



To the attention of the Office of the High Commissioner For Human Rights
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Regarding the Call¹ for inputs on the topics to be considered for discussion during the Fourth Session of the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent

Date: September 17th 2024

With reference to the above-mentioned Call, we, the Europe Pan African Forum for People of African Descent² (EPAF-PAD), are honoured to provide you with the results of our Roundtable conversation regarding the priority Themes to include in the Agenda of the Fourth Session of the Permanent Forum.

1. Anti-Discrimination laws and Mechanisms
2. Democracy and the democratic rights of PFPAD
3. Afrophobia

These Topics are the Results of the EPAF-PAD Expert Committees that have been set up to guide the responses received.

We look forward to hearing from you.
Respectfully yours,
The EPAF-PAD Coordinating Commission

¹ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/events/sessions/2025/fourth-session-permanent-forum-people-african-descent>

² A Europe Coalition of Pan Africans Civil Society Cadres from Spain, Portugal, Italy, UK, Belgium, Switzerland, Ireland, Germany, Norway, Netherlands, France



THEME 1: This input is focusing on the **Theme Anti-discrimination Laws and Mechanisms**

In September 2024, the EPAFPAD conducted a brief collection of inputs for new themes from People of African descent living in Europe to be discussed at the 4th session of PFPAD. The result was that in more than 60 percent of the inputs the implementation of antidiscrimination laws and the affiliated ¹resolutions, declarations, mechanisms and instruments were high issues of concern for African descents in Europe.

Despite European countries being signatories to the ³UN International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination and other ³European Antidiscrimination Policies; and measures based on the principle of equality and codified in national constitutions, the problem of Afrophobia remains. This is due to the existing structural and systemic racism which is still rooted in Europe colonial history.

⁴Racial discrimination remains a major challenge to millions of people of African descent. Racial discrimination takes a variety of forms, from racist remarks in public or private sphere, extreme instances of physical assault and even murder, police brutality and harassment, impairment in access to housing, education, and health care, non-representation in political space to the refusal of a job based on an individual's colour, race, origin, ethnicity, gender or nationality.

⁵According to 2023 EU Barometer Survey on Discrimination, skin colour is the second most widespread.

⁶In 2023, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) published Hate Crimes Data Reporting. The hate crimes submitted by national police between 2018 to 2022, racism and xenophobia had the highest number compared to the other hate crimes. ⁷The United Kingdom reported the highest number of hate crimes between 2018 to 2022 a total of 431,313 cases, while 204,337 were based on racist and xenophobic reasons. Other European countries reported with high number of hate crimes for racist and xenophobic reasons: Germany, Austria, France, Belgium, Finland, Italy, Netherlands, Spain and Sweden. In the ODIHR report little or no information were provided by the national police if the hate crimes were prosecuted or sentenced. In the case of Austria, the racist and xenophobic hate crimes were defined as right-wing extremism under the prohibition Act, "Insult and Honour". The decades since have seen a rise in nationalist populist parties with mainstreaming of xenophobic, and racist discourse and hate speech, including at the highest levels of politics, these discourses pose a threat to racial equality and makes it difficult to combat structural racism. The lack of the perceived political will to implement the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (2001) including the affiliated resolutions and declarations plays a role too.

⁸The Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in her report to the UN General Assembly on its country visit to the Netherlands in 2020 emphasized, that it is impossible to fulfil obligations under the Convention to ensure substantive racial equality and eradicate racial discrimination without the adopting a comprehensive and intersectional approach by eliminating purposive or intentional discrimination and structural forms of discrimination

We therefore propose this Topic as new for the Agenda of the 4th PFPAD Session.

¹ [Microsoft Word - Document5 \(equalrightstrust.org\)](https://www.equalrightstrust.org/)

² [International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination | OHCHR](https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-treaties)

³ [EU Anti-Discrimination Policy: Annexes - European Union Anti-Discrimination Policy: FROM EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN TO COMBATING RACISM \(europa.eu\)](https://european-council.europa.eu/media/404044/image_cache/image_cache/EU-Anti-Discrimination-Policy-Annexes.pdf)

⁴ [Publications - European Network Against Racism \(enar-eu.org\)](https://enar.eu.org/)

⁵ [Eurobarometer \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/)

⁶ [Racist and xenophobic hate crime | HCRW \(osce.org\)](https://www.osce.org/hcrw)

⁷ [United Kingdom | HCRW \(osce.org\)](https://www.osce.org/hcrw)

⁸ [A/HRC/44/57/Add.2 \(un.org\)](https://www.un.org/ru/hr/a44/57/add.2.htm)



THEME 2: This input is focusing on the **Theme Democracy and the Democratic Rights of PFPAD.**

We suggest that the following sub-topics should be included in the PFPADs session on Democracy:

United Nations as accelerator of democratic rights of PAD

How can we as people of African descent enjoy our full democratic rights and how can the United Nations instruments and processes help in this, with i.e. monitoring, interventions or other processes.

Pan-African Unity as accelerator of democratic rights of PAD

How can we as people of African descent and Africans in Pan-African unity strengthen our democratic rights; locally, nationally, regionally and globally. Through support of local activism, networks and connections, locally, nationally, regionally and globally.

How should local, national and regional governments support the democratic rights of PAD in minority or as minoritized.

How can lack of representation, political participation, and lack of statistics undermining the democratic rights of PAD be supported by national governments?

What measures and activities should be undertaken?

How could the recognition of NGOs working on the situation of people of African descent be afforded by governments?

How should governments address the lack of access to, and discrimination in granting citizenship that are infringing of the democratic rights of people of African descent both as immigrants, descendant of immigrants and as descendants of enslaved Africans?

Questions to be consider.

We therefore propose this Topic as new for the Agenda of the 4th PFPAD Session.



THEME 3: This input is focusing on the **Theme ‘Afrophobia’**.

Through observation and analysis, we became aware of an alarming occlusion that threatened the specific focus and effectiveness of the *‘Draft United Nations Declaration on the Respect, Protection and Fulfilment of the Human Rights of people of African Descent’*. The need for the ‘Declaration’ arises from the painful conclusion that Africans and peoples(s) of African descent are still subjected to egregious human rights violations. The persistence of these violations – as measured in contemporary disaggregated data across all key human rights indicators – remains etiologically connected to their historical antecedents in the criminal trade and trafficking of enslaved Africans, the further brutalisation and exploitation of Africans under colonialism, apartheid and neocolonial social relations. These forms of discrimination, notwithstanding their historical and geographical differences, share a common negative denominator in the irrational fear and denial of African humanity; that is, Afrophobia⁴. This denial of African humanity is simultaneously a denial of humanity as such and therefore of the rights and dignity of all. For this substantive reason it was noted with alarm that the Term, ‘Afrophobia’ which specifically denotes the forms of multiple racism directed against the fulfilment of the human rights of people(s) of African descent did not appear in the draft Declaration; despite, it being the key overarching modality through which the human rights of Africans and people(s) of African descent are systematically denied. Recalling that the Term, ‘Afrophobia’ was mentioned eighteen times in the original ‘Draft Declaration...’ discussed during the 20th session of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (IGWG); and, that the inclusion of, ‘Afrophobia’ was the result of the U.N. Office, the PFPAD, calling upon civil society to submit recommendations for the draft.

Further analyses demonstrated that the significance of ‘Afrophobia’ – as that which grounds the need for the Declaration itself – had, been missed. An alarming and painful omission. Civil society impressed upon the IGWG the urgent practical need for this clarificatory Term ‘Afrophobia’ to be properly incorporated into the Draft Declaration and, following this request, it now appears once in parentheses.

The EU Commissioner of Human Rights establishes⁵ a clear causal link between ‘Afrophobia’ and its historical antecedents. Further examples of its productive utilisation in other U.N. documents and national governments such as Sweden are available.

The WGEPAD has shown that action programmes within the framework of the UN Decade POAD are not complete without disaggregated data and rigorous analyses that expose the full extent of racism and discrimination faced by people of African descent. The explicit analysis of Afrophobia would, however, facilitate the development of appropriate measures to address it⁶.

Although not new, we believe that this topic deserves urgent attention. The PFPAD can use its mandate to clarify this decades long discussion; and should add this topic to the Agenda of the 4th Session⁷.

⁴ ‘Afrobphia’ is spelt ‘Afriphobia’ by U.K. based activists; however, the conceptual designation is the same.

⁵ https://www.coe.int/nl/web/commissioner/blog/-/asset_publisher/xZ32OPEoxOkq/content/afrophobia-europe-should-confront-this-legacy-of-colonialism-and-the-slave-trade

⁶ Rooted in early modern European racial pseudoscience ‘Afrophobia’ sought to deny the humanity of Africans through the erasure of African history, philosophy and cultural achievements. All to rationalize the brutal chattelization and exploitation of Africans and people of African descent. As such Afrophobia requires explicit clarification and cannot simply be bracketed off on the underexamined assumption that all stakeholders are equally aware of its meaning and significance. That detailed task is, however, beyond the scope of this paper.

⁷ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/permanent-forum-people-african-descent/mandate>