



**Ms. Ursula von der Leyen**

President of the European Commission  
European Commission  
Rue de la Loi 200  
1049 Brussels

Re: Murder of George Floyd, Black Lives Matter protests and violation of fundamental rights in the USA and anti-racism in the European Union

Brussels,  
June 4, 2020

To: President von der Leyen

CC: HRVP Josep Borrell, Commissioner Helena Dalli, Commissioner Didier Reynders

We are writing to express our utmost concern towards the ongoing situation in the United States of America and the need for a strong EU response, towards racism both at home and abroad.

Following the murder of George Floyd at the hands of 4 police officers, protests have erupted across the USA and indeed the world. People everywhere have taken to the streets to express their malcontent, and their desire for change. Police have attacked protestors and journalists have been arrested live on TV, with complete disregards for the freedom of the press.

President Donald Trump has openly voiced his resentment for the protestors and has even incited violence towards them. On May 29, Trump tweeted “when the looting starts, the shooting starts” – a 1967 quote from a racist Miami police chief. Yesterday, President Trump stated that he would send in the military to states where Governors refused to deploy the national guard.

The EU should never hesitate to take a strong and decisive stand against racism, violence and injustice. It is vital that the Commission publishes an official statement condemning the ongoing violations of fundamental rights in the United States of America, including the right to life, freedom of expression and freedom of assembly, and moves to show solidarity with those protesting for their lives.

Furthermore, it is not only in the United States that police brutality and systemic racism rob people of colour of their lives. Here in Belgium where our institutions are seated, on April 10 Adil C., a 19-year-old of Moroccan descent, was killed by police following a short chase. In France, on April 8, Mohamed G was killed by police following a control concerning confinement measures. On the 16<sup>th</sup> of May, Sabri, an 18-year-old died following a collision with a police van.

We need change and we need it now. We can no longer stand by as racism flourishes within our societies and police brutality is inflicted upon Black and brown people with near impunity. We call upon the European Commission to;

- Issue a statement condemning the inflammatory words and actions of President Donald Trump, especially concerning the threat of military force towards citizens
- Acknowledge and condemn police brutality within the European Union
- Implement the European Parliament resolution on the fundamental rights of people of African Descent (in annex)
- To develop an EU framework for national strategies for the social inclusion of ethnic minorities
- Collect and publish equality data disaggregated by racial and/or ethnic origin (as defined by the EU race directive) that is voluntary, anonymous and ensures the protection of personal data, self-identification and consultation with relevant communities
- Call for the Council to unblock the anti-discrimination horizontal directive
- Convene a European Anti-Racism Summit on combatting structural discrimination in Europe.

We must come together to address the scourge of racism both here in the European Union and abroad. Black lives matter.

We look forward to your response.

With kind regards,

- 1) **Dr. Pierrette Herzberger-Fofana**, MEP Greens/EFA, *Co-Chair ARDI*
- 2) **Alice Kuhnke**, MEP Greens/EFA, *Vice-President Greens/EFA*
- 3) **Monica Semedo** MEP, Renew
- 4) **Elisabetta Gualmini** MEP, S&D
- 5) **Saskia Bricmont** MEP, Greens/EFA
- 6) **Rasmus Andresen** MEP, Greens/EFA
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- 8) **Erik Marquardt** MEP, Greens/EFA
- 9) **Dorien Rookmaker** MEP, Non-attached
- 10) **Clare Daly**, MEP GUE/NGL
- 11) **Mick Wallace** MEP, GUE/NGL
- 12) **Alviina Alametsa** MEP, Greens/EFA
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