



ROYAUME DE BELGIQUE

Déclaration délivrée par

Ambassadeur Philippe KRIDELKA, Représentant permanent
au nom de l' Union européenne

***Commemorative plenary meeting of the General Assembly
to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racial
Discrimination***

New York, le 21 mars 2024

M. Le Président,
Excellences,
Mesdames et Messieurs,

J'ai l'honneur de parler au nom de l'Union européenne et ses États membres.

C'est un plaisir de m'adresser à l'Assemblée générale alors que nous commémorons la Journée internationale pour l'élimination de la discrimination raciale.

L'Union européenne rejette et condamne toutes les formes de racisme, de discrimination raciale, de xénophobie et de l'intolérance qui y est associée. Nous restons fermement engagés dans la lutte contre ces phénomènes, tant au sein de l'UE que dans le monde entier.

Le racisme va à l'encontre des principes de respect de la dignité humaine, la liberté, la démocratie, l'égalité, l'État de droit et les droits humains sur lesquels l'Union européenne est bâtie.

La discrimination raciale non seulement inflige un préjudice profond aux victimes individuelles, mais nuit également au tissu même des sociétés pacifiques et démocratiques.

Mr. President,

In a year where more than 2 billion voters are set to go to the polls it remains particularly important to address racial discrimination in the context of elections. Comprehensive efforts are required to safeguard voting rights, enhance diversity in political representation and fight hate speech on the campaign trail.

Our work needs to start at home. While the European Union unequivocally prohibits discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin, recent reports from the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights reveal distressing levels of such discrimination within our societies.

The EU Anti-Racism Action Plan 2020-2025 calls for enhanced enforcement of European law and concrete measures defined in national action plans. These plans include policy measures and funding to combat racism and discrimination in areas such as access to employment, education and training, healthcare social protection and housing. In addition, EU Member States have stepped up efforts to prevent discriminatory attitudes by law enforcement authorities and to boost the credibility of law enforcement work against hate crimes.

The EU Anti-Racism Coordinator remains essential to this joint work, alongside the full and meaningful participation of civil society.

The EU has also intensified the fight against racist and xenophobic hate speech and hate crime , by strengthening the implementation of laws already in place and extending the criminal law response at EU level to face new challenges.

Concerted action is needed from all of us to convert our legal frameworks into lived realities, in particular to ensure full implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD). This Convention is the bedrock of our action. It is a living instrument, which is able to address both new and emerging challenges. Our focus should remain on realising universal adherence to the Convention and encouraging its full and effective implementation.

The EU is fully committed to the primary objectives and commitments undertaken at the 2001 Durban World Conference to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

Mr. President,

In light of the theme of this year's observance - "A Decade of Recognition, Justice, and Development: Implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent" – the EU supports all efforts to eradicate all forms of discrimination against people of African descent and the activities currently undertaken under the programme of activities for the implementation of the ongoing International Decade for People of African Descent.

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People of African descent are an integral part of the social fabric of European Union Member States.

It is imperative to accelerate the pace of action if we want to bring about a world in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality prevail.

In far too many places, racial discrimination continues to erode the foundations of peace and security, by fuelling conflict, inequality and injustice. Every member of society benefits when racism is eradicated. On this day, let us renew our collective commitment to stand against racial discrimination in all its forms.

It is our common duty as the United Nations to combat the scourge of racism. We can only do so effectively by overcoming our divisions, and addressing, in a consensual way, how we can achieve genuine progress towards our common goal, which is a world free of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

I thank you