



# International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Observed March 21st, 2022



## When Was it Declared & Why?

On October 26, 1966, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed March 21st as the **International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to be commemorated annually**. March 21st was decided upon to commemorate the Sharpeville Massacre from 1966.

## Quick Review: What is Apartheid?

It means "apartness" in the Afrikaans language. It was an industrialized system of racial segregation. It was endorsed, legalized and promoted by the white National Party in South Africa in 1948. Under apartheid, South Africans were grouped into four racial categories: "white/European," "native/black," "coloured," (people of "mixed race") or "Indian/Asian."



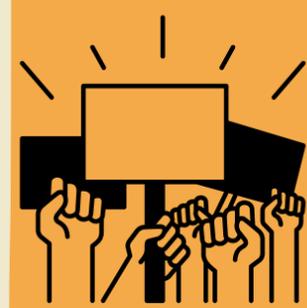
## What are Pass Laws?

Some of the most racist apartheid laws were "pass laws." These pass laws forced only Black South Africans to carry a pass with them at all times, acting as a type of passport system. Failing to carry the pass resulted in a fine. These passes controlled the movement of Black South Africans, restricting where they could live and work. This perpetuated racial segregation and racism.



## What was the Sharpeville Massacre?

On March 21st, 1960 in Sharpeville, South Africa, police opened fire and killed 69 people at a peaceful demonstration against the **apartheid** pass laws. March 21, 1966 signifies the struggle to end the policy of **apartheid** in South Africa. Apartheid finally started to come to an end in the early 1990s.



## How Can We Learn More?

### To Learn More, Just Click or Copy, Paste & Go:

- United Nations, Voices Against Racism - <https://www.un.org/en/observances/end-racism-day>
- Canadian Museum for Human Rights - <https://humanrights.ca/story/the-sharpeville-massacre>
- UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization - <https://en.unesco.org/commemorations/nodiscriminationday>

"For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others."

- Nelson Mandela