PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 21 March 2011

International Day Against Racism: 45 years later ENAR Shadow Report shows that racism is far from over in Europe

In 1966, the United Nations proclaimed March 21 as the ‘International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination’, and every year on this day, all nations are encouraged to examine racial discrimination and take affirmative steps to address racial inequality. This Day takes on even more significance as 45 years later, data collected by anti-racist civil society across Europe show that racism remains a deep-rooted problem in a broad range of areas, including employment, housing, education, health, policing, access to goods and services, and the media.

ENAR’s European Shadow Report draws on 27 national shadow reports prepared by ENAR members across the European Union and Croatia. It identifies communities vulnerable to racism and presents an overview of manifestations of racism in a range of areas, as well as an assessment of the legal and political context and responses by governments.

The report reveals that across Europe, ethnic and religious minorities continue to face discrimination and exclusion in all areas of life. For instance, in the field of education, the issues highlighted include lower quality education for ethnic minorities, segregation, racist bullying, as well as lower attendance and schooling rates. Access to public transport is also highlighted as a key area of concern in many countries with regard to various means of transport, including airlines. Another example of such discrimination is in the private rental market, most notably in Belgium, Czech Republic, Ireland, Latvia, Malta and Spain. Explicit discriminatory remarks in housing adverts are reported in a number of countries. In addition, extremism and racist violence are on the rise across Europe. The rise of extremist organisations and public expressions of racist sentiments within the mainstream political parties and elected governments has hindered the integration of migrants and ethnic minorities. These barriers and challenges have been amplified by the financial and economic crisis. The report also shows some areas of improvement, notably with regard to the positive impact of EU anti-discrimination legislation in EU member states. However, the report shows that legislation alone is not sufficient and that additional measures need to be taken to ensure non-discrimination in practice. These are some of the main conclusions of ENAR’s 2009/2010 Shadow Report on racism in Europe.

Chibo Onyeji, ENAR President, said: “ENAR’s European Shadow Report demonstrates that racism is far from over in Europe -- we still have a long way to go before reaching effective equality for all. It is crucial that decision makers retain a focus on racism and ensure equality of treatment, particularly in times where an essentially negative approach to migration has meant migrants, or individuals perceived as migrants, are often treated as second class persons.”

The European Report, the 27 national reports, as well as a report on Racist violence in Europe, produced by ENAR, are available on the ENAR website: http://www.enar-eu.org/Page_Generale.asp?DocID=15294&la=1&langue=EN

The European report “Racism in Europe - ENAR Shadow Report 2009/2010” can also be ordered in hard copy in English and French from the ENAR secretariat: info@enar-eu.org
The European Network Against Racism (ENAR) is a network of European NGOs working to combat racism in all EU member states and represents more than 700 NGOs spread around the European Union. Its establishment was a major outcome of the 1997 European Year Against Racism. ENAR aims to fight racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, to promote equality of treatment between EU citizens and third country nationals.

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