



To:
Ursula VON DER LEYEN
President of the EU Commission

Brussels, 2nd March 2022

Racism instead of solidarity: The situation of African students on the borders of Ukraine

Dear President von der Leyen,

On behalf of ARDI, the European Parliament Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup, we express our solidarity with all those people who are currently living the horrors of the Russian military aggression.

We support the people in Ukraine and Russia who do not want this war.

However, we are very concerned about the wave of anti-black racism of which Africans are the target. We note with horror that because of the colour of their skin, some European countries bordering the Ukraine refuse Africans entry into their countries.

This discrimination, racial profiling, only targets people of "black race," a visible minority.

Such an attitude shocks the human conscience at a time when the whole world is standing in solidarity with Ukraine, to learn that Ukrainians refuse African students access to public transport and that these young persons do not have the possibility to leave Ukraine and join the country of their choice.

According to the "Foundation for Investigative Journalism", and "Berliner Kurier" a group of Nigerian students protested on Sunday at the border between Ukraine and Poland after being detained by law enforcement officers under threat of at gunpoint.

If this is an official measure of the Polish authorities, we do not approve of it and do not understand that a country of the European Union acts against human rights and our values.

The African Union and most African countries have diplomatic, friendly relations with all European countries bordering Ukraine, this unfriendly gesture in the aftermath of the EU-AU summit would be in contradiction with the partnership that we want to establish.

We ask you, as President of the European Commission, to firmly call on European countries bordering Ukraine to respect the laws on asylum and to welcome the Africans who wish to flee from the war-torn Ukraine or at least to let them pass to the European country of their choice. It is clear that situation requires host countries to take into consideration their own interests, but the humanitarian issue should take precedence.

On behalf of all these people in distress, we ask you to use your influence to ensure that these discriminatory measures are immediately revoked and that the countries, members of the European Union, consider all those who are fleeing a country at war equally.

Yours sincerely,

Pierrette Herzberger-Fofana Greens/EFA

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