

# Child-friendly version of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) and its standards



If you want to see the longer, original text you can visit: <https://ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/cerd.pdf>

# Introduction

**The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)** is a key agreement adopted by countries who have promised to protect everyone from racial discrimination. The Convention explains what racial discrimination is, the human rights standards against it, and the responsibilities of governments. The Convention also applies to protect children from racial discrimination.

## **Good to know!**

### **What is the UN?**

The United Nations or UN was set up in 1945 to keep international peace and security, to develop friendships among nations, to help to solve international problems, to promote respect for human rights, and to encourage countries to work together.

### **What are human rights?**

Human rights are things you can be, do or have because you are human. Human rights belong to everyone, no matter who you are or where you are and they are all equally important (for example, whether the right to life, the right to education or the right to privacy).

# Article 1

## ***Definition of racial discrimination***

Racial discrimination means treating people differently for their race, colour, descent\*, or national or ethnic origin in ways that deny their rights, on purpose or without realising.





## Article 2

### ***State promises to end racial discrimination***

Governments must work to stop and end racial discrimination. No national laws or policies should discriminate, but rather promote inclusion and diversity.

Governments must take special steps to end racial discrimination against specific groups and persons to ensure racial equality.



## Article 3

### *State promises to condemn racial segregation and apartheid\**

Governments must act against any restrictions or separations based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin and take actions to end any such practices in their countries.





## Article 4

### *State promises against racist hate speech*

Governments must call out campaigns and organizations spreading racism and racial discrimination and take actions to stop such activities.

National laws must:

- Punish speeches and violence that encourage or are motivated by racism and racial discrimination.
- Stop organizations and activities that encourage racial discrimination.
- Not allow public bodies\* to encourage racial discrimination.

## Article 5

### *Human rights protected under the Convention*

Governments must take actions to make sure everyone can enjoy human rights and freedoms without racial discrimination. This includes civil and political rights as well as economic, social and cultural rights.

For example, the right to health, the right to take part in a protest, the right to education, the right to housing, the right to be protected from violence, and the right to life.





## Article 6

### *Remedies for victims of racial discrimination*

Governments must make sure all victims of racial discrimination can access protection and relief, such as through courts and public bodies.





## Article 7

### *Human rights education*

Governments must take actions, especially through education, culture and information, to change racial stereotyping\* and promote harmony among and within countries.





## Article 8–16

### ***Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)***

These articles set up the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and describe how the Committee works to help governments to end racial discrimination.

## Article 17–25

### *Administration of the Convention*

These articles explain how the United Nations and governments should work together to end racial discrimination.



# General Recommendations

[https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en&TreatyID=6&DocTypeID=11](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en&TreatyID=6&DocTypeID=11)

The Committee produces documents known as "General Recommendations" to explain the ICERD in more detail in relation to particular groups and issues.

The followings are some of the rights explained in the General Recommendations on specific groups including children.

The whole texts of all General Recommendations can be found at the Committee's website.



## No.23

### *Rights of indigenous peoples*

Governments must make sure indigenous peoples are free from discrimination and can use their own languages and practice cultures, and pass them on to future generations.



## No.25

### ***Gender-related dimensions of racial discrimination***

Governments must gather information and data about specific forms of racial discrimination experienced by women and girls to pay greater attention and take actions against it so that they are protected and not left behind.



## No.27

### ***Discrimination against Roma***

Governments must take actions, such as providing bilingual education, flexible or remote access, and teaching staffs from Roma communities, to make sure that Roma and Traveller children are not discriminated in education.

Governments must make sure that such actions consider specific challenges of Roma girls and women.



## No.29

### ***Descent-based discrimination***

Discrimination based on descent includes discrimination against members of communities and it is based on social hierarchy such as caste and similar systems of inherited status.

Government must take actions to ensure that children of descent-based communities are free from doing work that is dangerous or harmful to them, can access education and do not face any unfairness like bullying or harassment.







## No.30

### ***Discrimination against non- citizens***

Governments must take actions to make sure all children have a nationality (belong to a country).

Governments must make sure children can study at schools open to the public without racial discrimination, regardless of their nationality or migration status.

## No.34

### ***Discrimination against people of African descent***

Governments must take special steps to make sure children of African descent enjoy human rights equally so that they do not suffer from inequality and poverty.



## Notes\*

**Article 1.** Discrimination based on descent includes discrimination against members of communities and it is based on social hierarchy such as caste and similar systems of inherited status.

**Article 3.** Apartheid is when there was a policy of racial discrimination based on skin colour in South Africa, from 1948 until around 1994. People were divided and segregated by racial groups. The rights of white people were protected, but the majority of South Africans had their rights denied, such as restrictions on where they could live or go to school, to participate in sports, visit parks and restaurants.

**Article 4.** Public bodies are run by governments and include services like healthcare, education, arts and culture.

**Article 7.** Racial stereotyping is assuming certain characteristics of all members of a given race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin.

## Credits

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