

Video Statement: 34th session of the Human Rights Council

Debate on racial profiling and incitement to hatred, including in the context of migration (in commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination)

17 March 2017

The US Human Rights Network is the largest grassroots human rights organization in the United States. Our mission is to build a people-centered human rights movement in the U.S., lead by those most directly affected by human rights violations. We are honored to be able to offer the following statement for consideration in commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

The recent U.S. Presidential election has triggered hatred and increased racial and religious profiling against our communities – including particularly people of color, Descendants of Africans, women, Muslims, immigrants, refugees, LGBTQI people, and Indigenous Peoples.

There has been a rise in hate crimes since the election, many perpetrated against Black communities; increased surveillance of majority Black communities, including a secret aerial surveillance program in Baltimore to primarily track the movements of citizens. We are alarmed that not only has President Trump failed to address the rapid increase of hate-motivated incidents, but also is justifying racial discrimination on the basis of national security. New immigration policies are a codification of discrimination. Long-term residents, including youth, are being deported, and families torn apart. The presidential expansion of the expedited removal process eliminates a legal right to seek refuge or protection from persecution. Expedited deportations could amount to collective expulsions and *refoulement*.

Prior to the 2016 election, the human right to be free from racial discrimination was under attack through the systemic practice and institutionalized policy of state and quasi-state actors killing of Black people. This practice of state sanctioned murder was making significant inroads to a U.S. national consciousness. However, the new Attorney General has indicated an intention for the U.S. Department of Justice to “pull back” on activity aimed at police departments’ systemic use of force issues. As the UN’s Committee for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and Committee Against Torture have found, a major human rights concern in the U.S. continues to be the pervasive lack of “prompt, thorough, and impartial” investigations of ill-treatment by law-enforcement officers, a condition that has fostered police impunity. The current Attorney General’s intention to pull back from oversight, threatens to move us further from human rights obligations and towards impunity.

We respectfully urge the UN to promote awareness by the U.S. of the legal and ethical obligations to adhere to human rights standards. In this difficult time, U.S. civil society, including those directly impacted; need the High Commissioner and his office to stand together. We call upon the Council members to strengthen support to the High Commissioner’s office, so we can work together to defend human rights. Thank you.

NGO in consultative status (Special) with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations