



Ursula von der Leyen, European Commission
President
Helena Dalli, European Commissioner for
Equality
Nuno Brito, Permanent Representative of
Portugal to the European Union

Copy to:

*Szabolcs Schmidt, Head of Non-
Discrimination and Roma
Coordination Unit
Barbara Nolan, Head of Fundamental
Rights Policy Unit*

Brussels, 14th January 2021

Dear Commissioner Dalli,

We are writing to ask to meet with you to discuss the planning and hosting of the first European Union Summit on Anti-Racism that will take place around the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

We, as leading figures in the European anti-racism movement, write to express our support for the heightened political commitment afforded to dismantling racism by the European Union and European Commission President. We recognise that the current European Commission has taken positive steps in the field of racial justice by adopting for the first time in 20 years a dedicated EU Action Plan on Anti-Racism (APAR) and the creation of new positions such as the EU Commissioner on Equality and the EU Coordinator on Anti-Racism. We were heartened to read of the Commission's desire for "closer cooperation with people with a racial or ethnic minority background," as we know this to be crucial for the development of effective policy to achieve the ambitious aims of the action plan.

The Anti-Racism Summit is the first milestone in the implementation of the APAR and will be a key opportunity for the European Union and its Member States to demonstrate their commitment to dismantling structural and institutional racism in Europe, through an inclusive and holistic approach.

For the summit to be successful, we believe that the situational knowledge of people directly affected by racism is instrumental. We posit that racialised communities should take the lead in organising the summit with the European Commission and the EU Presidency. There are an estimated 50 million racialised people living in Europe. Yet, we are mostly absent from decision-making tables and mainstream institutions at all levels. We believe true change cannot be realised without racialised people and communities at the centre of all decisions, laws and policies affecting us. The Commission and the Presidency should promote the leadership of our communities and involve grassroots organisers in shaping the format and priorities of the summit. This is in line with the commitments made by President Von der Leyen that we “can only reach our full potential if we use all of our talent and diversity” and that “we cannot afford to leave any potential behind.”

To achieve this, we propose:

- A civil society consultation to determine the priorities of the summit;
- The development of a civil society steering group, comprising institutional leaders in racial justice at European level, to co-organise and host the summit, to be;
- Involving underrepresented members of racialised communities, including LGBTIQ communities, women, disabled people, people without documents, and religious minorities.

We believe that the organising and hosting of the summit can be an opportunity to reset relations between the institutions and civil society on this vital issue. By ensuring equitable working practices with civil society, and ensuring the participation of all groups at all levels, we believe we can work together for a successful Anti-Racism Summit in 2021.

Yours sincerely,



ENAR

The European Network Against Racism is the pan-European network combining racial equality advocacy with building a strong network of anti-racist organisations across Europe. We ensure that laws and policies address racism and reflect the experiences of racialised people. We recently published an open letter calling the European

Commission to secure meaningful participatory mechanisms in the implementation of the EU Action Plan Against Racism, co-signed by 45 CSOs in Europe.

EQUINOX

The Equinox Initiative for Racial Justice is a people of colour-led advocacy project with solidarity and empowerment at its heart. Equinox is a coalition of racial and social justice leaders, activists and organizers from across Europe working in solidarity to influence European Union law and policy.