



European Network Against Racism
Réseau européen contre le racisme

PRESS STATEMENT

Afrophobia past and present: Still no good time for being Black in Europe

Brussels, 23 August, 2013 - Over the course of four centuries, approximately 17 million Black Africans were sold as slaves and transported across the Atlantic to European colonies. Racism played a fundamental role in the slave trade by constructing the European myth of an inferior Black race that served to legitimise anti-Black violence. Although science long ago debunked the myths of biological “races”, hostility towards Blacks continues to be embedded in the idea of a separate Black “race”.

Today, on International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and of its Abolition, ENAR brings attention to the fact that the racist legacy of colonialism endures in Europe. Millions of Black Europeans are still being treated as inferior, continuing to lack equal access to employment, education, housing, justice, as well as goods and services.

For example, unemployment among Black 16 to 24 year-olds in the UK is double that for White counterparts. Black people in Paris are on average six times more likely to be stopped by the police than White people. A European-wide [survey](#) by the Fundamental Rights Agency also showed that 41% of Sub-Saharan African respondents felt they had been discriminated against on the basis of their ethnicity at least once in the previous 12 months.

Despite data that show persistent and European-wide racism against Blacks, there are no comprehensive and focused strategies on EU and national levels to tackle anti-Black racism. ENAR therefore issues the following recommendations to the EU and European States:

- Identify and combat anti-Black racism, or Afrophobia, as a specific form of racism rooted in European colonialism and the transatlantic slave trade.
- Raise awareness about people of African descent in Europe and their positive contributions to European society, history, culture, and economics.
- Ensure that people of African descent enjoy equal access to quality education and address the existence of discrimination against Black students as well as biased school curricula.
- Promote equal justice for people of African descent and tackle disparities in police and border stop rates, sentencing, incarceration, and other inequities in justice.
- Collect and publish EU-wide racial discrimination and inclusion data to empirically document and monitor discrimination and exclusion impacting people of African descent.

ENAR Chair Sarah Isal said: “There continues to be a complacent acceptance of Afrophobia in European societies. To end discrimination against Blacks in Europe, political leaders and representatives must publicly recognise anti-Black racism both as a specific form of racism and as a pan-European problem, stemming from a



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shared heritage of colonial abuses. It is high time that states and civil society acknowledge that hostility towards Blacks is irrational and grounded in the myth of a distinct and inferior Black race”.

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Notes to the editor:

1. The European Network Against Racism (ENAR aisbl) stands up against racism and discrimination and advocates for equality and solidarity for all in Europe. We connect local and national anti-racist NGOs throughout Europe and act as an interface between our member organisations and the European institutions. We voice the concerns of ethnic and religious minorities in European and national policy debates.