. The open-ended comments made by the JIU participating organizations on the transformative changes needed to move forward highlight: (a) the importance of coherence; (b) the definition of race and the development of racial identifiers; (c) the enhancement of transformative leadership and accountability; (d) the expansion of the framework for diversity, equity and inclusion to fully address racism and racial discrimination; and (e) the addressing of macrostructural issues and constraints.

## D. Conclusion

180. The information above, combined with interviews and dialogues with senior personnel, indicates that a process of reform and transformation to prevent and address racism and racial discrimination is taking place, which has major pivotal, reverberating and spin-off effects not only for addressing racism and racial discrimination, but also for addressing other forms of discrimination and the interlinkages among them. The challenges presented provide a real opportunity for the United Nations system to further enhance its capacity for resilience and agility and to adopt alternatives that would enhance relevance and sustainability. The process also provides the United Nations with the opportunity to assume a leadership role in making transformative changes beyond preventing and addressing racism and racial discrimination.

181. The overall analysis of this review indicates that a high level of effort is needed for: system-wide coherence and harmonization, coordination, and collaboration; integrated and interdependent ways of working across the United Nations system; building alliances and partnerships; enhancing the work of inter-agency and thematic groups and networks

operating across the United Nations system; and ensuring relevance to current and emerging global demands. The effectiveness of this process of reform and transformation calls for an established mechanism and not one that depends on voluntary and ad hoc services.

182. The mechanism would need a vision and strategy for system-wide coherence and collaboration. It would need high-level leadership with convening power across the United Nations system and defined advisory functions. It would need dedicated personnel and resources to bring organizations together, strategically plan and carry out the range of planned activities in coordination, collaboration, partnership, system-wide assessments and accountability, and develop products and platforms of system-wide value and benefit. It would provide a platform for working across organizations to engage external partners and build alliances. This mechanism and function needs to draw on the lessons from the successes and shortcomings of identical coordination mechanisms in the United Nations system that have been established in the past by the General Assembly or the United Nations Secretary-General. One critical factor for success is getting the support of the various United Nations system organizations.

183. Recommendation 4 above would enhance strategic and system-wide coordination, cooperation and collaboration in joint efforts that would eventually lead to coherence for effective and collective impact in addressing racism and racial discrimination across the system. As well as addressing the immediate needs of organizations, the recommendation also addresses the needs expressed in the above paragraphs for the continuous, longer-term changes and transformations needed to ensure the coherence, impact, sustainability and relevance of the United Nations systems in addressing racism and racial discrimination.

## Annex I

### **Mandates and legal instruments adopted in the United Nations system to address racism and racial discrimination<sup>1</sup>**

Article 1 (3) of the Charter of the United Nations states that one of the purposes of the United Nations is: “To achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion”. Throughout its history, the United Nations has worked for human rights and the eradication of racism and racial discrimination around the world. Following the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination was the first of the major international agreements on human rights adopted by the General Assembly. It was adopted in 1965 and entered into force in 1969. Its implementation is monitored by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

In addition to the ongoing work of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, special procedures of the Human Rights Council also monitor this topic, including in particular, the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent.<sup>2</sup>

Over time, the United Nations has also held conferences dedicated to this topic, including the World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, held in Geneva, from 14 to 25 August 1978,<sup>3</sup> the Second World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, held in Geneva, from 1 to 12 August 1983,<sup>4</sup> and the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, held in Durban, South Africa, from 31 August to 8 September 2001.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to conferences, certain observances have been named, including:

- International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March)
- International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade (25 March)
- Nelson Mandela International Day (18 July)
- UNESCO International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition (23 August)
- Week of Solidarity with the Peoples Struggling against Racism and Racial Discrimination (21–27 March)
- International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (1971)
- International Anti-Apartheid Year (1978/79)
- International Year of Mobilization against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (2001)
- International Year to Commemorate the Struggle against Slavery and its Abolition (2004)
- International Year for People of African Descent (2011)

<sup>1</sup> See <https://ask.un.org/faq/306811>.

<sup>2</sup> See also <https://libraryresources.unog.ch/specialhumanrights>.

<sup>3</sup> A/CONF.92/40.

<sup>4</sup> A/CONF.119/26 and A/CONF.119/26.Corr.1.

<sup>5</sup> A/CONF.189/12 and A/CONF.189/12/Corr.1.

- Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (1973–1982)
- Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (1983–1993)
- Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination: (1993–2003)
- International Decade for People of African Descent (2015–2024)

Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance are complex topics that intersect with many other issues on the United Nations agenda. Additional related information can be found at the following sources:

- Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights web pages on racism<sup>6</sup> and minorities<sup>7</sup>
- Department of Economic and Social Affairs web page on Indigenous Peoples<sup>8</sup>
- [Sustainable Development Goals](#) website<sup>9</sup>
- Dag Hammarskjöld Library research guides on development<sup>10</sup> and decolonization<sup>11</sup>
- United Nations Office at Geneva Library and Archives research guide on people of African descent<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> See <https://previous.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Racism/Pages/Index.aspx>.

<sup>7</sup> See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/minorities>.

<sup>8</sup> See <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouseoples/>.

<sup>9</sup> See <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>.

<sup>10</sup> See <https://research.un.org/en/docs/dev/>.

<sup>11</sup> See <https://research.un.org/en/docs/decolonization>.

<sup>12</sup> See <https://libraryresources.unog.ch/africandescent>.

## Annex II

### Excerpts from legal and policy instruments on race, racism and racial discrimination

#### 1. Charter of the United Nations (1945)

The [Charter of the United Nations](#) is the founding document of the United Nations. It was signed on 26 June 1945, in San Francisco, at the conclusion of the United Nations Conference on International Organization and came into force on 24 October 1945.

The United Nations can take action on a wide variety of issues owing to its unique international character and the powers vested in its Charter, which is considered an international treaty.

As such, the Charter of the United Nations is an instrument of international law, and United Nations Member States are bound by it. The Charter codifies the major principles of international relations,

The purposes of the United Nations are:

3. “To achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion”; and

“The United Nations shall place no restrictions on the eligibility of men and women to participate in any capacity and under conditions of equality in its principal and subsidiary organs”.

#### 2. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (General Assembly resolution 217 A) (1948)

The [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) is a milestone document in the history of human rights. Drafted by representatives with different legal and cultural backgrounds from all regions of the world, the Declaration was proclaimed by the General Assembly in Paris on 10 December 1948 (General Assembly resolution 217 A) as a common standard of achievements for all peoples and all nations. It sets out, for the first time, fundamental human rights to be universally protected and it has been translated into over 500 languages. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is widely recognized as having inspired, and paved the way for, the adoption of more than 70 human rights treaties, applied today on a permanent basis at the global and regional levels (all containing references to it in their preambles).

“Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

...

Now, therefore,

The General Assembly,

Proclaims this Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.”

**3. Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice (1978)**

“The General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, meeting at Paris at its twentieth session, from 24 October to 28 November 1978,

Whereas it is stated in the Preamble to the Constitution of UNESCO, adopted on 16 November 1945, that “the great and terrible war which has now ended was a war made possible by the denial of the democratic principles of the dignity, equality and mutual respect of men, and by the propagation, in their place, through ignorance and prejudice, of the doctrine of the inequality of men and races”, and whereas, according to Article 1 of the said Constitution, the purpose of UNESCO “is to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations”,

...

Mindful of the process of decolonization and other historical changes which have led most of the peoples formerly under foreign rule to recover their sovereignty, making the international community a universal and diversified whole and creating new opportunities of eradicating the scourge of racism and of putting an end to its odious manifestations in all aspects of social and political life, both nationally and internationally,

Convinced that the essential unity of the human race and consequently the fundamental equality of all human beings and all peoples, recognized in the loftiest expressions of philosophy, morality and religion, reflect an ideal towards which ethics and science are converging today,

Convinced that all peoples and all human groups, whatever their composition or ethnic origin, contribute according to their own genius to the progress of the civilizations and cultures which, in their plurality and as a result of their interpenetration, constitute the common heritage of mankind,

...

Noting with the gravest concern that racism, racial discrimination, colonialism and apartheid continue to afflict the world in ever-changing forms, as a result both of the continuation of legislative provisions and government and administrative practices contrary to the principles of human rights and also of the continued existence of political and social structures, and of relationships and attitudes, characterized by injustice and contempt for human beings and leading to the exclusion, humiliation and exploitation, or to the forced assimilation, of the members of disadvantaged groups,

...

**Article 1**

1. All human beings belong to a single species and are descended from a common stock. They are born equal in dignity and rights and all form an integral part of humanity.

2. All individuals and groups have the right to be different, to consider themselves as different and to be regarded as such. However, the diversity of life styles and the right to be different may not, in any circumstances, serve as a pretext for racial prejudice; they may not justify either in law or in fact any discriminatory practice whatsoever, nor provide a ground for the policy of apartheid, which is the extreme form of racism.

...

**Article 2**

1. Any theory which involves the claim that racial or ethnic groups are inherently superior or inferior, thus implying that some would be entitled to dominate or eliminate others, presumed to be inferior, or which bases value judgements on racial differentiation, has no scientific foundation and is contrary to the moral and ethical principles of humanity.

2. Racism includes racist ideologies, prejudiced attitudes, discriminatory behaviour, structural arrangements and institutionalized practices resulting in racial inequality as well as the fallacious notion that discriminatory relations between groups are morally and scientifically justifiable; it is reflected in discriminatory provisions in legislation or regulations and discriminatory practices as well as in anti-social beliefs and acts; it hinders the development of its victims, perverts those who practice it, divides nations internally, impedes international co-operation and gives rise to political tensions between peoples; it is contrary to the fundamental principles of international law and, consequently, seriously disturbs international peace and security.

...

#### Article 3

Any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, ethnic or national origin or religious intolerance motivated by racist considerations, which destroys or compromises the sovereign equality of States and the right of peoples to self-determination, or which limits in an arbitrary or discriminatory manner the right of every human being and group to full development is incompatible with the requirements of an international order which is just and guarantees respect for human rights; the right to full development implies equal access to the means of personal and collective advancement and fulfilment in a climate of respect for the values of civilizations and cultures, both national and world-wide.

#### Article 4

1. Any restriction on the complete self-fulfilment of human beings and free communication between them which is based on racial or ethnic considerations is contrary to the principle of equality in dignity and rights; it cannot be admitted.

2. One of the most serious violations of this principle is represented by apartheid, which, like genocide, is a crime against humanity, and gravely disturbs international peace and security.

3. Other policies and practices of racial segregation and discrimination constitute crimes against the conscience and dignity of mankind and may lead to political tensions and gravely endanger international peace and security.”

#### **4. International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965)**

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Adopted and opened for signature and ratification by General Assembly resolution 2106 (XX) of 21 December 1965, entered into force on 4 January 1969, in accordance with article 19.

“In this Convention, the term “racial discrimination” shall mean any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, 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.”

“In compliance with the fundamental obligations laid down in article 2 of this Convention, States Parties undertake to prohibit and to eliminate racial discrimination in all its forms and to guarantee the right of everyone, without distinction as to race, colour, or national or ethnic origin, to equality before the law, notably in the enjoyment of the following rights ...”

#### **5. Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (2001)**

Adopted by consensus at the [2001 World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance](#) in Durban, South Africa, the [Durban Declaration and Programme of Action](#) is a comprehensive, action-oriented document that proposes concrete measures to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. It is holistic in its vision, addresses a wide range of issues, and contains far-reaching recommendations and practical measures.

The Durban Declaration and Programme of Action embodies the firm commitment of the international community to tackle racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance at the national, regional and international levels. Recognition that no country can claim to be free of racism, that racism is a global concern, and that tackling it should be a universal effort, is an important achievement. Although the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action is not legally binding, it has a strong moral value and serves as a basis for advocacy efforts worldwide.

**At a glance: the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action**

The Durban Declaration and Programme of Action reasserts the principles of equality and non-discrimination as core human rights, thus transforming victims of discrimination into rights-holders and States into duty bearers.

“2. We recognize that racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance occur on the grounds of race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin and that victims can suffer multiple or aggravated forms of discrimination based on other related grounds such as sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, social origin, property, birth or other status;

2. We recognize and affirm that, at the outset of the third millennium, a global fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and all their abhorrent and evolving forms and manifestations is a matter of priority for the international community, and that this Conference offers a unique and historic opportunity for assessing and identifying all dimensions of those devastating evils of humanity with a view to their total elimination through, inter alia, the initiation of innovative and holistic approaches and the strengthening and enhancement of practical and effective measures at the national, regional and international levels”;

Excerpt:

“No country can claim to be free of racism, racism is a global concern, and tackling it requires a universal effort.”

**6. ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998, amended 2022)**

The [ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work](#), adopted in 1998 and amended in 2022, is an expression of commitment by governments, employer’s and worker’s organizations to uphold basic human values, values that are vital to our social and economic lives. It affirms the obligations and commitments that are inherent in membership of the ILO:

“The International Labour Conference,

...

2. Declares that all Members, even if they have not ratified the Conventions in question, have an obligation, arising from the very fact of membership in the Organization, to respect, to promote and to realize, in good faith and in accordance with the Constitution, the principles concerning the fundamental rights which are the subject of those Conventions, namely:

(a) freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

(b) the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour;

(c) the effective abolition of child labour;

(d) the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation;  
and

(e) a safe and healthy working environment.”

**7. Declaration of Principles on Tolerance (1995)**

(Adopted and proclaimed by Member States of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Paris, France, 16 November 1995)



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*“The Member States of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, meeting in Paris at the twenty-eighth session of the General Conference, from 25 October to 16 November 1995.*

...

*Recalling also* that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirms that ‘Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion’ (Article 18), ‘of opinion and expression’ (Article 19), and that education ‘should promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups’ (Article 26),

*Noting* relevant international instruments including:

...

*Bearing in mind* the objectives of the Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, the World Decade for Human Rights Education, and the International Decade of the World’s Indigenous People,

...

*Emphasizing* the responsibilities of Member States to develop and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, gender, language, national origin, religion or disability, and to combat intolerance,

**Adopt and solemnly proclaim this Declaration of Principles on Tolerance**

*Resolving* to take all positive measures necessary to promote tolerance in our societies, because tolerance is not only a cherished principle, but also a necessity for peace and for the economic and social advancement of all peoples”.

## Annex III

### Description of concepts<sup>1</sup>

**Race** is described as a diamond by John Powell because of its multifaceted and complex nature. Its value and meaning are social constructs, and the assignment of value and meaning have concrete ramifications on people's lives. It is thus described as a socially constructed way of judging, categorizing, casting and creating differences among people based typically on observable features (phenotypes), such as skin colour and physical features/ancestry. There is no scientific basis for or discernible distinction between racial categories. The ideology of race has become embedded in our identities, institutions and culture, and is used as a basis for discrimination and domination.

Two predominant facets for self-identification in the United Nations system are: (a) phenotype (colour); and (b) descent (geographical/ethnic origin) and cultural heritage. These two factors provide a basis for self-identification. This is important for analysis, accountability, policymaking, and improvement.

**Racial discrimination**, according to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1969), means "any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, 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".

*Note:* For the purposes of this review and this survey, the term "racial discrimination" is utilized for the topic of focus. Where the word "discrimination" is used alone, it refers to all forms of discrimination.

**Racism** is: (a) a belief that race is a fundamental determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race; and (b) the systemic oppression of a racial group to the social, economic, and political advantage of another. The concept of racism is widely thought of as simply personal prejudice, but in fact, it is a complex system of racial hierarchies and inequities. At the micro level or individual level of racism are internalized and interpersonal forms of racism and racial discrimination. At the meso and macro level of racism, we look beyond the individuals to the broader dynamics, including institutional and structural racism.

#### Manifestations of racism and racial discrimination

JIU recognizes the multidimensional and interactive nature of the various levels and forms of racism and racial discrimination. Transformative change requires the various forms and configurations to be understood and addressed. The review covers all forms of racism and racial discrimination. (See figure I on "Illustration of racism at micro, meso, macro and supra macro levels" at the end of the definitions.)

- **Systemic racialization** describes a dynamic system that produces and replicates racial ideologies, identities and inequities. Systemic racialization is the well-institutionalized pattern of discrimination that cuts across the major political, economic and social organizations in a society. Public attention to racism is generally focused on the symptoms (such as the use of a racist slur by an individual) rather than the system of racial inequality.
- **Micro and individual level forms of racism:**

**Internalized racism** describes the private racial beliefs held by and within individuals. The way we absorb social messages about race and adopt them as personal beliefs, biases and prejudices are all within the realm of internalized racism. For people of colour, internalized oppression can involve believing in negative messages about

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<sup>1</sup> Drawn from various sources both United Nations and the scholarly literature referenced in this note and in bibliography in complementary file.

oneself or one's racial group. For white people, internalized privilege can involve feeling a sense of superiority and entitlement or holding negative beliefs about people of colour.

Like two sides of the same coin, racial privilege describes race-based advantages and preferential treatment based on skin colour, while racial oppression refers to race-based disadvantages, discrimination, and exploitation.

**Interpersonal racism** is how our private beliefs about race become public when we interact with others. When we act upon our prejudices or unconscious bias – whether intentionally, visibly, verbally or not – we engage in interpersonal racism. Interpersonal racism also can be willful and overt, taking the form of bigotry, hate speech or racial violence.

- **Meso and institutional level forms of racism in policies, processes, procedures and practices, or institutional rules:**

**Institutional racism** is racial inequity within institutions and systems of power, such as places of employment, government agencies and social services. It can take the form of unfair policies and practices, discriminatory treatment and inequitable opportunities and outcomes. This is indicative of the collective failure of an organization to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviours that amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping that disadvantage minority ethnic people.

- **Macro or structural level forms of racism – the structural and underlying (substrata) dynamic and cumulative and durable framework of operation:**

**Structural racism (or structural racialization)** is racial bias across institutions and society. It describes the cumulative and compounding effects of an array of factors that systematically privilege white people and disadvantage people of colour, race or ethnic group. Since the word “racism” is often understood as a conscious belief, “racialization” may be a better way to describe a process that does not require intentionality. Race equity expert John A. Powell writes: ‘Racialization’ connotes a process rather than a static event. It underscores the fluid and dynamic nature of race. ‘Structural racialization’ is a set of processes that may generate disparities or depress life outcomes without any racist actors.’ Structural racism in the United Nations system is tied to the foundations of the United Nations system, its funding system and the nature of power asymmetries between donor and recipient countries.

**Harassment** is defined as unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.<sup>2</sup>

Harassment is any unwelcome conduct that might reasonably be expected or perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another person, when such conduct interferes with work or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Harassment may take the form of words, gestures or actions which tend to annoy, alarm, abuse, demean, intimidate, belittle, humiliate or embarrass another person. Harassment may be directed at one or more persons based on a shared characteristic or trait, as set out in section 1.2 above. Harassment normally implies a series of incidents.

**Racial harassment** occurs where a person is subject to physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct or other conduct based on race that undermines their dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile or humiliating working environment for the recipient. Moreover, the intersection of factors such as race, religion, gender or disability increases the risk of harassment, particularly in respect of young women and from a racial or minority group.

<sup>2</sup> Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, “Harassment and bullying at work” (London, 2022).

Racial harassment is an incident or a series of incidents intended or likely to intimidate, offend or harm an individual or group because of their ethnic origin, colour, race, religion or nationality, and a racist incident is any incident that is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person. Such behaviour may include:

- Derogatory name calling;
- Verbal threats, insults and racist jokes;
- Display of racially offensive material;
- Exclusion from normal workplace conversation or activities;
- Physical attacks;
- Encouraging others to commit any such acts.

**Abuse of authority** is the improper use of a position of influence, power or authority against another person. This is particularly serious when a person uses their influence, power or authority to improperly influence the career or employment conditions of another, including, but not limited to, appointment, assignment, contract renewal, performance evaluation, working conditions or promotion. Abuse of authority may also include conduct that creates a hostile or offensive work environment, which includes, but is not limited to, the use of intimidation, threats, blackmail or coercion. Discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, are particularly serious when accompanied by abuse of authority.

**Exploitation** is an extractive relationship akin to slavery or servitude in the workplace. It occurs when there is commodification of people and a failure to recognize their labour outputs and give due credit. Instead, credit is given to another or to oneself. It is a form of removal of reward and incentive for productivity.

**Racial equality** means ensuring that all racial groups have equal rights, responsibilities, opportunities and access to resources.

**Racial equity** ensures that each racial group receives what it needs for success, with consideration given to structural and historical barriers that affect the desired outcomes.

Racial equity, therefore, includes work to address the root causes of inequities, not just their manifestation, and the elimination of policies, practices, attitudes and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them. Equity is thus defined as the state, quality or ideal of being just, impartial and fair. The concept of equity is synonymous with fairness and justice. It is helpful to think of equity as not simply a desired state of affairs or a lofty value. To be achieved and sustained, equity needs to be thought of as a structural and systemic concept.

**Systematic equity** is a complex combination of interrelated elements consciously designed to create, support and sustain social justice. It is a robust system and dynamic process that reinforces and replicates equitable ideas, power, resources, strategies, conditions, habits and outcomes.

**Inclusion and belongingness** is the action or state of including or being included within a group or structure. More than simply diversity and numerical representation, inclusion involves authentic and empowered participation and a true sense of belonging.

**Racial justice** is the systematic fair treatment of people of all races that results in equitable opportunities and outcomes for everyone. All people are able to achieve their full potential in life, regardless of race, ethnicity or the community in which they live. Racial justice – or racial equity – goes beyond “anti-racism.” It is not just about what we are against, but also what we are for. A “racial justice” framework can move us from a reactive posture to a more powerful, proactive, and even preventative approach.

**Practice** is the description of the way in which professionals work within their profession in order to carry out a specific task. **Best practice** is the description of the best way of working based on the situation in hand. Such a description can be used by (future) professionals. The term ‘good practice’ is also in use.

**Senior leadership/senior leaders** are those who have primary responsibility for determining the strategy and direction of the secretariat of your entity, from the executive heads (Secretary-General/Director General/Executive Director) to heads of entities, may it be Heads of Departments, Offices, or Missions, such as Under-Secretaries-General and Assistant Secretaries-General or Directors, as appropriate.

**Annex IV**

**Data sources and methods for ensuring validity and reliability in the assessment of racism and racial discrimination**

<p>Data sources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JIU common system-wide survey administered to the personnel of 21 JIU participating organizations.</li> <li>• Human resources data from the CEB.</li> <li>• JIU organization-level questionnaire (OLQ) on race groupings (OLQ 24-25 26 31-35) and on macro forms: pillar 2, component 2.4 (OLQ 189-195), pillar 6 (OLQ 189 194).</li> </ul>
<p>Analyses and confidence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Univariate and bivariate analysis.</li> <li>• Exploratory/confirmatory factor analysis for constructs.</li> <li>• Multilevel modelling.</li> <li>• Logistic models.</li> <li>• Possible biases addressed: selection bias through representativeness with CEB data.</li> </ul>
<p>Confirmatory evidence (concurrent and criterion validity)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surveys of single organizations, inter-agency bodies or personnel resource groups (e.g. surveys on racism and racial discrimination; global surveys, staff engagement surveys).</li> <li>• Information provided by organizations under the organization-level questionnaire and through assessments of organizational performance, under the project benchmarking framework, and the stage of development.</li> </ul>
<p>Comparison of findings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multilateral organizations.</li> <li>• Public and private sector.</li> </ul>

**Annex V****Members of the advisory group for the project (ad hoc)**

Name of expert	Institution/Organization
1 Yin C. Paradies	Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia, and Chair in Race Relations and Indigenous Knowledges and Culture Coordinator, Centre of Citizenship and Globalisation Deakin University Victoria, Australia
2 Brigid Trenerry	Interdisciplinary social science researcher Research Fellow at the Lee Kuan Yew Centre for Innovative Cities Singapore University of Technology and Design Singapore
3 Derek R. Avery	C. T. Bauer Chair of Inclusive Leadership Bauer College of Business University of Houston – a Carnegie-designated Tier One public research university Texas, United States of America
4 Sabrina D’Andrea	Associate Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Officer United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Vienna
5 Mohamed Mahmoud Mohamedou	Deputy Director of the Graduate Institute, Professor of International History and Politics and Director of Executive Education Geneva Graduate Institute Geneva
6 Niraj Dawadi	Human Rights Officer and Secretary of the United Nations Permanent Forum on People of African Descent, Anti-Racial Discrimination Section, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Geneva
7 Clarence Lusane	Director, International Affairs majors and program, Interdisciplinary Studies Howard University United States of America
8 Indran A. Naidoo	Director, Independent Office of Evaluation International Fund for Agricultural Development Rome
9 Daniel Hirschman	Assistant Professor of Sociology, Department of Sociology Cornell University New York

Name of expert	Institution/Organization
10 Paria Rajai	Founder and CEO ModelExpand United States of America
11 Daniel Seymour	Director, Strategic Partnerships United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) New York
12 Martin Reynolds	Senior Lecturer in Systems Thinking, Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics School of Engineering and Innovation Open University United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
13 Alan Richter	President QED Consulting New York



## Annex VI

### Forms and configurations of racism and racial discrimination in the United Nations system: the constructs derived from factor analysis (breakdown of constructs by race)

The table below provides the mean score of the five constructs by race. The construct “microaggression” is measured on a scale from 1 to 4 where respondents were asked how often they experienced/witnessed an incident of microaggression, where 1 means “Never” and 4 means “Frequently”. The constructs “belongingness/visibility”, “equality of opportunity”, “Support from senior leadership” and “organizational intolerance of racism and racial discrimination” are measured on a scale from 1 to 5. These constructs consist of several Likert scale items where respondents were asked to agree or disagree with relevant statements, where 1 means “Strongly disagree” and 5 “Strongly Agree”. We can see all races score poorly compared to white.

	<i>Microaggression</i>	<i>Belongingness/visibility</i>	<i>Equality of opportunity</i>	<i>Support from senior leadership</i>	<i>Organizational intolerance of racism and racial discrimination</i>
White/Caucasian	1.54	2.02	3.47	3.28	3.46
Black/African descent	1.92	2.65	2.98	3.04	3.11
Central Asian	1.66	2.37	3.38	3.28	3.42
East Asian	1.76	2.62	3.20	3.16	3.27
Hispanic/Latino	1.56	2.15	3.51	3.29	3.43
Indigenous	1.74	2.57	3.18	3.11	3.22
Mixed origin	1.81	2.42	3.17	3.08	3.19
Middle East/North African	1.73	2.48	3.15	3.11	3.27
Other	1.69	2.36	3.24	3.30	3.40
South Asian	1.88	2.65	3.05	3.05	3.15
South-East Asian	1.63	2.48	3.32	3.16	3.27

## Annex VII

### **Senior leadership attributes and competencies critical to addressing racism and racial discrimination (quality criteria from benchmarking framework)**

The following text is an excerpt from the high-impact benchmarking framework. It is based on a value-oriented, results-based and systems-operating framework for managing and achieving organizational effectiveness to address racism and racial discrimination in United Nations system organizations.

#### **Introduction**

The development of the senior leadership attributes is guided by the statement in the CEB leadership framework that the challenges that confront us in the twenty-first century will not be met by mere deference to power, reliance on a shaky status quo or operation in old silos. Rather, they demand a model of leadership that is norm-based, principled, inclusive, accountable, multidimensional, transformational, collaborative and self-applied. That is, a United Nations leadership model.

#### **Important attributes of leadership for addressing racism and racial discrimination**

The following are important leadership attributes that go beyond the general leadership competencies. Some of the attributes are interrelated and not mutually exclusive.

**1. Tone at the top**

It is highlighted that direction-setting and accountability must lie at the top – with leadership. Change starts at the top- responsive, responsible and accountable leadership is important.

**2. Leadership for direction setting and for addressing mega trends from complexity, changing times, and transformations**

- Core aspects of senior leadership include setting direction. A lot has been written about the new senior leadership role to address global mega trends and these include leading through influence, leading more complexity and ambiguity, and managing remotely.
- Leadership competencies such as inclusion, fairness, social responsibility, understanding the role of automation and leading in a network are now part of the leadership manifesto.

**3. Inclusive leadership – Belongingness versus otherness**

- Inclusive leadership drive the process, walks the talk, is engaged through their own behaviors and through behaviors it rewards, encourages, ignores, or sanctions.
- It is about attributes that are significant for diverse environments being able to make maximum use of diverse ideas and perspectives to enhance innovation and expectations for equality of opportunity. Inclusion exists when people feel they are treated fairly, and their uniqueness is appreciated, and they have a sense of belong and a voice in decision-making. This allows workforce to be able to fulfil their potential, contribute to increased productivity and contribute to defined organization results.
- An important consideration of leadership is understanding the difference between inclusion and belongingness. Inclusion implies you are invited and are welcomed to my house. Belongingness implies partnership – we own the house and work together to build it and make it work and a success. The psychological factors behind the two

principles that define an organization culture are important considerations for the leadership role in enhancing dignity and meaning in work.

- Inclusive leadership entails actions aimed at facilitating belonging and supporting employee uniqueness. ... Leaders should (1) support group members, (2) ensure that justice and equity are part of each member's experience, and (3) provide opportunities for shared decision-making on relevant issues to facilitate belonging. To support uniqueness, they should (a) encourage diverse contributions to the work group and (b) help group members fully offer their unique talents and perspectives.

#### **4. Psychological safety**

One other important element in an environment lacking in trust is the importance of leaders' behaviors that contribute to psychological safety of individuals. This refers to individual's perception of consequences of taking interpersonal risk in the work environment. It describes a perception that people are comfortable being themselves, feel able to show and employ one's self and capabilities without fear of negative consequences to self-image, status, or career.

#### **5. Empowerment from relationship**

Getting to know and developing relationships with subordinates along with treating them respectfully helps prevent ostracism.

#### **6. Power and privilege**

Racism is born and perpetuated through the misuse of power. Another important factor for leadership in addressing equity is the ability to address white privilege and subtle systems that work to the advantage of white and other privileged groups.

#### **7. Ethical Leadership**

- Leaders have an ethic of critique, justice and care manifested in everyday behaviors and interactions of leadership with staff and among themselves and their governing bodies.
- Ethic of critique – leaders are aware of inequitable social and political arrangements of power and privilege that are legitimated by various structural forces. Who controls? Who legitimizes? Who defines?
- Ethic of justice to address governing of oneself and the workforce- How should we govern ourselves- democracy, authoritarian etc.
- Ethic of care: to deal with the “underside” of administration which includes what do our relationships ask us to do with “those motives that involve racial, sexual, ethnic, and age stereotypes that block the possibility of honest communication”.

#### **8. Communication**

- Speak up against discrimination and racism in the workplace.
- Set tone at the top (statement of zero tolerance and not condone any form).
- Act with immediacy.
- Rights and responsibilities – free speech does not mean free reign.
- Tackling difficult conversations – reaching understanding and encouraging new behaviour.

#### **9. Equity and justice beyond equality**

- Address long practices that limit the career progress and act to reverse the trend and apply justice.

**10. Empowerment and individual accountability**

- Build in the tools of empowerment and give individual the power to drive institutional culture and change (social capital); See CEB leadership framework and competency framework.
- Empowerment and enhance responsibility of employee resource and advocacy groups and staff-led social movements: networks, inter-agency groups, staff regional groups, and staff councils and representative (examples include the informal inter-agency group on anti-racism, the UN People of African Descent (UNPAD), the Young UN Group, the UN-Asia Network for Diversity and Inclusion (UN\_ANDI)).

**11. Enforcement of violations**

Leadership should take action and investigate more cases of racism and racial discrimination within the UN. It will take effective leadership within the various UN specialized agencies to prevent racial discrimination and bring to account groups and individuals responsible for human rights violations.

## Annex VIII

### **Statements made by various executive heads and senior leadership groups of United Nations system organizations against racism and racial discrimination in the world and inside the system**

#### **Preliminary information compiled: information compiled from United Nations system organizations about racism and racial discrimination**

##### **Links and files**

Farhan Haq, Deputy Spokesperson for the United Nations Secretary-General, statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the United Nations Secretary-General - on the rise of violence against Asians, New York, 22 March 2021 (<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/statement-attributable-the-spokesperson-for-the-secretary-general-the-rise-of-violence-against-asians>).

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN-Women, statement on the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, 21 March 2021 (<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2021/3/statement-ed-phumzile-international-day-for-the-elimination-of-racial-discrimination>).

Henrietta Fore, Executive Director of UNICEF, statement on the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, 20 March 2021 (<https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/statement-unicef-executive-director-henrietta-fore-international-day-elimination>).

Lisa Peterson, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, United States Mission to International Organizations in Geneva, joint statement on countering racism and racial discrimination delivered at the 46th Session of the Human Rights Council, Item 9 General Debate, Geneva, 19 March 2021 (<https://geneva.usmission.gov/2021/03/19/joint-statement-on-racism/>).

António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General of the United Nations, statement on the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, 19 March 2021 (<https://www.un.org/press/en/2021/sghsm20637.doc.htm>).

António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General of the United Nations, statement on the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, 17 March 2021 (<https://press.un.org/en/2021/sghsm20631.doc.htm>).

United Nations Office at Geneva, “Entrenched harms caused by racism over generations have been magnified by COVID-19, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights tells the Human Rights Council”, 12 March 2021 (<https://www.un Geneva.org/en/news-media/meeting-summary/2021/03/afternoon-entrenched-harms-caused-racism-over-generations-have>).

United Nations, “United Nations will host online events focused on ending racism, injustices to mark International Remembrance Day for Transatlantic Slave Trade Victims, 4-25 March”, 24 February 2021 (<https://www.un.org/press/en/2021/note6541.doc.htm>).

António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General of the United Nations, statement to the Human Rights Council panel on “Fight against Racism and Discrimination 20 Years after the Adoption of the Durban Declaration and Plan of Action”, 22 February 2021 (<https://www.un.org/press/en/2021/sghsm20592.doc.htm>).

Munir Akram, President of the Economic and Social Council, “Reimagining Equality: Eliminating racism, xenophobia and discrimination for all in the Decade of Action for the SDGs”, statement to the Economic and Social Council, 18 February 2021 (<https://www.un.org/ecosoc/sites/www.un.org.ecosoc/files/files/en/president/2021/statement-ecosoc-president-18-February-2021.pdf>).

Presidential statement on the occasion of the Special Ministerial Meeting of the Economic and Social Council on “Reimagining Equality: Eliminating racism, xenophobia and discrimination for all in the decade of action for the SDGs, 18 February 2021 (<https://www.un.org/ecosoc/sites/www.un.org.ecosoc/files/files/en/president/2021/presidential-statement-18-february-2021.pdf>).

António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General of the United Nations, statement to the Special Ministerial Meeting of the Economic and Social Council on “Reimagining Equality: Eliminating Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination for All in the Decade of Action for the SDGs”, 18 February 2021, (<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/speeches/2021-02-18/remarks-2021-ecosoc-eliminating-racism-xenophobia-and-discrimination-meeting>).

Panel event entitled “Racism at the workplace: what is racism?”, part of the series “Conversations about Racism in the Workplace”, 3 February 2021.

António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General of the United Nations, remarks on racism in the workplace, 19 November 2020 (<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2020-11-19/secretary-generals-remarks-racism-the-workplace>).

Rome-based agencies, joint statement on racism, Fourth Informal Joint Meeting of the FAO Council, IFAD Executive Board and WFP Executive Board, Rome, 12 October 2020 (<https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/1e7aee03247a418eb5a8f17da4cda5fe/download/>).

Principals of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, statement on racism and racial discrimination in the humanitarian sector, 10 September 2020 (<https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/inter-agency-standing-committee/statement-principals-inter-agency-standing-committee-iasc-racism>).

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## Annex IX

### Resilience in organizations and among personnel: indicators important to addressing racism and racial discrimination

*Note:* The quality criteria come from the JIU benchmarking framework for addressing racism and racial discrimination. For references, see JIU concept note on agility, adaptability and resilience.

#### Empowerment for self-governance and accountability – self, interpersonal, mutual, collective

- Enhancing devolved and responsive decision-making. This requires an organizational structure where people have the authority to make decisions directly linked to their work or day-to-day interactions and where higher authority can be obtained quickly and without excessive bureaucracy when needed. This is the same as the empowerment of the workforce to assume a leadership and self-governance role (as espoused in the CEB leadership framework).

#### Education

- In order to address day-to-day interactions and relationship management, it is necessary for the workforce to have:
  - (a) a descent level of education about racism and racial discrimination and their origins, root causes and evolutionary nature; and
  - (b) education about world cultures and civilizations and the histories of nations.

#### Cognition, mastery and control of the environment and consideration of VUCA\* as a dominant environmental feature

- The development of principles and abilities to guide:
  - (a) changing mindsets for responsibility, self-directed action, self-accountability and collective accountability;
  - (b) different forms of intelligence needed for mastery and control of the environment;
  - (c) different cognitive styles for operations in various contexts and the ability to multi-contextualize; and
  - (d) enhanced meta-cognitive and learning to acquire new abilities.

\* *VUCA means “volatile, unpredictable, complex and ambiguous”*

#### Socio-emotive factors

- Understanding fear, and reactive and defensive behaviours; developing socio-emotive intelligence and mindfulness, generativity and self-actualization; understanding power, control, privilege, discrimination, auto-accountability and honesty.

#### Engagement and mutual support

- Sensing (see the Cynefin model), surfacing and developing mutually acceptable solutions on the spot, and sharing good practice solutions on communication platforms;
- Self-resilience versus adaptation: self-development means bouncing back and continuing to work, rather than staying in disruptive or stale environments.

#### Survival and management skills

- Understanding power, control and discrimination, and the development of skills relating to negotiation, how to influence and how not to co-opt.

- Empowering those targeted or those who experience racism, and build their resilience in the face of it.
- Building the resilience of those vulnerable to racism: acknowledging racism, learning about emotional distancing, staying calm and positive, having a strong sense of identity, seeking support from friends and family and challenging racism.

### **Third party role and responsibility**

The role of bystanders as witnesses to acts of racism and racial discrimination (include good examples).

### **Structural support**

- Flattened hierarchical structures, the decentralization of power and structural fluidity.
- The development of platforms for sharing experiences and developing principles for addressing racism and racial discrimination.
- Encourage and support informal networks and groups in addressing racism and racial discrimination, as well as other forms of discrimination, and in addressing emergent challenges.

### **Agility**

- The level of general agility of organizations or the capacity for agility and resilience in addressing the following key features and pillars as an effective environmental condition for anti-racism. A culture of creativity and innovation, empowerment, tolerance of difference and ambiguity, vision, change management, organizational communication, market analysis and response, operations management, flattened hierarchical structures and decentralization of power and structural fluidity and a learning organization that believes in continuous learning, collective learning, collaboration, knowledge sharing and a commitment to lifelong learning.

## Annex X

### Self-development initiatives for personnel to address racism and racial discrimination

Analysis of personnel responses to the question:

- What have you done to enhance your own awareness, knowledge and understanding of racism and racial discrimination? Please describe.

The summary is based on the of types of responses from a set of 3,941 responses.

1. Respondents reported educating themselves on topics related to racism and racial discrimination as the main activity to enhance their awareness, knowledge, and understanding of racism and racial discrimination.

Activities include:

- reading (1,032), training (549), learning (294), taking courses (252), study/studying (106), education (64).
2. Another trend concerns communication, with the words “discuss” (230) and “talk about” (106).

The following are the quality indicators defined in the benchmarking framework that has been developed on the basis of: (a) empirical evidence that determines methods for self-empowerment; (b) information from dialogues with various members of inter-agency and thematic groups that, among other things, provide a safe space; and (c) information in chat boxes during seminars, webinars and dialogue sessions (as part of organization ethnography).

- Individual self-empowerment: self-empowerment for voice, action, control and responsibility (individual and as part of a support or reference group).
- Individual strategy for the mastery of the environment and power and control: targeted individual actions to prevent or address racism and racial discrimination; the art of mastery of the environment and intelligence; clarity of goals; the art of war; mastery of chess; what they do not teach you at Harvard Business School; the talk; developing fall back mechanisms or shock absorbers and resilience.
- Understanding the self and decolonization of the mind.
- Introspection and consideration of one’s own thought patterns (meta-cognition) and thinking.
- Getting people to try to think algorithmically helps to offset any racial biases they may hold, i.e. breaking problems down and building up the solution. Our natural tendency as developers is to build the solution first.
- Use of the Cynefin model for sensing: making decisions in a complex context and in ways that take into account the perspectives of others.
- Building relationships: use of non-work social integration efforts: integration experiences across racial lines are often unsuccessful (Dumas et al., 2013) and there is a need to be conscious about creating the right kind of social interactions.
- Developing one’s own safe space and support mechanism, including participation with personnel resources or in special interest groups.
- Defence mechanisms and alternative systems for perseverance: understanding the rules of the game and how to position oneself (to support, to offer service, to partner) and having strategies to develop engagement (an intentional process) and mastery of the environment.
- Advocacy, voice, collective responsibility and impact. This involves through active membership in personnel resources and special interest groups or through staff representative associations.

- Seeking out mentors and sponsors: breakthrough leadership<sup>1</sup>
- Ongoing processes, support mechanisms and shock absorbers (mentors, coaches etc.), and alliances.
- High-quality mentors and supportive colleagues buffer the negative effects of perceived racism.
- The involvement and ownership of personnel facilitate a positive relationship between racial diversity and organizational commitment/performance. What role are you playing in supporting your organization or the United Nations system in addressing racism and racial discrimination?

Respondents mentioned speaking up against racism, reporting it, increasing awareness, discussing the issue, and organizing or participating in training.

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<sup>1</sup> Mindy Lowy, “Men must take an active role in closing the gender gap in corporate leadership”, Fast Company, 19 July 2019. Available at <https://www.fastcompany.com/90378055/men-must-take-an-active-role-in-closing-the-gender-gap-incorporate-leadership>.

## Annex XI

### Overview of actions to be taken by participating organizations on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit

		Intended impact	<i>United Nations, its funds and programmes</i>															<i>Specialized agencies and IAEA</i>											
			United Nations	UNAIDS	UNCTAD	ITC	UNDP	UNEP	UNFPA	UN-Habitat	UNHCR	UNICEF	UNODC	UNOPS	UNRWA	UN-Women	WFP	FAO	IAEA	ICAO	ILO	IMO	ITU	UNESCO	UNIDO	UNWTO	UPU	WHO	WIPO
Note	For action		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	For information		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recommendation 1	<b>a</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>
Recommendation 2	<b>f</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>
Recommendation 3	<b>f</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>
Recommendation 4	<b>c</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>
Recommendation 5	<b>a</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>
Recommendation 6	<b>f</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>

#### Legend:

- L:** Recommendation for decision by legislative organ
- E:** Recommendation for action by executive head
- : Recommendation does not require action by this organization

#### Intended impact:

- a:** enhanced transparency and accountability; **b:** dissemination of good/best practices; **c:** enhanced coordination and cooperation; **d:** strengthened coherence and harmonization; **e:** enhanced control and compliance; **f:** enhanced effectiveness; **g:** significant financial savings; **h:** enhanced efficiency; **i:** other.