

Republika ng Pilipinas
(Republic of the Philippines)
MINISTRI NG EDUKASYON, KULTURA AT ESPORTS
(MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORTS)
Manila

March 5, 1985

MECS MEMORANDUM
No. 29, s. 1985

UNITED NATIONS CELEBRATION IN MARCH

To: Bureau Directors
Regional Directors
Chief of Service and Heads of Units/Centers
Schools Superintendents
Presidents, State Colleges and Universities
Heads of Private Schools, Colleges and Universities

1. The United Nations observes the following celebrations during the month of March -

Major Observances

- a. March 21 - Observance of International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- b. March 21-27 - Week of Solidarity with the Peoples Struggling Against Racism and Racial Discrimination

Other United Nations Observances

- a. March 8 - International Women's Day
- b. March 17 - World Maritime Day (Observed in the Philippines in September)
- c. March 23 - World Meteorological Day

2. Appropriate activities may be undertaken by schools to draw attention of the children and the community to the significance of these events.

3. The suggested activities in the inclosure may serve as basis for planning the activities to commemorate the events.

4. The contents of this Memorandum and its inclosure should be brought to the attention of all schools concerned.

(SGD.) JAIME C. LAYA
Minister

Incl.:

As stated

Reference:

None

Allotment: 1-2-3-4--(D.O. 1-76)

To be indicated in the Perpetual Index under the following subjects:

CELEBRATIONS & FESTIVALS
CLASSES

STUDENTS
TEACHERS

UNITED NATIONS CELEBRATION IN MARCH

"The 21st of March has been proclaimed by the United Nations as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and as the beginning of the "Week of Solidarity with the Peoples Struggling Against Racism and Racial Discrimination, in accordance with UN General Assembly Resolution of 1966 and 1979 respectively.

The 21st of March commemorates the Sharpeville incident which took place in South Africa, the only country in the world that practices racial discrimination, or as it is known, apartheid as a government policy. On this day in 1960, a group of black South Africans held peaceful demonstrations in front of the Sharpeville police station against the requirement of the South African Government that all black Africans in the country carry "reference" or "pass" books. White policemen armed with machine-guns and rifles fired at the demonstrators while jet fighter planes flew overhead to frighten them. A total of 69 persons were killed and 180 wounded, including many women and children. For the past 18 years, the United Nations has encouraged the peoples of all UN Member Nations to remember the sacrifices of the Sharpeville victims of racial discrimination and to undertake activities to draw attention to the injustice of racism and racial discrimination in South Africa and everywhere else in the world where these evils exist.

The Week of Solidarity with the Peoples Struggling Against Racism and Racial Discrimination was established by the United Nations in 1979 as part of the program for the first Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination 1973-1983. The Second Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination was proclaimed by the UN from 1983-1993.

During this International Youth Year, the United Nations is particularly interested in making young people aware of the need to eliminate racism and racial discrimination all over the world because they represent violations of human rights and because, when carried to extremes, they represent a threat to international peace and security..."

The above paragraphs were copied from the letter of Director Robina Sokal of the United Nations Information Centre for the Philippines to provide the background information that may be needed by teachers in order to fittingly observe the events.

In order that attention can be focused on the issues enumerated in the said letter, lessons on the same may be integrated in Sibika at Kultura, Social Studies, Arts and Music, English and Pilipino. Activities may be:

1. Talks by teachers about the background of the celebrations and the Sharpeville incident
2. Classroom discussions of similar incidents drawing attention to the injustices of racism
3. Making drawings/posters depicting examples of discrimination and ways of overcoming it
4. Writing short essays, poems or songs on the subject of discrimination and how the same may be overcome
5. Staging short plays on discrimination conveying the message of the injustices of discrimination

