UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

AGENDA TIME:COMBATING RACISM, RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, XENOPHOBIA AND RELATED INTOLERANCE

CHAIR BOARD MEMBERS:MOHAMMAD RUZAIN BIN ISMAIL, GULNAR HUSEYNLI

CONTEXT

Assalamualaikum and greetings dear agents of change!

I am Mohammad Ruzain Bin Ismail from Brunei Darussalam, currently studying Petroleum Engineering as my course. It is with profound gratitude to act as Chairperson for UNHRC at TED Bodrum College MUN, which will gather metanoias of aspirational youth. It is such a joy to learn, and comprehend in-depth of the continuity and amplitude of crisis that has affected the world. Regardless of what your age and academic background may be, we proudly accept everyone to discover technical path-independencies.

Centering upon the context of human rights, I would expect the delegates to understand their country stance and grasp the fundamentals of their respective regulations and framework at hand. Conclusively, do thorough research and achieve great understanding! That is all from me and will see you all soon!

Mohammad Ruzain Bin Ismail

Honorable Delegates,

I am happy to introduce myself as the vice-chair of UNHRC in TED Bodrum College MUN.

I am Gulnar Huseynli from Baku, Azerbaijan. I am currently studying at the Azerbaijan State University of Economics, majoring in Finance. I began my MUN journey in 2018 and I have my pleasure delegating in National and International MUN circuits and currently, I am still actively delegating and chairing in multiple online conferences. I also participated in conferences like Moot Court. Thanks to them I gained a large experience in debating, solving problems. MUNs allowed me to learn about diplomacy.

I should mention that I am extremely delighted to be able to work with the Human Rights Committee. I am looking forward to meeting you all at the conference. To all of my UNHRC delegates, there is no need to be afraid to cast your voice on this platform. I highly encourage all of you to research thoroughly and be active in discussion during the committee session. You may reach me via email at ghuseynliii@gmail.com if you have any inquiries. I wish you all the best of luck! Can't wait to see you soon!

Gulnar Huseynli

PREFACE

Understanding the root cause and variables of racism, xenophobia and also related intolerance is crucial. This crisis has preceded its prominent continuity for a long period of time, thus affecting the marginalized groups with focus on religion, race, and ethnicities. In light of the past and recent tragedies concerning the systematic and arbitrary treatment towards these groups of people.

This study guide outlines the key terms that need to be understood. And also touching upon the context and components of racism, xenophobia and related intolerance with reference to definitions, causes, study cases and possible solutions.

ABOUT THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

The Human Rights Council is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe and for addressing situations of human rights violations and making recommendations on them. It has the ability to discuss all thematic human rights issues and situations that require its attention throughout the year. It meets at the UN Office at Geneva. The Council is made up of 47 United Nations Member States which are elected by the UN General Assembly. The Human Rights Council replaced the former United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

BASIC OVERVIEW OF THE ISSUE

Racism is an instrument in the generation of conflict, the provoking of exclusivist nationalism, and a motor for the disintegration of states and slaughter among neighbors. Governments, political movements, and violent armed groups continue to use racial discrimination as a tool for the political mobilization of supporters, and a framework for the exclusion, misuse, cruelty, and even extermination of others. Total populations may be denied the full privilege of nationality in their own countries-or stripped of their citizenship by political fiat-because of their race or descent. Racism can also intersect with gender discrimination, to diminish or negate women's exercise of their human rights.

EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT TERMS

Caste Discrimination: In much of Asia, parts of Africa, and in the South Asian diaspora racism has become attached with order in the definition and exclusion of groups distinguished by their descent. Over 250 million people worldwide suffer under a hidden discrimination of segregation, modern-day slavery, and other extreme forms of discrimination because they were born into a marginalized caste. Despite formal protections in law, discriminatory treatment remains endemic and discriminatory societal norms continue to be reinforced by governments. Caste discrimination imposes enormous obstacles to the enjoyment of civil and political rights and the realization of economic, social, and cultural rights.

Migrants and Refugees: Trends in population movements and an increasingly international labor force make it particularly urgent to address racism as a factor in migration and refugee flows and in its relation to conflict. Women migrants suffer particularly, in trafficking and forced prostitution, in the lack of protection in the work place, and in constraints on family life imposed by migration and the specter of statelessness.

Racism is both a cause and a result of forced displacement, and a barrier to its solution. Refugees and asylum seekers who flee situations of racial and ethnic discrimination and violence also increasingly confront such hostility in their countries of refuge. Over the past decade, there has been a global trend of xenophobia and growing hostility towards refugees and asylum seekers. This trend is most notable in industrialized countries where a barrage of new, restrictive policies have targeted asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants over the past decade. Even traditionally generous host countries in the developing world, often over-burdened with their own social and economic problems, have become increasingly reluctant to host large refugee populations.

Nationality and Citizenship Rights: People face racial discrimination through the summary resettlement of citizenship; through the modification of the terms of nationality in the upheavals of state succession; through the historical refusal to recognize national minorities as citizens in their own countries; and through gender discrimination in the transmission of nationality from parents to a child.

Whole populations may be denied nationality in their own countries or be stripped of their citizenship because of their race or ethnicity. Some have been present in a country for generations, often predating their country's independence; others are native peoples. Discrimination on the basis of gender often combines with racism as a discriminatory factor in states that define citizenship in terms of racial or national purity. When citizenship is restricted to the children of male nationals, female citizens are discouraged from marrying men of a different race or nationality because their children would be denied citizenship.

Criminal Justice: Criminal justice has an enormous potential for unjustified discriminatory effect. At the national or local level discrimination can arise from practices with racist intent, like racial mark, in which an individual's presumed race is the determining factor in placing them under suspicion. The mechanisms of criminal justice can equally result in unjustified discriminatory effect where there is no clear racist intent. Discriminatory impact can be shown in patterns of police abuse, inconsistent arrest, imprisonment, prosecution, and

sentencing. The de facto denial of remedies to particular groups within a criminal justice system or the disparate effect of de jure disempower of members of a particular group may be evidence of unjustified racial discrimination regardless of the intent of lawmakers and public officials.

Public Administration: The unjustified discriminatory effect of public policy and administrative practice can effectively prevent the enjoyment of fundamental human rights even in the absence of overt discriminatory intent. This is often most clear in the administration of social services, education, and public housing to exclude or marginalize members of particular groups. It can also apply to restrictions of the freedom of movement and the right to live in a particular area of one's own country. Access to education without discrimination should be a particular focus of the World Conference.

Compensation and Reparations: Governments that practice or tolerate racial discrimination must acknowledge and end the violation of human rights and repay the victims. The descendants of a victim of human rights abuse should also be able to pursue claims of reparations. That is, the right to reparations should not be extinguished with the death of the victim but can be pursued by his or her heirs.

Xenophobia: There is no internationally recognized legal definition of xenophobia.The UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance suggests a definition whereby xenophobia "denotes behavior specifically based on the perception that the other is foreign to or originates from outside the community or nation". The Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism further insists that xenophobia exists when "individuals are denied equal rightson account of real or perceived geographic origins of the said individuals or groups, or the values, beliefs and/or practices associated with such individuals or groups that make them appear as foreigners or outsiders."Generally, xenophobia implies discrimination based on the perception of the other as foreign or originating from outside a community or a nation.However, manifestations of xenophobia can occur against people of identical physical characteristics, even of shared ancestry, such as when people arrive, return or migrate to States or areas and are considered as outsiders.

RACISM,NATIONALITY ,STATELESSNESS, AND THE RIGHTS OF CITIZENSHIP

In many parts of the world, children and adults may be denied citizenship and corresponding civil rights in their own countries, or be stripped of citizenship, solely because of their race or national descent. In some cases this has applied to populations that have been present in a country for generations, often predating their country's independence. In others, children born in their mother's country of nationality may be denied that nationality because women can not transmit nationality, rendering the children potentially stateless on gender grounds, or forced to take the nationality of a non-national father.

The racially discriminatory aspects of policies to acknowledge nationality on the grounds of blood ties alone, with no provision for nationality to be conferred on the basis of place of birth or on other grounds, require particular research. The rigid and exclusive fulfilment of blood ties, if in practice implemented along racial lines, can serve to deny whole populations of rights in what is often the only country they have ever known.

Discrimination on the basis of gender is often combined with racism as a discriminatory factor for children in states that define citizenship in terms of racial or national "purity." As the rights of citizenship are restricted to the children of male nationals, female citizens are discouraged from marrying men of a distinct race or nationality because their children would be denied citizenship.

International conventions on statelessness are inadequate to address this denial of citizenship rights to children and adults on national or racial grounds. Denial or removal of the rights of citizenship can be a means comprehensively to deny a population a broad range of human rights. Short of physical extermination or removal from one's country, this denial of civil rights reduces a population to the most extreme vulnerability to abuse and misuse. The issue is most dramatic as it concerns children's rights to a nationality and to the full exercise of human rights.

Children without recognition as citizens in their own country may be denied a right to education, to social services, to many areas of employment as they reach adulthood, or even to documents establishing their identity. In some cases, governments informally recognize members of particular national minorities as distinct from foreigners, while according to them a restrictive status short of full recognition as nationals: as if citizens without citizenship. Democratic participation in the regulation of their own community's affairs is impossible for this disenfranchised population.

Naturalization policies, by which non-nationals receive citizenship, may be wholly or largely founded on discriminatory grounds. Denial of citizenship on racial or national grounds may be a norm even for people who have established deep roots in a country and have retained no connections with any other. In many regions, changing patterns of migration and catastrophic movements of refugees fleeing war or ethnic mistreatment have moved large populations in a retreat and flow across national boundaries. Over decades these population movements have resulted in large populations putting down new roots in countries to which they are relative newcomers, but who have no other country to return to. The children of these upheavals are the most vulnerable to discriminatory nationality policies and practices. The denial of their right to a nationality turns upon their race or national origin.

In the Middle East, statelessness most frequently stems from the need of nationality, often as a result of conflict over the composition of a state and its borders. A situation of citizens without citizenship also derives from the failure to establish nationality at a crucial phase during the process of state formation, or the stripping of nationality, a process that also sometimes accompanies or follows international armed conflict. Government policies often promote the denial of citizenship among particular groups to further other political aims. Discriminatory government policies serve to exclude unwanted groups, or to attempt to force out a group perceived as unsupportive of the government while encouraging the naturalization of other groups perceived as more supportive. Long periods of economic

dependence on cheap migrant labor in many countries has also fostered anti-foreigner views, and sometimes produced statelessness when migrants and their children lose their ties to their original nationality but are unable to claim nationality in their state of residence. These groups are particularly vulnerable during economic downturns and political crises.

The denial of citizenship is increased by the persistence of nationality laws that typically make it difficult for foreigners to gain nationality, even when an individual is born in a country or resident there for many years; prevent women nationals from passing their nationality to their children; and prohibit dual nationality among citizens of Arab states. Taken together, these factors have produced large populations whose statelessness is inherited, and often negatively impacts on individuals' ability to vote, work, register marriage, births, and deaths, own or inherit property, receive government health and educational benefits, or travel.
Particular crises of racially exclusive citizenship policies have occurred after states have broken up, as successor states have acted to privilege particular racial or national groups to the exclusion of others, as well as in states in upheaval which have acted to strip off their recognized nationality of whole ethnic or racial groups. This has been a particular issue in much of the former Yugoslavia, in some of the independent states of
the former USSR, in the Horn of Africa, and in Africa's Great Lakes region. Discriminatory nationality and citizenship policies and practices in these circumstances are frequently accompanied by racist violence.

RACISM, CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Racial, ethnic, and related identities can be a powerful source of cohesion, values, and identity that strengthen and enrich individual and community lives. These identities can also be manipulated for political gain, employed to force and destroy, and used as criteria for determining whose rights are respected and whose are obliterated. Although the international community cannot remove all race and descent-based doctrines from political discourse, it can and must work to ensure that the power of the state does not promote race or descent-based hatred and is not employed to perpetuate and deepen race or descent-based distinctions in the exercise of basic rights.

Not all government actions that have racially disparate impacts constitute internationally prohibited discrimination. In some cases, the discrimination is overt, intentional and explicit; in others, seemingly race neutral policies have an unjustified disparate impact. In some cases policies are motivated by expressing ethnic hostility; in others they reflect a "malign neglect," a refusal to take seriously the need to secure equal treatment of all racial and ethnic groups.

In the states of the former Soviet Union, control of movement and residence continues to be exercised at the national, provincial, or municipal level. In the Russian Federation, the administration of these restrictions often assumes racial dimensions, while implementation of residency controls through the propiska system serves as a pretext for the police harassment, arbitrary arrest, and extortion of people distinguished by their racial characteristics.

In the United States of America, race and the criminal justice system are a matter of continuing national concern. The examples of discriminatory impact are numerous: African-Americans and other minorities report police abuse more frequently than whites. Juvenile offenders from minority communities are more likely to be arrested and confined in detention facilities than white juveniles who have committed the same offense. Although there are far more white drug law offenders than black, ostensibly race neutral laws designed to curtail drug abuse have been enforced in ways that have targeted black communities and sent disproportionate numbers of black men and women to prison on drug charges. Blacks who murder white victims have the highest chance of ending up on death row; whites who murder blacks have the lowest chance. In some states, police engage in explicit racial profiling--police stop a person on the assumption of possible criminal activity simply because a person is black or Hispanic.

In Western Europe, where migration and increased movement within the European Union has gradually made populations less homogenous, this has been accompanied by xenophobia, racist violence against migrants and national minorities, and the emergence of political movements founded on the manipulation of racism fears and the promotion of racist, exclusionist policies. In states formed by secession, often on grounds of a distinct and predominant nationality and a claim to ancestral territory, the overt racism of forced expulsions, denial of citizenship, and racial violence have been accompanied or succeeded by administrative measures to implement other often scarcely concealed racist policies. In the successor states of the former Yugoslavia, administrative law and regulations concerning public housing were altered and applied as an instrument of public policy designed to benefit members of particular ethnic groups, largely to the exclusion of other ethnic groups.

MIGRATION AND REFUGEE FLOWS

A racist dimension of public policy toward both refugee flows and the treatment of migrant labor may be apparent in formal legal constraints on access, applied differently to would-be migrants or refugees of distinct racial or ethnic origins. The development of a common European policy toward refugees, often described as a 'fortress Europe' policy for its emphasis on exclusion and the deflection of refugee flows to host 'holding' countries outside the European Union, has been characterized in this manner. A disparity founded on race may also be reflected in the definition of national policies to address a particular domestic crisis regarding migrants or refugees, or in the allocation of resources to address international crises and their attending refugee flows.

Migrants or refugees may be either privileged or prejudiced in access to state protection depending on their race, ethnicity, or nationality. This may be most apparent in national policies to induce other states to receive refugees at a distance from their own borders, or even in interning refugees away from their own shores, without regard for treaty obligations or the welfare of those refugees intercepted.

The United Nations General Assembly has expressed special concern for the plight of migrants in its recent resolutions concerning racism. Most recently, in December 1999, it expressed deep concern "that racism and racial discrimination against migrant workers continue to increase," and condemning these forms of intolerance as well as "stereotyping of

migrant workers and members of their families." All states were called up "to review and, where necessary, revise their immigration policies with a view to eliminating all discriminatory policies and practices against migrants which are inconsistent with relevant international human rights instruments..."

RACE AND CASTE

In Asia, one of the most pernicious forms of racial discrimination is discrimination based on descent, including caste discrimination in South Asia and discrimination against Burakumin in Japan. In much of South Asia, race has become coterminous with caste in the definition and exclusion of distinct population groups distinguished by their descent. Despite formal protections in law, discriminatory treatment remains endemic and discriminatory societal norms continue to be reinforced by government structures ranging from the police and the lower courts to state and municipal authorities.

In India alone, close to 160 million so-called "untouchables" or Dalits (known in legal parlance as scheduled castes) are routinely discriminated against, denied access to land, forced to work in degrading conditions, and routinely abused, even killed, at the hands of the police and of higher caste groups that enjoy the state's protection. Dalit women are frequent victims of sexual abuse. In what has been called India's "hidden apartheid," entire villages in many Indian states remain completely segregated by caste. Though national legislation and constitutional provisions suggest that the Indian government has successfully tackled caste-related violations, much of the legislation remains unimplemented. For those at the bottom of its hierarchy, caste remains a determinative factor for the attainment of social, political, civil, and economic rights. Because caste-based abuse is not regularly on the agenda of the Commission on Human Rights, it is important to recognize attempts by some UN treaty bodies to bring caste into the purview of their mandates, and equally important to place the issue prominently on the agenda of the race conference. In the concluding observations of its forty-ninth session held in August 1996 (as it reviewed India's tenth to fourteenth periodic reports under the convention), the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination affirmed that "the situation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes falls within the scope of" the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 1965.

THE QUESTION OF INTENT

Racist intent remains a real and present factor in the policies and actions of states, even when not immediately apparent in law or at the highest levels of government. A commitment to racial discrimination at any level of government can serve to destroy the rights of distinct populations unless confronted by action at the highest level. At the same time, racist discourse and policy in government and in the private sphere have not notably diminished.

Indeed the General Assembly's resolution of December 17, 1999, warned that racist intolerance and acts of violence "persist and even grow in magnitude including tendencies to establish policies based on racial, religious, ethnic, cultural and national superiority or exclusivity."

Racist practices and policies may be most clearly present in precisely those areas of government most critical to the regulation of political and civil rights-the police, military, and the administration of justice. They may comprehensively block the enjoyment of social, economic, and cultural rights, through the denial of education, social services, and protection from economic exploitation. The policies, laws, and administrative regulations by which states are governed may have a profoundly racist impact even where this effect is not matched by a racist intent. State action as well as state inaction may be at fault in providing the victims of racism equal protection under the law and equal opportunity in the exercise of those rights. The inadequacy of state policies and action to confront and eliminate racism may be sufficient to perpetuate institutional racism. Even explicit legislation to confront racism and intolerance may be rendered useless by passivity in its implementation.

Patterns and practices of racism endure even when these are not constructs of openly perverse, explicitly racist laws of the apartheid or other segregationist models. Where racist intent is present, this is often concealed, with no express declaration of racist intent formulated in law or stated policy. Rather, where racist intent is present, policies and practices will be couched in terms that explain their discriminatory effects in the ostensibly neutral terms of economics, of resource constraints, or geographical isolation-or by attributing the negative effects of state acts or inaction upon a particular group to that group's own failings.

The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) is a valuable tool in combating racism in part because it stipulates with crystal clarity that a state is still accountable for racism even where there is no proven intent. CERD requires remedial action whenever there is racism in effect: even where there may be no intent whatsoever to discriminate against a certain group. Similarly, CERD requires states to take responsibility and to take action to combat racism by public agencies and in the private sphere.

COMBATING RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINITION IN EUROPE

In today's world, contemporary forms of racism and racial discrimination are complex and disturbing. In Europe, these issues increasingly lie at the heart of political and social concerns. Faced with persistent expressions of racism and xenophobia, the Council of Europe Member States have, for several years now, been taking firm and sustained action to combat these trends.

Without making an exhaustive inventory of the situation and listing all the problems observed, we can outline a few broad categories in which racism and racial discrimination occur: day to day life in major areas, such as employment, education, housing and access to social services; human rights violations against members of Roma communities; hostile attitudes to and stigmatization of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers; increasingly widespread anti-Semitic incidents; intensification of expressions of Islamophobia; use of racist, anti-Semitic and xenophobic arguments in political discourse; and a negative climate in public opinion,which plays a crucial part in the emergence of expressions of racism and intolerance in society. These trends, of course, vary in scale from one country to another, but are significant enough to be of concern.

To cope with this situation, European countries have devised responses at both national and European levels. The salient feature of the Council of Europe Member States' action over the past few years is the fact that they address the issues surrounding the fight against racism and racial discrimination from the perspective of protecting and promoting human rights. In other words, the right to be protected from racism and racial discrimination is first and foremost a fundamental right of all human beings.
When it comes to working out practical and viable long-term solutions to combat racism and racial discrimination, choices may differ from one country to another. All strategies in this respect should at least comprise measures in the areas of legislation, awareness-raising, education, positive action and participation.

While legislation alone is not enough to combat racism and racial discrimination, the law is obviously a cornerstone. In Europe, the greatest advances in recent years have been made in the legal sphere. Many Member States have embarked on reforms to supplement their anti-discrimination legislation at a national level. This is a welcome development from the victims' point of view, given that appropriate legal measures to combat racial discrimination effectively, dissuasively and as satisfactorily as possible are of paramount importance. But enacting anti-discrimination legislation does not necessarily mean successfully ensuring equal rights for everyone in society. It is not enough to outlaw discrimination; we must also combat it by ensuring that anti-discrimination provisions are actually applied and put into practice. The same can be said for criminal law provisions prohibiting racist acts.

If all these provisions are to be effective, it is imperative that they be implemented by the authorities, including the police and the judiciary. They should not exist only on paper, but should comprise large-scale awareness campaigns directed at the general public and potential victims, as well as training for the appropriate officials. For this reason, it is important to set up an independent national body with the unique responsibility of fighting racism and racial discrimination; 2 many Council of Europe Member States have taken steps to set up such bodies.

At the broader European level, the most significant advance in recent years has been the adoption of Protocol No. 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights, which came into force on 1 April 2005. The Protocol contains a general independent clause prohibiting discrimination. The fact that the European Court of Human Rights will be able to deal with individual applications in this area makes the Protocol a particularly useful instrument for combating racial discrimination. For the time being, however, only 35 of the 47 Council of Europe Member States have signed Protocol No. 12, and only 15 of them have ratified it.3

Lastly, Member States have taken a further step to combat racism and racial discrimination by setting up and bringing into operation the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) in 1994. ECRI, whose work is based on respect for human rights, aims to protect all persons on the territory of the Council of Europe Member States from racism and all forms of racial discrimination. It is made up of independent, impartial members, whose statutory activities include country by country monitoring of racism and racial discrimination, drawing up general policy recommendations and building awareness and disseminating information through its relations with civil society.

One of the main achievements of ECRI is bringing about changes in law and its practice at national and European levels to counteract racism and intolerance more effectively. One of its major contributions is undoubtedly the fact that it has made people understand that "racism" and "racial discrimination" are changing concepts and now encompass acts targeting persons or groups, not only because of their colour or ethnic origin, but also because of their language, religion or nationality. The main prerequisite for effectively combating racism and racial discrimination is recognizing that these problems exist. ECRI has shed light on daily and widespread racism and racial discrimination at the pan-European level, which creates substantial and sometimes even insurmountable obstacles for many individuals.

In the immediate future, European Governments are faced with several challenges, two of which are very significant: enforcing action against racism and racial discrimination in an environment increasingly affected by the fight against terrorism; and addressing the issue of integration, which is widely debated in most European countries. Attention should be drawn to the ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 8 on combating racism while fighting terrorism and to General Policy Recommendation No. 11, adopted on 29 June 2007, on combating racism and racial discrimination in policing. The latter contains a legal definition of racial profiling and asks Member States to clearly define and prohibit racial profiling by law. As racial profiling has increased and assumed new dimensions as part of the fight against terrorism, Recommendation No. 11 is a useful means of countering this specific form of racial discrimination. Regarding integration, it is essential to firmly underscore that the success of any integration strategy will essentially hinge on the importance it attaches to combating discrimination in general, particularly racial discrimination. The principle of non-discrimination and policies on the pursuit of equality are the necessary basis for achieving integration.

In the final analysis, encouraging signs at the national and European levels demonstrate that Governments and civil society are genuinely involved in fighting racism and racial discrimination in Europe. But the fight is far from won and advances are needed now more than ever to guide our countries and give practical effect and full meaning to the universal principle: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights".

Graph 1. Net discrimination rates in Belgium, Netherlands, Spain and Germany in 1998.
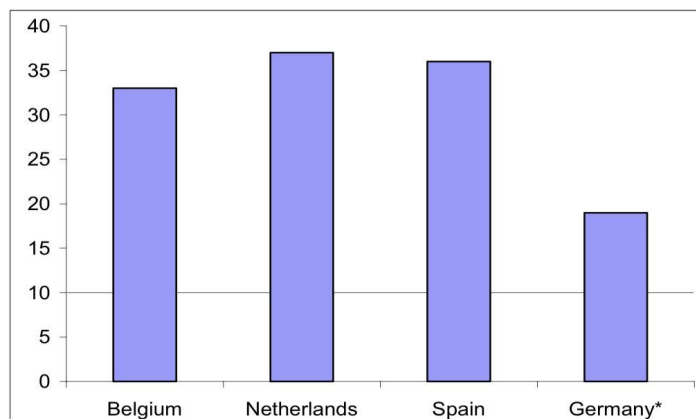
*In Germany, the figures are lower because the testing procedure did not extend to the third stage of the application process.

Source: Zegers de Beijl, Roger; *Migrant Discrimination in the Labour Market: A Comparative Study of Four European Countries,* ILO, 1999.

COMBATING RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN THE USA

• Police brutality is just a surface manifestation of deeper systemic racism.

• This ingrained racism affects black Americans on the job market, in workplaces, at the polling booth, in urban environments and more.

• White people and non-black people of colour must undertake conscious action and education to combat the problem.

The killing of George Floyd in police custody resulted in massive protests across more than 140 US cities and 20 countries around the world. These protests have been focused on police brutality, but also led on issues of structural and systemic racism that exist in most countries today.
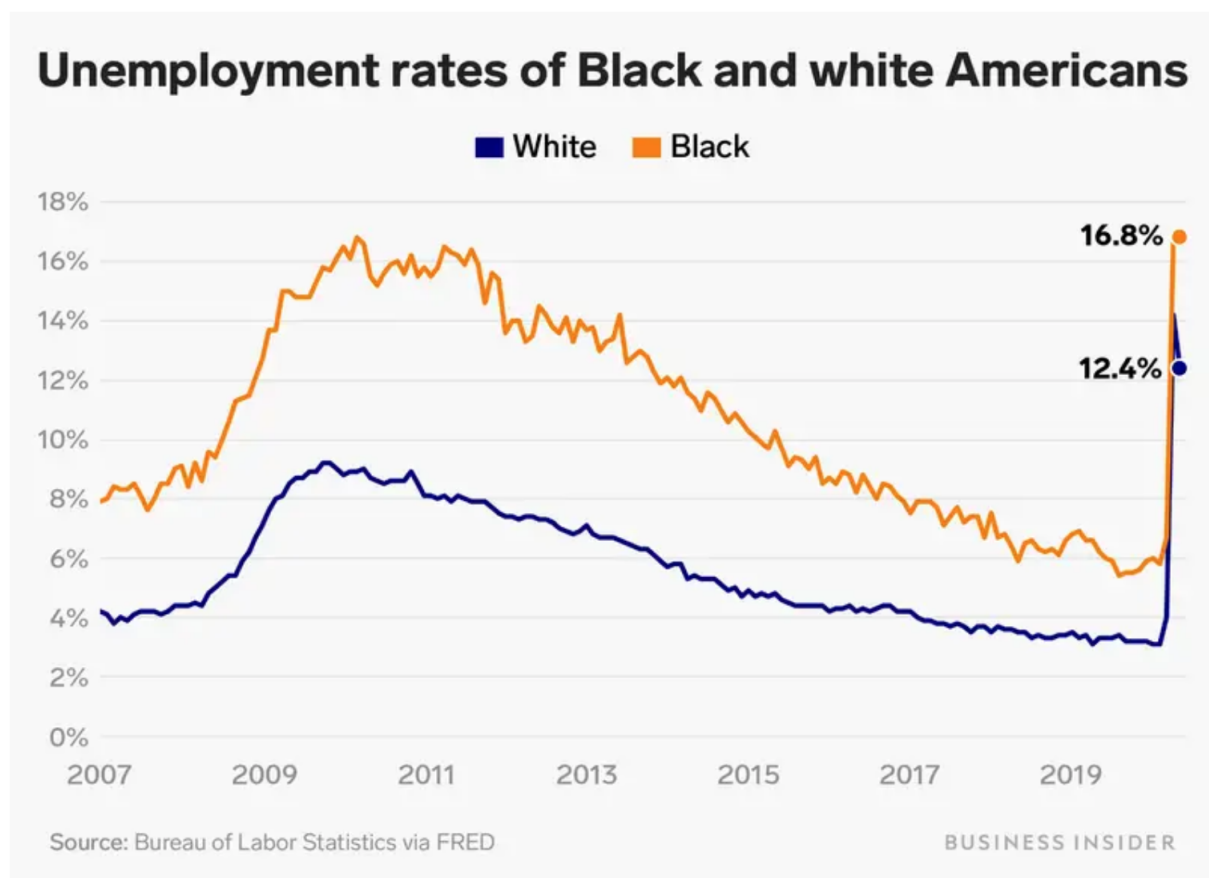
As these long-standing global issues have come to the forefront of today's discussions, so have questions on how to be an ally in the movement against anti-black racism. The road to allyship may require unlearning the teachings that you once thought true; this ongoing journey means educating oneself on the topics at hand and taking initiative. Here are resources, and some historical context, for white people and non-black people of colour who wish to be an ally.

1. Understand that systemic racism goes beyond police brutality

An early example of police brutality against unarmed African-Americans in modern times was the 1991 beating of Rodney King in Los Angeles. A grainy video of his assault was replayed for days on national news networks. Nearly 30 years later, the killing of George Floyd was shared across television news and social media networks. The digital age has played a pivotal role in capturing unjust aggression by police, and amplified the message for millions through sharing, retweeting and trending hashtags. The death of George Floyd magnified the conversation around systemic racism, but understanding the core of the issue goes beyond police brutality.

Systemic racism exists within the banking, education industries and even within business. It is ingrained in nearly every aspect of how people move through societies, and it disproportionately affects black people. African-Americans are underrepresented in leadership roles across business industries, have a difficult time accessing quality housing, are over-represented in the criminal justice system, and their experiences in healthcare stand in stark contrast to those of white and non-black citizens.

In the United States, unemployment has been exacerbated by the coronavirus, but has hit black Americans especially severely. Even when employed, a black worker earns just 62% of the amount a white worker is paid.

Unemployment rates of Black and white Americans

■ White ■ Black

16.8%

12.4%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics via FRED

BUSINESS INSIDER

Variations of racism and injustice range from very clear discriminatory actions to the most surreptitious policies. Historical examples in the US include poll taxes and literacy tests, which required citizens to pay for their right to vote and excluded people who couldn't read. This tactic marginalized people from low-income communities.

Segregation in cities across America may have been outlawed, but it nevertheless remains in existence in practice. Just look at Chicago's north-south divide, Detroit's 8 Mile Road and extensive gentrification in major cities such as Oakland and San Francisco. Income differences between white and black people are so prevalent, it leads to less lending options for black Americans to buy a home or own a business, education inequalities for children and harder to find job opportunities. The cycle of systemic racism comes in many forms, making it even more difficult to break.

2. Speak up against racism in the workplace and support black colleagues

Unfortunately, black professionals are still underrepresented in the workforce despite gains in undergraduate degrees. (For example, in 2018, 31% of black people in the US attained a university degree or higher compared to just 16% in 1992.) This lack of visibility is particularly stark in senior leadership roles, where just 3.3% of roles are currently filled by black employees. If your organisation is lacking in diversity, there are several ways to tackle the issue with your colleagues and keep an organisation accountable:

• Encourage resource groups for your black, indigenous and people-of-colour employees (BIPOC) to connect on experiences and find ways to address racism.

• If your organisation doesn't have a diversity and inclusion team, start working on ways to develop one. Companies that build on diversity and inclusion have a greater chance of outperforming and attracting top talent.

• Apply mentorship opportunities for BIPOC employees to ensure they have equal opportunities and access to promotion.

Beyond advancement barriers, black employees often face discrimination from their co-workers. In fact, a recent Glassdoor survey found that three out of five workers in the US had seen or experienced discrimination at work. While this can be overt, it often takes the form of microaggressions, and may not be covered in cultural sensitivity training. Speaking up about race issues is often the first step allies can take against systemic racism in the workplace.

As a non-black colleague, it's important to show your allyship and condone unjust actions against black people. However, there are better ways to support your black colleagues, starting off by just listening. By being there and hearing their experiences, you are already showing your support. As a company, it's vital to ensure safe places exist where employees feel able to speak about what is happening.

Another way to be an ally is by educating yourself to better understand your black colleagues' perspective. There are several books to help you learn about white privilege and how to start noticing systemic racism, while the National Museum of African American History and Culture has released an online programme that will help you learn about race through different exercises and videos.

3. Target racism in education

From experiencing a disproportionate number of suspensions to amassing more student debt, black students face more barriers than their white peers in education. It starts in school. More than 60 years ago, segregation between white and black children ended with the US Supreme Court case of Brown v Board of Education. But many schools remain segregated and unequal, due to the economic and social inequalities faced by African-American communities. Schools predominantly attended by people of colour are almost always underfunded. Though many previous laws in the Jim Crow era have been banned, conversations about segregation in today's schools and education system are mostly non-existent.

Ensuring equitable education for black students requires action at all levels. To engage in addressing racism in education, there are many ways to learn and get involved:

• Very few books for children involve non-white main characters. As summer holidays begin, here are some books featuring black and people of colour characters for children.

• A podcast episode looking at Brown v Board of Education's decision and the importance of having black teachers in schools.

• Schott Foundation for Public Education is a US-based resource offering information on racial injustice in the education system with a call of action to get involved in your communities.

• Code Switch listed podcasts, films and books about systemic racism, including inequality in schools, and how to have better, thoughtful conversations.

4. Petitions and political engagement

Today's anti-black racism stems from systemic racism that has gone unaddressed for decades. These racist systems are far-reaching, and many will require sustained public efforts to fix them.

Protests, petitions and calls for action in the past few weeks have already changed business policies and governance in cities, states and countries around the world. The National Football League (NFL) previously mentioned they would charge fines to teams if players

were to kneel during the national anthem, but since the George Floyd protests erupted, they have changed their stance and embraced the Black Lives Matter movement.

After the killing of an unarmed black woman in her home, the city of Louisville, Kentucky enacted the Breonna Taylor Law to ban no-knock warrants. These reforms are not restricted to the US either: Berlin became the first German state to pass a law barring public authorities, like the police, from stopping people based on race, gender or sexual orientation.

Political action from governments and other decision-makers will require continuous encouragement. That's why reaching out to your local and national political leaders can be another way to be an ally. Petitions are another way to show your support for anti-racism in your community. Change.org is a good place to start, if looking for national or international petitions. Since many regions and countries experience racism differently, it is also good to seek out local resources for the policies that may have the most impact in your community.

Alicia Garza, one of the founders of Black Lives Matter, was honoured by the World Economic Forum as a Young Global Leader in 2020. The organisation she started has grown to include many local Black Lives Matter chapters around the world; finding one in your local area can give you insight in how best to get involved with your local organizers.

Social media also can be a great place to find out which policy changes activists in your area are petitioning for. Below are a few top accounts organizing against anti-black racism and police brutality that are good places to start:

• Black Lives Matter

• Justice League NYC

• NAACP (The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People)

• The Audre Lorde Project

• Show Racism the Red Card

There are many different ways for allies to get involved in the fight against racial injustice. The most effective thing an ally can do is get involved, stay involved, and continue educating others on the movement against anti-black racism.

ANTI-ASIAN RACISM,VIOLENCE, AND VIRUS-BLAMING DURING THE PANDEMIC

The recent shootings in several Atlanta spas have brought violence against Asian Americans into the headlines. Again. Unfortunately, this isn't an isolated incident.
Unwarranted suspicion, fear, and even hatred of Asian people has been on the rise ever since word of the pandemic began to reach U.S. shores.

Yuchen Ye, 28, visited her parents in China in late January 2020 for Chinese New Year. She recalls being stared at while wearing a mask on the train when she returned to New York City a month later.

"I was very scared," she says. "Especially in March and April, people started being really against Asians, especially Chinese people. I tried to cover my face as much as possible when I went out, with sunglasses and a hat, because I saw more and more scary news about Asians being attacked."

Ye also worried about her work visa, and felt pressured to put in more hours at the hospitality public relations agency where she worked to prove her value.

VIOLENCE AND RACISM

COVID-19 has already put an unrecognized burden on the Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) community even without acts of discrimination and violence.

To make matters worse, hate crimes against Asian Americans have been increasing. The recent incidents in Atlanta and violence against seniors are simply the ones making headlines.

Even among those who aren't subject to acts of violence, daily racism and discrimination creates mental fatigue and exhaustion, compounding the stress and anxiety caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recent studies currently awaiting publication by Dr. Gloria Wong-Padoongpatt found an increase in microassaults against Asian people in the United States during COVID-19.

The studies conclude that consistent experience with everyday racism may have led Asian Americans to believe in a sense of inferiority, leading to internalized racism and a low sense of self-worth, furthering the toll.

USEFUL LINKS

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