Statement by the delegation of Brazil
68th UNGA – Third Committee

Agenda Item 67 (a) and (b): Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

New York, 4 November 2013

(Please check against delivery)
Thank you.

Mr. Chair,

Brazil associates itself with the statement made by Fiji on behalf of G-77 and China and would like to add some comments in its national capacity.

At the outset, please allow me to underline Brazil’s commitment to the full and effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Plan of Action and the Outcome Document of the 2009 Review Conference. These documents are the framework for our efforts in the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, islamophobia and related intolerance.

It is deplorable that millions of individuals are targets of crimes on the basis of racism and xenophobia carried out by extremist political parties, movements and groups. In this context, the provisions contained in the Durban agenda remain as relevant as ever.

Mr. Chair,

Brazil has made significant strides in the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in the last decade. We have established a Secretariat, at ministerial level, for the Promotion of Racial Equality, which reflects our commitment to the implementation of the provisions of the DDPA.

Since then, Brazil has put in place a series of national policies aimed at redressing historical injustices and promoting the social and economic inclusion of people of African descent, in particular through programs of affirmative action in areas such as education, health and employment.

One of the most important steps forward was the entry into force in 2010 of a specific legislation to promote racial equality and to fight racism and racial discrimination. The “Statute of Racial Equality” establishes that it is the responsibility of the State and the society at large to ensure equal opportunities to all citizens, regardless of ethnic origin or skin color.

Mr. Chair,

Brazil is a multi-racial, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society. This is a defining feature in our national diversity, which constitutes an integral part of our national and cultural identity. As the population census conducted in 2010, over 100 million people, more than half of Brazilians, have declared themselves as African descendants. And it is worth recalling that Brazilians are free to identify themselves as they find fit in terms of racial or ethnic background. This is to say that Brazil is home to the largest black population outside of Africa.

For this reason, we are an enthusiastic and active supporter of the initiative to proclaim the International Decade for People of African Descent, starting from 2013, and congratulate the President of the General Assembly for designating South Africa as the
facilitator for the consultative process for the proclamation of the Decade. For Brazil, it is an opportunity to acknowledge the contributions made by people of African descent to our economic, social, political and cultural development. And since we are at the UN, why not also acknowledge our contribution to peace?

Mr. Chair,

Brazil reaffirms its commitment to endeavor all necessary efforts to promptly approve the International Decade of People of African Descent, now long overdue, working closely with all Member States.

The Decade is a step of utmost importance towards a long and necessary path, which is the broad education of the public, in order to raise awareness against prejudice, intolerance and racism. But it is above all a reminder of our historical debt and of the urgent need to correct the social and economic inequalities that affect a significant part of the world population.

Thank you.