

**ACTION PLAN**  
**ON RACIAL AND ETHNIC EQUALITY**  
**BETWEEN**  
**THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**  
**AND**  
**THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF COLOMBIA**

The Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Colombia (hereinafter the “Participants”);

Recognizing that ethnic and racial diversity has been a crucial element in the development of democratic and multicultural societies and that tolerance and respect for diversity is considered a determining factor of social cohesion and of reducing violence;

Recognizing the multiethnic and multiracial nature of U.S. and Colombian societies, which strengthens the friendship and collaboration between the two countries;

Considering the commitment of both governments to racial and ethnic equality and equal opportunity;

Recognizing the strong ties of friendship and cooperation between both countries and the various projects that both governments have carried out to promote racial and ethnic equality;

Acknowledging that both governments have developed mechanisms at the national level to promote improved quality of life and full recognition of the rights of citizens and residents of all racial and ethnic origins;

Considering the importance of increasing existing cooperation in order to build capacities, eliminate racial and ethnic discrimination, and promote equality for all people; and

Recognizing the importance of the fight against racism and discrimination and related forms of intolerance, and conscious that respect and non-discrimination promote stability and security and foster the full development and dignity of all persons;

The Participants announce the following Action Plan:

1. The Participants are to work together to promote cooperation, understanding, and the exchange of information (including best practices) to promote equality of opportunity and to eliminate racial and ethnic discrimination. Likewise, they are to work closely in areas already covered under bilateral initiatives and recommendations from the Intersectoral Commission for the Advancement of the Afro-Colombian, Palenquera and Raizal People;
2. To advance these shared goals and to promote the implementation of this Action Plan, a Steering Committee is hereby created; the mission and composition of which is to be determined by the Participants.
  - a. The purpose of the Steering Committee is: to share experiences and information, including information on the implementation of best practices in the fields indicated in subparagraphs 3 and 4, as well as on any other matters the Steering Committee deems relevant;
  - b. The sites of meetings of the Steering Committee shall alternate between Colombia and the United States. In its first year of operations, the Steering Committee shall hold at least two meetings.

- c. Each Participant shall designate its respective members to serve on the Steering Committee. The discussions of the Steering Committee may be open to guests and experts on specific topics if the Participants so deem appropriate;
  - d. The Steering Committee shall report on its findings, recommendations, and other actions whenever the Committee meets. Conditions for the presentation of its reports shall be established as mutually acceptable to the Participants.
3. The subject areas addressed by the Steering Committee are to include the following:
- a. Education in primary, secondary, vocational schools, and in universities on racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity and on the historical contributions of racial and ethnic minorities, as well as education programs and projects discussed and developed with the different racial and ethnic minorities that reflect their own culture and methods of learning;
  - b. Culture, which includes ways of life, traditional knowledge, and the arts of racial and ethnic minorities;
  - c. Communication;
  - d. Labor and employment;
  - e. Equality in access to housing, quality of life, and public services;
  - f. Equal protection under the law and equal access to justice for racial and ethnic minorities;

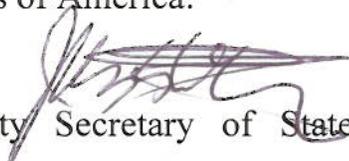
- g. Mechanisms for improving the enforcement of anti-discrimination laws;
  - h. Sports and recreation for racial and ethnic minorities;
  - i. Health, including coverage, outcomes, and traditional medicine;
  - j. Analysis of social, historical, and cultural considerations that could be related to racial or ethnic prejudices;
  - k. Access to credit and opportunities for education and training based on the needs of racial and ethnic minorities;
  - l. Leadership in government, private enterprise, and civil society;
  - m. Strengthening management and coordination among racial and ethnic grass roots organizations and institutions;
  - n. Environmental protection and sustainable development;
  - o. Demographic Information.
4. Emphasis is to be placed on: access to quality education, attendance and retention rates, and access to higher education, as well as analysis of the impact of education on reducing ethnic and racial discrimination.
5. The Steering Committee may discuss and consider techniques and initiatives to promote equality and methods to eliminate racial or ethnic discrimination, including but not limited to:

- a. Training programs;
- b. Regional initiatives to promote equality of opportunity by strengthening democratic institutions;
- c. Agreements with private sector representatives and non-governmental organizations;
- d. Workshops and seminars;
- e. Exchanges of experts and other visitors;
- f. Scholarships;
- g. Cooperation among universities, regional and international organizations, donor institutions, and civil society; and
- h. Other activities that may be proposed and accepted by members of the Steering Committee in the future.

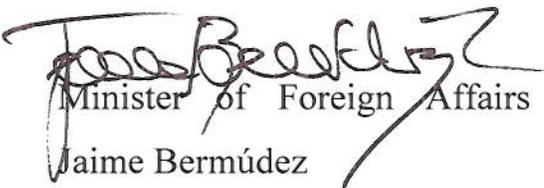
6. The Action Plan does not create rights or obligations under international or domestic law.

Signed at Montería, this 12<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2010, in duplicate, in the English and Spanish languages, with both texts being equally authentic.

For the Government of the United States of America:

  
Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg

For the Government of the Republic of Colombia:

  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Jaime Bermúdez

## ANNEX

### Education

Education is viewed here as the first step toward implementing the objectives of the Action Plan, which seeks to guarantee equality of opportunity through improved self-esteem, better understanding of differences, and greater visibility for individuals from under-represented racial and ethnic minority communities. Some of the areas and tools to be considered may include:

1. Working with bi-national centers and the Colombian Ministry of Education and the U.S. Department of Education to provide greater access to learning English as a second language and teaching Spanish, training programs for teachers in both languages, and promotion of internships in public and private institutions;
2. Support for higher education and training programs for and individuals from under-represented racial and ethnic minority communities should be considered, providing students with the skills to exercise leadership;
3. Promoting academic research, internship, and exchange agreements between schools and universities;
4. Sharing best practices in promoting racial and ethnic tolerance and non-discrimination through educational materials, methodologies, and techniques; include subjects pertaining to the history and sociology of minority communities in the pedagogical curriculum.

## Culture

1. Expand exchange programs between United States cultural organizations and Colombian cultural centers with a view toward sharing common cultural heritage and history and building bridges between United States and Colombian groups and artists;
2. Increase enrollment of children and young adults in existing youth exchange programs; strengthen these programs and facilitate technical assistance for specific programs;
3. Design and implement programs of cultural entrepreneurship for individuals from under-represented racial and ethnic minority communities, including training and market access planning.
4. Expand exchanges and digital video conferences with the participation of experts and public officials focused on issues related to ethnic and racial discrimination, public policies, and other subjects in the Action Plan with a view toward facilitating discussion among academics, researchers, members of non-governmental organizations, and cultural representatives from the United States and Colombia;
5. Expand support so that experts from the United States and Colombia can present comparative studies on racial and ethnic minority communities, cultural diversity, and racial and ethnic discrimination at educational forums and public venue;
6. Promote the preservation and teaching of the dialects of racial and ethnic minorities.

**Minority Representation and Access, Diversity Policies, Political Participation, and Institutional Capacity**

1. Provide technical assistance and exchange of experiences to promote increased representation in, and improved access to, education, employment in the public and private sectors, public office, health services, and other public goods and services, for individuals from under-represented racial and ethnic minority communities.
2. Exchange of experiences in promoting diversity policies and efforts to seek mechanisms to facilitate their implementation in both the public and private sector;
3. Exchange of experiences among governmental agencies, non-governmental institutions, and grassroots and community-based organizations which specialize in empowering racial and ethnic minority communities;
4. Develop a bilateral initiative to promote leadership training programs, especially for women and young people from under-represented racial and ethnic minority groups;
5. Training in the design of a technical and financial assistance program for the creation and consolidation of microfinance institutions owned by individuals from under-represented racial and ethnic minority communities.