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## Afrodescendants in Costa Rica

This article addresses the subject of Afro-Costa Ricans. Its objective is to examine their present situation regarding civil and political rights and to provide a better understanding of the dynamics of this minority population. Table 1 shows the distribution of the location in Costa Rica of the black population according to the National Institute of Census and Statistics.

The ethnic inheritance of the African black slaves<sup>1</sup> that arrived in Costa Rica during the colonial period was lost through an intensive mixture of races, where indigenous, *whites*, *mestizos*, and *mulattos* conformed a society that, by misinformation and lack of depth of research, allowed the Costa Ricans to boast for a long time of being a “completely white population,” terms that covered this process.<sup>2</sup>

From the very beginning of the Costa Rican nation, the black Africans were included. The Spaniard conqueror Sánchez de Badajoz explored the “costa rica” in 1540, escorted by nine black African slaves.<sup>3</sup> This historical background regarding the presence of Africans and Afrodescendants in Costa Rica is a demonstration that proves that the denial of the Costa Rican society to accept its multiethnic conformation has no basis and is just a strategy to undercover the situation of racism and discrimination. The most advanced form of literal denial of racial discrimination is through the myth of “racial democracy.”

The general situation of the country, visualized by the ninth report of the State of the Nation, concerning the strengthening of democracy as positive sign, is a better representation of sectors traditionally excluded or underrepresented, such as women and Afro-Costa Ricans. But these advances could be fragile because they do not derive from in-

**Table 1. Afro-Costa Rican Population in Relation to the Total Population of Costa Rica**

<i>Location</i>	<i>Population Census</i>	<i>Black Population</i>	<i>% Black Population</i>
Limón Province	339,295	54,131	15.95
First District of Limón	60,298	27,073	44.90
Residue of the Central Canton	29,635	3,283	11.08
Residue of Limón Province	249,362	23,775	9.53
Country's Residue	3,470,884	18,653	0.54
Costa Rica Total	3,810,179	72,784	1.91

Source: INEC, *Censo Nacional de Población y Vivienda*, 2000.

stitutional reforms to the organization and functioning of the state apparatus. This same report detected weakness in the quality of legislation approved, which gives the Costa Rican state new obligations and rights but in many cases without the provision of resources to make effective such dispositions.

## **POLICIES REGARDING ETHNIC MINORITIES IN COSTA RICA**

The manifestations of racism vary between cultures, contexts, and historical periods, but they share common factors: the denial of the existence of racism, discrimination, and xenophobia. Costa Rica is no different.

This section will focus on different aspects but will not seek to evaluate the legal responsibility of the Costa Rican state in respect of protection for the rights of Afro-Costa Ricans, given the historical background, present conditions, and limitations of resources. On the contrary, in order to ensure these rights, it would be necessary to formulate and apply policies that guarantee universal access to them.

The eighth report of the State of the Nation documented the requirement to establish public policy and offer more protection to ethnic minorities who are Costa Rican nationals.<sup>4</sup> This requirement has been pending since 2001.

In observing Costa Rica closely, government policies do not incorporate sufficiently the fundamental principles for rights, such as

nondiscrimination and real participation. It is true that Costa Rica has progressed as a country,<sup>5</sup> however, if we consider the economic, social, and cultural rights of the Afro-Costa Ricans, the state does not consider it a priority to make the necessary effort and to devote appropriate resources to securing the rights of the black population.

In 2002, the Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination of the United Nations highlighted to the state and government of Costa Rica: “there are weaknesses in the Costa Rican legislation which do not contain laws to punish racial discrimination appropriately, since penalization is not serious enough, in that it amounts to a simple fine. The Committee believes that this penalty does not reflect the seriousness of this practice and the dimensions of the damages caused to the victims.”<sup>6</sup>

The complex phenomenon of racial discrimination against the Afro-Costa Ricans is “indirect discrimination.” The problem is that it does not appear to have too much resonance in the Costa Rican social psychology. This could be the consequence of the historic Eurocentrism, or indeed it may be that the Costa Rican society does not have an “identity” because it still does not accept that those groups referred to the “others” should in fact be part of the “we” in the construction of a national identity.

In Costa Rica, racial, ethnic, religious, and linguistic discrimination, as well as other forms of intolerance and xenophobia, are denied, and no one wants to speak out about these matters because it is politically incorrect. There is a covert way of manifesting this discrimination, whereby there is a denial of the “others.” The “we” is valid because the “others” are not qualified to analyze and less so to express their views and understanding of the world.

There is a continuous surge of racist and discriminatory practices in Costa Rica. An example of this is a publication in the local press *Diario Extra*, in the section titled “Conflicting Sentiments”: “The Hospital of Limón is called a nazi camp, because someone always comes out without a part of their body.”<sup>7</sup> False images and negative stereotypes of ethnic groups are promoted, especially Afrodescendants, thereby contributing to the spread of racist and xenophobic feelings and practices in the society. Every action intended to destroy identities interferes with the continuity of existing traditions of belonging, which are based on emotional ties that strengthen the bonds of ethnicity.

Every society is branded in a distinctive way by its history, and this is also the case in Costa Rica. In order to combat and reduce discrimination, strategies would have to be put in place that take into account historical factors and the “social psychology of Costa Rican society,” its attitude and influences regarding ethnic minorities and moreover the country’s legal framework.

It is important to point out that although the history of Costa Rica is distinctive in comparison with other Latin American countries, there are certain general indicators that have special relevance when evaluating the context. Ethnic self-identification, for example, refers to a systematic use of an ethnic category to refer to oneself. One such case is that of the ethnic groups of the Province of Guanacaste and Puntarenas in Costa Rica, whose genetics and history show that they are Afrodescendants, but they do not see themselves as such.

Although Costa Rica has legislation on the equal rights of persons and has signed many treaties and conventions against different forms of discrimination, this has not been translated into concrete facts and policies to combat racism and discrimination against Afrodescendants. This was demonstrated in the research done by the State of the Nation Project and supported by the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights<sup>8</sup> following the World Conference Against Racial Discrimination (WCAR) in Durban, South Africa, from August 31 through September 7, 2001.

## EDUCATION

The Costa Rican education program still does not include the contribution of the Afro-Costa Rican group to the building of the nation. The content of the educational curricula also affects Afrodescendants adversely.

In primary and secondary education, the programs and textbooks show black people in a denigrated and stereotyped way.<sup>9</sup> Of course, this produces emotional effects and a very negative impact on children’s self-esteem and identity, which is a clear violation of Articles 1 and 4.2 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities.

The educator Carmen Hutchinson Miller demonstrates the existence of a simplistic and stereotyped focus on the Afro-Costa Rican culture in the textbooks for social studies used in basic general education,

where manifestations of racism latently persist and where the Afro-Costa Ricans are not featured in the history textbooks used by the Costa Rican students.<sup>10</sup>

A study was carried out by the Inter-American Institute for Human Rights (IIDH)<sup>11</sup> in nineteen Latin American countries on the inclusion of issues regarding ethnic diversity in school textbooks and with regard to Costa Rica. The study showed that in the textbooks, the trend is similar to that of the course programs, where people of African descent are predominantly depicted as slaves, servants, as people dancing, and as examples of extreme poverty or malnutrition.

In general, the study shows that the population of African descent is mentioned much less than the indigenous populations, both in 1990 and in 2003. One factor that may contribute to speeding up education reform in this regard is the international momentum in relation to the results of the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance held in Durban in 2001. However, at the time of writing this article, the government and state of Costa Rica have not fulfilled their obligation to establish a Program of Action for the application of a National Action Plan to combat racism in the Costa Rican society, especially against the Afrodescendants.

Afro-Costa Ricans have taken advantage of the education system that is accessible to the entire population of Costa Rica in order to educate their children, and this has contributed to significant socio-economic mobility for many families.

If we consider school attendance of youngsters between thirteen and seventeen years of age across the total population, the Afro-Costa Rican youth surpass all others. For example, 59.1 percent of the total population of Limón attend school, and within that group 73.9 percent are Afro-Costa Ricans. The proportion of women who have completed university studies is greater among the Afro-Costa Ricans (17.2 percent),<sup>12</sup> than in any other minority group except for the Chinese. On the other hand, Afro-Costa Rican males, with 12.9 percent, are below the national average for men.

The concept of a multicultural and multiethnic society is something that has not yet been accepted by state politicians and society as a whole. This concept means much more than mere “awareness of diversity”; it implies resolving the conflicts and misunderstandings that arise between majority and minority groups, whether for ethnic or social reasons, and aims to replace confrontation with dialogue.

At this time, the Costa Rican educational system does not offer an intercultural education that could help to “manage diversity” and give the various communities a common citizenship that transcends people’s differences. To address these objectives, school curricula must reflect the reality of the cultures that coexist but must also take care to give a balanced account of the different ideas and viewpoints, including religious beliefs. Subjects like languages, civics, and history obviously lend themselves better than others to discovering cultures and promoting dialogue and democracy. But officially the country’s education system still refuses to recognize and highlight the contribution of the Afro-Costa Ricans to the history and development of Costa Rica. This important contribution continues to be invisible.

The content of the educational curriculum adversely affects Afrodescendants. Before 2003, the Ministry of Education made it compulsory for primary school teachers and children to study the textbook *Cocorí*. Members of the Afro-Costa Rican community, together with NGOs, protested against this, because this textbook contains stereotypes and discriminatory elements against black people and has affected children’s self-esteem. It is therefore necessary to revise programs and eliminate such texts from the curriculum. The state of Costa Rica ratified the UN International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), which contains a broad range of measures for states parties to undertake to combat discrimination on the basis of “race, color, descent or national or ethnic origin.” Article 7 of the convention recalls the obligations of states parties “to adopt immediate and effective measures, particularly in the fields of teaching, education, culture and information, with a view to combating prejudices which lead to racial discrimination and to promoting understanding, tolerance, and friendship among nations and racial or ethnical groups.”<sup>13</sup> By accepting the request of the Afrodescendant community, the Ministry of Education revoked the requirement to use the textbook *Cocorí* in the educational system and made it optional.<sup>14</sup>

## HEALTH

Costa Rica National Health Policies for the period 2002–2006 cover many different areas of intervention.<sup>15</sup> The aim is to involve all social actors and sectors in the organization and strategic actions in the field

of social production of health. There are four main topics to be mentioned that correspond to areas of intervention: environmental health and natural disasters; health promotion and recreation; universal access and equity; consolidation and strengthening of the health system. For the purposes of this article, policies for public and social participation, protection of priority groups, and strengthening of primary attention relate to health promotion and recreation as well as universal access and equity to the health system.

The access to health services, whether in the curative or the preventive field—water, immunization program against contagious diseases, construction of latrines, food and proper action, and prevention against drug addiction—is just one of the factors that helps to produce a good state of health and impacts positively people's quality of life. According to available figures for 2001, Costa Rica's investments in health are almost 30 percent social expenditure, 20 percent of public spending, and represent 5 percent of the gross national income. Consequently, these are some of the indicators:

Mortality rate: 3.7

Infant mortality rate: 11.2

Life expectancy at birth: 78.5

Human Development Index: 0.832

In this respect there are no disaggregated data regarding the health situation of Afro-Costa Ricans. Research has demonstrated a clear lack of equity in health and medical attendance among ethnic and racial minorities, and the explanation for this is that racism and discrimination are the most disturbing factors. In the case of Costa Rica, the main indicators to be taken into consideration regarding access to health for Afro-Costa Ricans are discrimination against minorities and cultural sensitivity.

Based on the results from the National Census in 2000, the eighth report of the State of the Nation concerning Afrodescendants pointed out that the Afro-Costa Rican population has the lowest percentage of persons who are not insured through the Costa Rican social system. It is true that statistical data do not quantify this, and it is also clear that the national health system is universal and allows access by the entire population, but in 80 percent of the cases, with regard to elderly people, cultural barriers combined with the existence of struc-

tural racism create discrimination when medical attention is sought. There are no disaggregated data for the prevalence of types of disease in Afro-Costa Ricans.

## EMPLOYMENT

Discrimination is commonly seen to be a major impediment to accessing employment and for acquiring a job commensurate with one's level of education and abilities. Education is a key factor in gaining access to well-paying jobs, but for Afro-Costa Ricans, in both rural and urban areas, the racial discrimination practiced by institutions offering employment is perhaps just as important in determining opportunities.

When family incomes are insufficient to provide for basic needs and access to a reasonable quality of education, the most frequent solution has been migration to large urban areas, such as the cities of the Central Valley (San José, Heredia, Cartago, and Alajuela) or emigration abroad in search of better opportunities.

Afro-Costa Ricans appear to have been migrating for a number of generations, with the United States as the main foreign destination. The phenomenon of migration is therefore very significant in the economic profile. It also has different facets depending on the income levels of the migrants. But the results have caused a breakdown of the family unit and the creation of social dynamics that can further exacerbate conditions of poverty. The links between racial discrimination, social and economic exclusion, poverty, and emigration are obvious in the case of Afro-Costa Ricans.

## LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATION AND FORMS OF PARTICIPATION

In 1952, Alex Curling was elected the first Afrodescendant congressman, and in 1954 he presented a draft bill before Congress to abolish inequality among the inhabitants of the country on the basis of culture, place of birth, or origin. The draft bill became Law 1903 and is known as the Curling Rule. He is considered the "Father of Juridical Equality" of all Costa Ricans and has been recognized for his struggle against racial jurisprudence and racial discrimination.



There is a long way to go to implement all the different treaties and conventions ratified by the state of Costa Rica; however, there are people who are keeping up the struggle to ensure the rights of the Afro-Costa Ricans. For example, Joselyn Sawyers, deputy legislative representative to the National Parliament and winner of the prize for “Teacher of the Year” fought during the period 1998–2002 for Parliament to incorporate in the first article of the Political Constitution that the Costa Rican society is multiethnic and multicultural. Sadly, this proposal was not accepted.<sup>16</sup>

Epsy Campbell took up office in the Legislative Representation starting May 1, 2002, and has been nominated and recognized as an outstanding congresswoman and leader in the Parliament of the political party that put forward her nomination. She means to put in practice all the agreements that have been ratified concerning Afrodescendants, coming out of the Program of Action from the World Conference Against Racism and Discrimination in Durban in September 2001. Also in Congress is Edwin Patterson, a great community leader who revealed the lack of economic participation of Afro-Costa Ricans and the very little support for human development in the Caribbean region where the black community mainly resides. The racial discrimination and racism that affects Afro-Costa Ricans is really a result of the political structure of the country.

The general principle of nondiscrimination outlined in the national constitution is not enough for Afro-Costa Ricans to have influence and full participation. There is an underlying controversy on how best to ensure rights to participation and particularly whether these rights should be accorded to Afro-Costa Ricans as a group or be based on individual rights and through integration of Afro-Costa Ricans within the larger political community.

In practice, however, the assimilation approach tends to be imposed. The Afro-Costa Ricans have most of the requirements to secure the rights to participate, such as appropriate levels of education and emotional and physical stability. Therefore, there should be a policy of integration and the different institutions should implement this. Arrangements should also be put in place to allow members of the Afro-Costa Rican community to make decisions, exercise legislative and administrative powers, and moreover to develop their culture. Equitable ethnic representation in the public service, at regional and local levels, is not satisfactory, as can be seen in Table 2.

**Table 2. Representation of Afrodescendant and Indigenous Populations in Municipal Councils of Cantons Where These Ethnic Groups Are Present (2001)**

<i>Municipality</i>	<i>Programs or Specifics Policies*</i>	<i>Representation and Participation in Municipal Councils**</i>
Buenos Aires	None	22 members (4 indigenous)
Guatuso	None	17 members (no Afrodescendants or indigenous)
Limón	None	27 members (6 Afrodescendants)
Talamanca	None	21 members (6 indigenous and 7 Afrodescendants)

Notes: Although there are problems which exist in vulnerable populations, major protections and respect for their human rights are required. The eighth report of the State of the Nation calls upon the government to revise policies regarding ethnic minorities. See p. 275.

\*The main reason for including this column is to highlight the absence of programs and specific policies to combat racism and to promote tolerance and human rights of ethnic groups.

\*\*The number of members takes into account councilors, including permanent seats and substitutes.

Source: Translated and adapted by C. Minott from Proyecto Estado de la Nación (2002).

## STATE REPRESENTATIVES RESPOND TO ETHNIC MINORITIES

At a workshop and seminar for ethnic minorities in Costa Rica that took place in San José in December 2001 for the purpose of analyzing the role of the state regarding this issue, various government representatives were present.<sup>17</sup> Among these were Silvia Lara on behalf of the National Institute for Women; Lena White, for the president of the Office of Final Appeal within the Supreme Court, and Max Esquivel on behalf of the Ombudsman.

According to Lara, discrimination is an obstacle to the formulation of public policy; special measures and public policies are not differentiated. White also pointed out the need to increase the number of ethnic representatives in government institutions and increase participation in decision making. Similarly, mechanisms should be created to give more effective enforcement of the legal instruments against racism and discrimination. Furthermore, she mentioned that it is necessary to sensitize public officials about the issue of discrimination for ethnic reasons.

The representative from the Office of the Ombudsman stressed the need to begin to identify the actual forms of discrimination, noting that training should be given to judges and judicial authorities about the issue of discrimination, and, at the legislative level, a reform of the First Article of the Constitution should be introduced to define Costa Rica as a multicultural and multiethnic country.

## **OVERVIEW OF PROBLEMS WITH THE STATE OF COSTA RICA: CERD REPORT**

The last report on the Costa Rican government's compliance with the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) is not satisfactory. Regarding the attention given to the situation affecting the Afro-Costa Ricans, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)<sup>18</sup> in its sixtieth session on March 21, 2002, adopted the following concluding recommendations on reports on the state of Costa Rica: With regard to the sixteenth periodic report presented by Costa Rica, the committee expressed concern at the alleged manifestations in the media of racism, xenophobia, and intolerance against minority groups, and it recommended that the state party support the adoption of a code of ethics for the media. The committee recommended that Costa Rica continue to undertake educational campaigns to raise awareness of human rights and in particular of issues concerning racism, xenophobia, and intolerance in order to prevent and combat all forms of discrimination.

The committee requested the state party to take into account the relevant parts and recommendations of the Durban Declaration and Program of Action when implementing the convention in the domestic legal situation, and to include in its next periodic report information on the action plans or other measures it had taken to implement the Durban Declaration and Program of Action at the national level.

It is obvious that the government failed to undertake an adequate assessment of policies and practices as outlined by the convention. Article 2 of the ICERD is clear on the obligation of governments to actively address racial discrimination and promote understanding. Governments have an obligation to nullify or change practices that create or perpetuate racial discrimination, wherever it exists.

## **ROLE OF AFRO-COSTA RICANS IN NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**

Afro-Costa Rican groups point to the following as areas where there is a lack of concern on the part of the government: poverty, exclusion, lack of visibility, need for opportunities for social interaction, discrim-

ination, work, and education.<sup>19</sup> Over the past decades, the lack of information has prompted a number of initiatives designed to throw more light on the situation. These include attempts to systematically document the situation of the Afro-Costa Rican population, to develop key data on their situation, and to analyze the causes and results of prior and ongoing socioeconomic exclusion and the way in which this affects their civil and political rights.

Afrodescendant NGOs (Asociación Proyecto Caribe and Centro de Mujeres Afrocostarricenses) provide a lot of information on the infringements of the rights of the Afro-Costa Ricans by bringing these to the attention of the Ombudsman and the various United Nations human rights mechanisms, such as the Commission on Human Rights and the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. The Working Group on Minorities has received from 1998 to 2000 more than four interventions by members of the Asociación Proyecto Caribe regarding racial discrimination and violations of social and economic rights of Afrodescendants in Costa Rica. On the other hand, there are Afro-Costa Rican NGOs—such as Afro-Link, United Negro Improvement Association (a local chapter), Asociación Nefertiti, Men's Progressive Club, Comité Rescate de los Valores de Siquirres, Comité Cívico Cultural de Limón, Remembranzas Afrocaribeñas, Damas del Caribe, Organización para la Solidaridad, Cultura y Desarrollo Afrocostarricense, Asociación para la Cultura Africana, Grupo Afrosco, Corporación Familiar Caribeña, Lady's Unity, Men Unity, Women Advancement Club, Blue Bells Club, Summer Club, Passport Club, Club 4-H, Centro de Investigación Afrolatinoamericano y del Caribe, and Fundación Arte y Cultura—who have been working to rescue the values of the Afro-Costa Rican culture. For this reason, the National Festival "Flowers of the African Diaspora" has been focusing on promoting the values of black culture and highlighting its contributions to Costa Rican society. Its specific goals are to rescue the values of Afro-Costa Rican culture; to publicize and promote the achievements of the culture; to consolidate the identity of young Afro-Costa Ricans; to make the Costa Rican society in general aware of the historical and contemporary values of the Afro culture and its influence on the cultural heritage of the country, and to contribute to building Costa Rican identity.

In 1998 the government called for a National Concerted Action for Social Participation,<sup>20</sup> based on the need for economic and political

changes to the model of development established in the country. Even though this initiative by the government raised some interest, it was never fulfilled completely, but at least it opened new channels for discussion and dialogue between civil society and government. When the National Concerted Forum was set up, the Afro-Costa Ricans were excluded, and it is only recently that the right of minorities to public participation has been addressed, even though these are established in the UN's Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities.

Its origins lie in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights, which protect the right of all citizens to take part in government or in the conduct of public affairs. The importance of the participation of the Afro-Costa Ricans was to express and protect their identity to ensure the survival and integrity of the group. In representation of the ethnic minorities (Afro-Costa Ricans), Donald Allen from the Asociación Proyecto Caribe participated in the National Concerted Forum.

The Centro de Mujeres Afrocostarricenses put a case before the Office of National Regulation of Advertising in September 2001 against the American Sanitary Company, related to a sponge for domestic use with the label of "La Negrita."<sup>21</sup> The courts passed judgment in favor of the Centro de Mujeres and this was a precedent for the Costa Rican legislation concerning publicity and racial discrimination. On this matter the Office of the Ombudsman complained to the Office for the Regulation of Advertising of the Ministry of Government and Police that "both the trademark, the logo and the picture used on the product label and the advertising for the article itself had a negative impact on the national community, in that it presented a stereotyped image of women in general and of black women in particular. . . . The image used in the advertisement minimizes the role and contribution of black women in the social and cultural development of the country, creates a stereotype of them and, what is worse, stresses their present work by reproducing a power relationship of unchanging subjection and domination, which is out-of-date and derogatory."<sup>22</sup> Among the discriminatory elements that were taken into consideration was the undermining of the Afrodescendant population, specifically black women, because of the violation of human dignity, which is the principle of human rights.

The situation of Afro-Costa Rican women is also characterized by a lack of policies and initiatives that would take into account the three-fold discrimination against them: because they are black, because they are women, and, for a large number of them, because they belong to an impoverished and marginalized social class.<sup>23</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Afrodescendant issues in Costa Rica have frequently been obscured by a greater institutional willingness to address the themes of participation and social and economic exclusion as they apply mainly to indigenous communities. A major result of the oversight has been the lack of national and international effort to create a comprehensive information base on Afro-Costa Ricans, which can be used to identify and address their specific needs. The household surveys, as an instrument for data collection, do not include disaggregated data by race/ethnoculture.

It is to be acknowledged that the Afro-Costa Ricans have advanced in human development because of their capability to make use of the great values and principles of their ancestors to take advantage of the social and political context of Costa Rica, plus the extraordinary struggles carried out by many great Afro-Costa Rican men and women at present who must be honored, although their names are not mentioned in this article.

## NOTES

1. Slavery was abolished in Costa Rica on April 17, 1824.
2. The social mobility, the interethnic relations, and the gradual integration to the economy of Costa Rica ensured that with certain acceleration the descendants of African slaves, free or not, could be incorporated and be mixing, until they left their seal or characteristics in some sectors of the population, which even despite their color of skin, were considered "white" in the full sense of the social term. See Bulgarelli (1997:379).
3. *Ibid.*, p. 445.
4. Proyecto Estado de la Nación, "Proyecto Estado de la Nación en Desarrollo Humano Sostenible," *Octavo Informe*, 2001.

5. According to the United Nations Program for Human Development, Costa Rica is among the group of countries of high human development with an index of 0.834 (45) for 2004. The report of the United Nations Program revealed a panorama of \$8,840 yearly income, seventy-eight years for life expectancy, 69 percent of student registry, and 95.8 percent literacy of adults. *La Nación*, July 15, 2004, p. 6A.

6. Proyecto Estado de la Nación, "Proyecto Estado de la Nación en Desarrollo Humano Sostenible," *Noveno Informe*, 2002.

7. "Sentimientos en conflicto: El Hospital de Limón es llamado un campo nazi, porque siempre alguien sale sin una parte de su cuerpo." *Diario Extra*, May 5, 2004, p. 5.

8. Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos (IIDH). Proyecto Estado de la Región. 2002.

9. Carmen Hutchinson Miller, "El enfoque de la Cultura Afrocostarricense en los textos de estudios sociales del primer ciclo de la educación general básica. Tesis para optar al grado de Maestría en Ciencias de la Educación con Énfasis en Investigación Educativa," master's thesis, Universidad Latina de Costa Rica, 1998.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 137.

11. "II Inter-American Report on Human Rights Education: A Study in 19 Countries. 2003 Development in School Curricula and Textbooks." Inter-American Institute of Human Rights, p. 51.

12. From the eighth report of the State of the Nation (2002, p. 121), regarding equity and social integration.

13. In this Article 7, the reference to education is not limited to school education, but also includes training, of teachers and other professionals, such as law enforcement officials. In this regard, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), which is the monitoring body of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, finds that states do not pay attention to the implementation of Article 7. Comments on this Article can be found in the manual written by Atsuko Tanaka with Yoshinubo Nagamine for the International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR) and Minority Rights Group International (MRG) under the title of "The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination: A Guide for NGOs."

14. "El MEP no expulsó a Cocorí," *La Nación*, May 2, 2003, p. 22a.

15. There is a full research of social integration and equity set up in Chapter 2 of the Report of the State of the Nation, analyzing the situation of health in Costa Rica (p. 101).

16. The Constitution of the Republic of Costa Rica established in Title I, Single Chapter, Article 1: Costa Rica is a democratic, free, and independent Republic. Jorge Peralta Ballester, *Constitution of the Republic of Costa Rica* (San José, Costa Rica: Investigaciones Jurídicas, S.A., 1998).

17. Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO). "Seminario-Taller, Colectivos Étnicos Minoritarios en Costa Rica: Situación actual y perspectivas," *Edición de la Memoria*, 2002.

18. CERD, press release (2002).

19. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

20. Programa de Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo-Consejo Nacional de Rectores (PNUD-CONARE), Concertación Nacional en Costa Rica: Balance y propuestas, 1998.

21. From interview with former director Ann McKinley in January 2002.

22. CERD, Report of the State of Costa Rica, 2002.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

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