Justification Statement

Resolution on Racism and Racial Discrimination:
A Policy Statement in Support of the goals of
The World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination,
Xenophobia and Related Intolerance

Relevance to Psychology, and Psychologists and Importance to Psychology or to Society as a Whole

The convening of the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCAR) to be held in Durban, South Africa in August/September 2001, has been preceded by 50 years of activity by the United Nations (UN) and the world community to eradicate all forms of racism and racial discrimination. In fact, one of the guiding principles of the UN, created in 1945 at the end of World War II, is the principle of non-discrimination on the grounds of race. This principle is clearly established in the preamble of the Charter of the UN and a number of its human rights declarations and conventions, especially the 1965 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

Despite continuing efforts by the international community, racial discrimination, ethno-political conflicts and violence persist throughout the world. In recent years, in addition to interstate conflicts, the world has witnessed intra-state campaigns of ethnic cleansing, frequently amounting to genocidal proportions and resulting in the destruction of social-political economies of entire nations. The decision to convene the WCAR reflects both international concern for the rise in the incidents of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance as well as recognition of the challenges and opportunities in combating these phenomena in an increasingly globalized world. The objectives of the Conference are:

1. To review progress made in the fight against racism and racial discrimination, in particular since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and to reappraise the obstacles to progress and to identify ways to overcome them;

2. To consider ways and means to better ensure the application of existing standards and their implementation to combat racism and racial discrimination;

3. To increase the level of awareness about the scourge of racism and racial discrimination;

4. To formulate concrete recommendations on ways to increase the effectiveness of the activities and mechanisms of the UN through programs aimed at combating racism and racial discrimination;

5. To review the political, historical, economic, social, cultural and other factors leading to racism and racial discrimination;

6. To review the political, historical, economic, social, cultural and other factors leading to racism and racial discrimination;

7. To formulate concrete recommendations to further action-oriented national, regional and international measures aimed at combating all forms of racism and racial discrimination; and

8. To draw up concrete recommendations to ensure that the UN has the necessary resources for its activities to combat racism and racial discrimination.

In consideration of the current and historical contexts and goals of the WCAR, the proposed resolution, as a policy statement in support of the goals of the United Nation's World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance is both relevant and important for the following reasons:

- First, the resolution is consonant with APA's overarching purpose to advance psychology as a science and as a profession, dedicated to understanding commonalties and differences in human behavior and promoting human development and welfare. As such, the resolution is intended to serve as a catalyst within APA's national and international membership for reducing interpersonal, institutional and societal sources and consequences of racism.

- Second, the resolution is supported by a vast body of United States and international psychological research, accumulated over more than half a century. Knowledge of human behavioral and psychological principles is of critical importance to fulfilling several of the goals of the WCAR, including the development and implementation of effective national and international policies and programs against racism.

- Third, the resolution seeks to build upon APA's policies and programs against discrimination on the basis of race and APA's efforts to support the struggle against racism and other forms of intolerance.

- Fourth, the resolution is consistent with APA's purposes in seeking accreditation as a non-governmental organization (NGO) at the United Nations (UN). Under the guidelines for NGO participation, APA shares the commitment with other accredited NGOs to disseminate information about the UN and global issues to APA members and affiliates throughout the world and to contribute its expertise and resources toward addressing the challenges of global transformation.

<u>Quality and Quantity of Psychological Data and Conceptualization Relevant to the Resolution</u>

Racism, racial intolerance, and xenophobia have permeated the research agendas of psychologists for decades. For example, psychologists have developed major programs of research focused on such topics as:

- The prevalence of racism, racial intolerance , prejudice and related acts of power, violence, and fear (Hawley & Jackson, 1995; Katz, 1991; Fritzsche, 1994; Schuman, Steeh & Bobo, 1985; Schutte, 1995; Smith, 1974; Sniderman & Piazza, 1993; Thomas, 1995; Katz & Taylor, 1988);
- the insidious nature of their expression (Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986; Kaplan & Rogers, 1994; Rosenbaum, 1992; Baird & Rosenbaum, 1992);

- the measurement of related attitudes, dispositions, and personality (Duckitt, 1993; 1991; Dunbar, 1995; Eisenman, 1993; Kleinpenning & Hagendoorn, 1993; Landrine & Klonoff, 1996; Fazio, Jackson, Dunton, & Williams, 1995);

- and the profound and penetrating impact of these experiences on children (Mane, 1993; Powlishta, Serbin, Doyle, & White, 1994; Boushel, 1994),

- adults (Herbert, 1990), the elderly (Kastenbaum, 1991),

- families (Boyd-Franklin, 1993), schools (Ford, 1990; King, 1991),

- colleges (Farrell & Jones, 1988; Feagin, 1992; McCormack, 1995),

- various cultural groups (Lempert & Monsma, 1994; Deyhle, 1995; Hsai, 1986; Ojanuga, 1993; Ray, 1988, 1990; Roberts, 1988),

- countries of the world (Stones, 1994; Streicker, 1995; Verkuyten & Masson, 1995;Wetherell & Potter, 1992),

- the world of work (Feagin & Imani, 1994; McConahay, 1983; Okocha, 1994; Sidanius, Pratto, Martin, & Stallworth, 1991; Sidanius & Pratto, 1993; Telles, 1994; Yamato, 1994),

- politics (Drew, 1982; Green & Waxman, 1987; Hagen, 1995, Koocher, 1994;Laird, 1994; Moskowitz & Stroh, 1994),

- the legal system (Fukurai, Buler & Krooth, 1991; Goetting, 1985; Lipton, 1983; Pfeifer & Ogloff, 1991),

- the healthcare system (Byrd, 1990; Cully, 1996; Funkhouser, Moser, 1990; Glastra & Kats, 1992),

- mental health (Jones, 1992),

- religion (Herek, 1987; Spaights, 1991),

- the media (Kellner, Hall, Pieterse, Hooks, Rhodes, Ehrenreich, Lipsitz, Bobo, & Gross, 1991) and

- sports (Ashe, 1988; Brooks & Althouse, 1993).

Most studies and other scholarly discourse on the topics of racism, racial intolerance, and xenophobia have focused on the victim, with particular attention given to the impact acts of racial aggression have had on their lives. Contemporary scholarship in this area has increasingly focused on the strengths, growth, and healing of the survivor. The study of perpetrators as individuals or groups who engage in these forms of aggressive experiences have received less, though significant, attention in the literature. Considerably less attention has been devoted to studying the immediate and extended families of the victim, particularly the emotional, psychological and sometimes physiological aftermath that now challenges their lives. The communities wherein the

victims reside may also struggle with the emotional upheaval caused by acts of racism, racial intolerance and xenophobia. Ongoing research that aims at identifying the factors contributing to the successful or less than satisfactory regrouping of the impacted communities seems warranted. Finally, the consequential aftermath experienced by the immediate and extended families and communities of the perpetrators of racial hatred also merits closer psychological investigation.

Likely Degree of Consensus Among APA Constituents

The overwhelming majority of the constituencies of the American Psychological Association are likely to strongly endorse the resolution on Racism and Racial Discrimination… . To a large extent, this is due to the strong psychological research base related to these issues. Early work in social psychology indicated how stereotyping and prejudice lead to the development of racist attitudes and behavior. Social psychologists also provided models of how racist attitudes could be prevented. These and other related psychological research have served to guide and justify APA's involvement in a broad agenda of related activities. For example, APA's former President Martin Seligman, PhD, encouraged APA's involvement in efforts related to ethno-political warfare and peace (which is also an issue of central concern to the Society for the Study of Peace, Conflict and Violence–APA Division 48), while APA former President Richard Suinn, PhD, dedicated the 1999 APA convention to racial and other diversity issues. APA's Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs sponsored a major 1997 mini-convention on Psychology and Racism and a continuing APA National Conversation on Psychology and Racism. Additionally, APA has seeks to eliminate racism and promote diversity within its own organizational structure by promoting the inclusion of ethnic minorities, including establishing an Office and Committee on Ethnic Minority Affairs and the Society for the Psychological Study of Ethnic Minority Issues (APA Division 45). In addition, APA actively seeks to increase the number of ethnic minority psychologists through its sustained support of the APA Minority Fellowship Program for over 25 years. These and other past and ongoing initiatives by APA are evidence of the longstanding importance of issues of racism and anti-racism to psychologists, as well as the broad support and consensus that exist among diverse APA constituencies for the proposed resolution on Racism and Racial Discrimination.

Likelihood of the Resolution Having a Constructive Impact on Public Opinion/Policy, Assessment, Consultation and Training

APA is a global organization (Rosenweig, 1992). Taking a public stand against racism, in all its forms and manifestations, deploring the continuing exploitation of all peoples based upon racial background, can have profound influences upon public opinion. We have learned over the years that through public outreach the APA can play a very constructive role in educating the public (e.g. Feinberg, 2000). Taking a principled stand against the worse of the human experience cannot but help in providing a solid public image and the opportunity for delivering a clear message on the fundamental human values shared by members of APA. In addition to the direct effects in advertising, testimony, public materials, a firm and aggressive stance will also have a positive effect on the development of research and research base that directly attacks the fundamental aspects of the cognitive, social and affective bases in stereotyping, bigotry and prejudice that support individual and interpersonal dimensions of the problem (Aboud & Levy, 1999). In addition, through work that targets the institutional support mechanisms and cultural bases of racism and discrimination (e.g. Jones, 1997), the public stance can help in furthering the nature of empirical research (Aboud & Levy, 1999). Finally, through processes of education and accreditation, the APA can begin to legitimately have training modules and programs that include the ways in which

the fundamental education of psychologist can be influenced to reflect greater attention to the problem of racism and discrimination and their influence on problems of well-being and positive psychological functioning (Boyd-Franklin, 1988; Herrell, Merritt & Kalu, 1998; Pedersen, 2000).

As has been made clear in prior research, ethnic and racial minorities are not the only victims of racism (e.g. Jackson & Inglehart, 1995), and societies in which such bigotry and expressions of hatred are tolerated are in general less successful in providing for the material, social and psychological well-being of all of its citizens (United Nations, 1994). APA can take the lead in thinking about community consultation models that address the needs of the victims of racism and discrimination (Sue, 1991). Similar to the interventions now targeted for schools that are the objects of violence, programs can be designed to address circumstances, like the recent situations in Cincinnati and in New York City involving police killings of unarmed racial minorities (Hawley, Banks, Padilla, Pope-Davis & Schofield, 1995). Workshops at meetings and conventions, special educational programs for continuing education credits, and concern with ways of addressing individual racism and discriminatory practices, are all reasonable and acceptable ways of thinking about maximizing individual well-being (Franklin & Jackson, 1990) and the overall objective of a global psychological organization like the APA (Rosenweig, 1992)

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