

REPORT

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EUROPEAN ANTI-RACISM SUMMIT

19 March 2021

#EuAntiracism

Welcome by the Moderator Shada Islam, Founder and Director of New Horizons Project

The moderator welcomed participants to the summit on Anti-Racism, co-hosted by the European Commission and the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union, in cooperation with the Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI) of the European Parliament.

The Summit marked the International Day for elimination of racism on 21 March.

Participants were mainly from national administrations, civil society, and European or international Institutions.

According to participants, who replied through the interactive 'Slido' platform, what they hoped to get out of the Summit was: awareness, concrete and sustainable solutions, and best practice.

Introductory Address by Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission

President von der Leyen (VDL) welcomed participants and spoke about the threat racism poses to our societies. Racism is around us in and although it does not always make the headlines it is there. We do not always see it, but it is there, and it is also in our institutions. She said that Europe must be better than this and that the EU's Founding treaties promised to fight against discrimination in Europe.

VDL recalled that the Black Lives Matter protests in the United States had been a call for action, making us look in the mirror and reflect upon who we want to be as a people. It was an opportunity to bring existing policies against racism to the next level, step up action, increase EU funding cooperation, improve education policy around anti-racism, and across the EU's external action.

VDL highlighted the adoption by the European Commission of the EU Anti-Racism Action Plan. The Action Plan and the Summit are the beginning of a new path and the start of a constant engagement. She also announced that a new Anti-racism Coordinator will be appointed shortly, who will bring anti-racism to core of the European Institutions.

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VDL spoke about the first pilot survey that was launched across Commission services on diversity and highlighting the high turnout in participation. The survey showed that services are not at all representative of European society and the survey will help to understand the reasons behind this.

VLD underscored the importance of Member State engagement in combating racism and discrimination. MS should have an Action Plan against racism by the end of 2022.

Keynote Speech by Helena Dalli, European Commission, Commissioner for Equality

Helena Dalli (HD) spoke about the widening inequalities the COVID-19 pandemic has caused. She introduced the EU Action Plan Against Racism, which sets out a series of measures to tackle racism. It includes a mainstreaming of anti-racism and an intersectional approach, to address structural discrimination. HD highlighted the fact that racism must be addressed at all levels of government to truly turn the tide. Other key areas to address are racism and discrimination in law enforcement and cultural attitudes.

HD underscored the fact that Member States (MS) must apply EU law, and a strong political commitment as well as robust policy frameworks are needed to eradicate racism. She called on all MS to adopt Anti-Racism Action Plans by 2022, as they are important tools to tackle racism at local and national level. HD welcomed the visible commitment by ministers to mobilise around the Summit and the participation of over 800 people.

HD reminded participants that all work must be done in dialogue and that the principle of “nothing about us without us” means empowering racial and ethnic minorities to take on positions of leadership themselves.

“Nothing about us without us”, Intervention by Simon Woolley, Baron Woolley of Woodford, Member of the House of Lords, United Kingdom

Simon Woodley (SW) started his intervention by speaking about his own multiple identities, as a black-Caribbean person, a British citizen, and a European. He stressed that communities are worried about racialized groups feeling marginalised from the conversation.

SW stressed that the conversation about racism and discrimination is an important conversation, and that it should be one of the most serious conversations in modern history. He emphasised the need to lay bare the structural inequalities and confront them head on. In particular, the need to face Europe’s colonial past as the genesis of racism and that racism is part of the ‘DNA’ of our institutions. He said we have not yet begun to have that honest conversation.

SW went on to say that the fault lines of the pandemic are racial and that we need look no further than the World Health Organisation which recently announced that 50 million people have been

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vaccinated, while not acknowledging that in the poorest countries only 25 people have been vaccinated.

SW implored President VDL for the European Union to take this unique opportunity to look at infrastructures, and to ensure that all children can fulfil their greatest opportunity.

Testimonies by activists and representatives of civil society organisations

- **Mbo Mpenza, Belgian footballer and activist**

Mbo Mpenza (MM) welcomed the mobilisation around the Summit and stressed that anti-racism is important for all parts of society but particularly for younger generations. It requires a new way of anticipating our future needs. MM said that his perspective on racism was not unique. He dreamed of becoming a professional footballer and trained and worked towards this goal throughout his childhood. The first time he was confronted with racism was when he entered a packed stadium as a player and was met with racist chants and comments. MM shared that he was disappointed to realise that he would be judged on his skin colour and not his talent. He and his brother were the first black players in the Belgian national team. MM stressed that integration is possible but requires commitment from all levels. He founded the Mbo Mpenza Challenge, bringing children together from all backgrounds, to promote unity and goals. MM said that sports can be a positive vehicle for integration.

- **Đorđe Jovanović, President of the European Roma Rights Center**

Đorđe Jovanović (DJ) shared his personal experiences of being systematically racially profiled and stopped and searched by law enforcement when he travels. His organisation provides strategic litigation to victims of racism. DJ stated that police misconduct is the most common forms of racism of the state.

DJ expressed concern at the inclusion of language in the EU Anti-racism Action Plan which suggests that profiling is acceptable in certain situations. He stressed that racial and ethnic profiling is never ok. DJ expressed his frustration at being the only Roma participant in the Summit, as Roma are the largest ethnicity in Europe. He expressed disapproval at the fact that the role of ethnic and racial minorities had been limited to testimony during the summit, while issues of substance are decided by others. Putting these groups in the 'victim' category rather than empowering them.

DJ complained of a lack of transparency throughout the development of the EU Anti-racism Action Plan, and that it contains unambitious targets without any enforcement mechanism. He stressed the need to rethink participation and that the document was in effect produced by white commission staff. Minorities and their lived experience must be included in the design and drive many of the processes if meaningful change is to emerge in Europe.

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- **Clémence Zamora-Cruz, Activist for the rights of trans people**

Clémence Zamora-Cruz (CZC) shared her experience of fleeing Mexico because of discrimination due to her gender identity and colour of her skin. She detailed her shock and disappointment of experiencing similar discrimination upon arriving in Belgium, where she faced transphobia and racism. CZC experienced harassment, both visible and invisible, as well as experiencing structural racism and experiencing racial profiling.

She spoke about the intersectional discrimination experienced by trans-racial women and that crimes against trans people are often ignored, in particular those committed against sex workers. CZC said that laws make trans people of colour very vulnerable and that racism endures under the pretext of security. Such as racial profiling by law enforcement. She stated that transphobia and racism go hand in hand and that the political level is reductive and does not take into account the intersectionality of discrimination.

- **Layla Azzouzi, Co-founder of the Collectif Contre l'Islamophobie en Belgique (CCIB)**

Layla Azzouzi (LA) described her experience of the power of empowering women through education. She spoke about her own experience being born and raised in Belgium, attending a Catholic school, growing up in a multi-cultural and multi-religious background. She became involved in the youth wing of political party and up to that point had not experienced any discrimination. LA described suddenly experiencing threats and racism when she started wearing a hijab. She felt that up until then she had presented as a model of integrated citizen and after starting to express her identity by wearing a hijab, she was excluded from her party. She realised how widespread exclusion of women is and that other women like her who wanted to become involved in political life, face exclusion and islamophobia. LA described the widespread suspicion of Muslims and their portrayal as not belonging to Europe. She detailed the hate speech and hate crimes targeting Muslim women, as well as structural barriers to accessing employment. LA said that Belgium asks adult women to choose between accessing education and observing their faith. This is highlighted through high schools banning the hijab, which threatens fundamental right like education, which are key to emancipation of women.

LA also referred to the impact of some counter terrorism policies, which potentially consider all Muslims as a security threat, and denounced ordinary Muslims as radical. She welcomed the EU Action Plan against Racism as having strong potential, as long as it addresses the issue of women's inclusion at all levels of policy making.

Keynote Speech by Mariana Vieira da Silva, Minister of State for the Presidency, Portugal

Mariana Vieira da Silva (MVS) thanked the EU for extending the invitation to Portugal to co-host the Summit. She recalled that the European social model is built on the principles of equality and non-discrimination and these are the foundations of the Union.

MVS echoed the calls to address the issue of racism and discrimination head on, and while the issue is one of society's long-standing challenge, society is increasingly demanding that we address issues

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since the Black Lives Matters movement started in the United States. She stressed the need to engage in an open and continuous dialogue with minorities. And the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic should not diminish or delay this conversation. MVS repeated that the crisis had exacerbated inequalities and that an escalation of hate speech and incitement of violence is creating social exclusion and stigmatisation of these groups.

MVS stated that we have now identified key areas to tackle racism and discrimination, such as education, health, housing, and law enforcement.

She called on MS to develop National Action Plans and that they should include concrete tools for implementation.

She recalled the words of President von der Leyen that “Racism is among us, even in our institutions” and the need to strive every day for a Union of equality.

High Level Panel discussion: The European Action Plan against Racism – From words to action

Introduction: “Let’s talk about structural racism” Intervention by Michael O’Flaherty, Director of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights

Michael O’Flaherty (MOF) spoke about the widespread discrimination faced by minorities in housing, in accessing services and education. He said that hate speech and harassment are often connected with hardship and poverty. That only 1 in 10 incidents are ever reported and that in reality figures are far worse than we realise. MOF repeated the importance of acknowledging the intersectionality of experience, as said by previous panellists.

MOF expressed concern that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated inequalities and that patterns of exclusion are even more visible. The situation of many groups has deteriorated, e.g. Roma children in 2020.

MOF welcomed the EU Anti-racism Action Plan and encouraged MS to put in place their own Action Plans, to which the Fundamental Rights Agency will provide appropriate support.

He highlighted key action points:

1. It is critical to work **with** not **for** impacted communities.
2. Anti-racism is not an issue just for minorities but for the community as a whole.
3. It is vital to gather racially disaggregated data. We cannot fix what we can’t measure.
4. We must strengthen capacity of equality bodies and equality organisations.
5. Investment is vital in civil society organisations that promote equality.

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Panellists:

• Sarah Schiltz, Federal State Secretary for Equal Opportunities and Diversity, Belgium

Sarah Schiltz (SSc) spoke about the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and how it is impacting already vulnerable communities. Many of these minorities are being targeted as scapegoats. She spoke about the ongoing process of decolonisation of public spaces in Belgium and its importance in the journey towards Anti-Racism. SSc acknowledged the role of civil society and the groundwork of activists, such as Belgian labour activists. SSc spoke about the core role of MS and the importance of developing National Plans. She reiterated the importance of giving a voice to civil society actors and to follow up commitment and pledges with concrete actions.

• Samira Rafaela, Co-President of the ARDI Intergroup, European Parliament, Renew Europe

Samira Rafaela (SR) thanked the European Commission and civil society for the good cooperation in developing the EU Anti-racism Action Plan. She highlighted three key priorities to address:

- Institutional racism - the importance to recognise the issue in order to address it. The lack of diversity within the Institutions is still a problem and a diverse workforce is vital to ensure a sensitive approach to the issue of anti-racism
- Reliance on technology to recruit can reinforce lack of diversity.
- Stronger legislation enforcement is needed of the EU Treaties, the Charter for Fundamental Rights and EU Directives. SR welcomed that some infringement procedures have started but highlighted the need to adopt concrete actions to address MS transgressions.

• Romeo Franz, Co-President of the ARDI Intergroup, European Parliament, Greens/EFA

Romeo Franz (RF) recalled that ARDI had contributed to the development of the Action Plan and committed to its implementation. He spoke about his own experience as a member of the Romani community, having lost members of his family in the holocaust. RF spoke about the plight of the Romani community, which is over 12 million people, 6 million of which live in the EU. They are one of the most socially excluded minorities, experiencing widespread anti-gypsyism, segregation from schools, denied essential services such as water utilities, sanitary conditions, and many live in extreme poverty. The Romani have been increasingly scapegoated during the COVID-19 pandemic. He underlined the predicament of Romani children, and the need to ensure that anti-gypsyism is treated as seriously as other manifestations of racism. RF highlighted the fact that violence against Romani is particularly bad in various parts of Eastern Europe.

RF reiterated that soft policies would produce only limited change and that national inclusion strategies must be binding, must have budget, as well as progress and monitoring systems. He said that Romani participation in the policy development process is vital, with support of civil society. RF expressed disappointment that Romani were not represented in high level panels.

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- Karen Taylor, European Network against Racism (ENAR), Chair of the Board

Karen Taylor (KT) expressed that participants should legitimately expect the Summit to ensure a safe space and should not be a place which tolerates hate speech. She pointed to a statement released that morning on the issue released by ENAR and co-signed by 80 civil society organisations to highlight their concerns.

KT nevertheless welcomed the Summit and said that ENAR has been a strong advocate for it. She noted the urgency to act against the disproportionate exclusion of people of colour and ethnic minorities, and of prejudice online and offline. She reiterated the need for civil society actors to be involved and to go beyond the commitments to action.

KT acknowledged steps taken but expressed concerns about the tangible impacts of the new EU Anti-racism Action Plan. She stated that the mandate of the EU on anti-racism is not new, and although the Summit is a key milestone, it is not an excuse for complacency. She expressed frustration that concerns of racialised people are still not heard and that lives are being damaged for good.

KT called for more meaningful participation and she finished by stating the need to move beyond consultation towards inclusion of civil society actors in the design and development of policy.

- Raya Kalenova, European Jewish Congress, Executive vice-President and CEO

Raya Kalenova (RK) welcomed the EU Action Plan Against Racism as timely and necessary. She thanked participants for sharing their testimonies which were very moving and highlighted the fact that racism and discrimination is very real and contemporary and need to be addressed.

RK spoke about the experience of European Jewish communities and a worrying trend of increased threats online, of hate speech, conspiracy theories and disinformation. She said law enforcement structures are failing to recognise racist and anti-Semitic harassment and underreporting by victims of harassment is high. There remain key areas of society where Jews are excluded and areas in Europe where Jews cannot openly display their identity. She referred to discrimination of Jewish children in schools and structural racism. Finally, she qualified racism as a shared challenge which affects all our societies.

- Fiyaz Mughal, Founder of Faith Matters and Tell Mama

Fiyaz Mughal (FM) spoke to the impact on emotional and mental health faced by racialised people. He stressed the need to take into account the long-term impact on their health and spoke about the impact of trauma experienced. He noted that racism manifests both as structural racism as well as racism affecting individuals and communities.

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FM reiterated the call for measurable data, which is vital to help us understand the scale of problem. He said that communication of leaders, including EU leaders, needs to be more active on the issue of racism and reassuring and inclusive.

FM also addressed the issue of the lack of representation in EU institutions and that data and transparency are essential to capture, challenge and address the issue of diversity. He called for a blind application processes to mitigate the problem of unconscious bias in recruitment in the European Institutions. FM stressed that the European Institutions do not reflect the communities they are supposed to represent, that in 2021 there is really no excuse.

He echoed the frustrations of young, black, and ethnic minority communities only being called on for tokenistic participation but not truly being part of the decision-making process. FM spoke about the need to invest in leadership, allowing and facilitating participation of younger audiences.

Finally, FM said that bureaucracy and lack of transparency allow racism and prejudice to hide behind these structures and MS need to engage constructively on the issue.

High Level Panel discussion: Tackling racism and racial discrimination through legislation

Panellists:

- Carmen Calvo, First Deputy Prime Minister, Spain

Carmen Calvo (CC) congratulated the European Commission (EC) and Portuguese EU Presidency on the Summit and welcomed the initiative as highly relevant and timely. She said that it was more important than ever to address the issue of racism and discrimination, as our societies are in a situation of crisis, not just in the area of health, but also social, economic challenges.

CC said that it was crucial to promote freedom, respect, and equality, that the EU is built on the principles of human rights, and that racist discourse is a denial of democracy itself.

CC welcomed the EU Anti-racism Action Plan as a framework to inform decisions and action. She detailed how Spain is taking steps through its courts and legislation to transpose law into the Spanish legal system. That it is time to stop applying different standards to minorities and move society forward with responsibility. The Spanish Government is working hard to ensure to tackle racism against citizens from North Africa, European Jews, European Roma and other minorities. She stressed that racism is not compatible with European and Spanish principles and that Spain will be at the forefront of implementing the EU Action Plan against Racism.

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- Elisabeth Moreno, Minister for Equality between Women and Men and Diversity, France

Elisabeth Moreno (EM) spoke about how racism and discrimination affects cohesion and the defence of European values, condemning them as unworthy of our humanity. She confirmed that the EU Action Plan Against Racism is in total alignment with actions undertaken in France. She said that racism has evolved and taken on new forms but has not diminished in intensity. She reiterated France's deep commitment to continue fighting against racism and all forms of discrimination. In France, legislation punishing racism dates back from 1972 and EU laws have helped strengthen the legislative framework.

EM spoke about the importance of training for staff and representatives of public institutions who must be exemplary (law enforcement, public services, magistrates, educators).

She called for all actors be mobilised, including public and private sectors, and for NGOs and civil society actors to be supported with adequate resources.

France will adopt its National Action Plan Against Racism in summer 2022. A new anti-racism platform is being launched, as well as a citizens consultation process on the issue.

EM closed by mentioning the Digital Single Act Directive as a major tool in this fight, and that France will work closely with all EU institutions to make sure it is up to the challenge, in particular during its presidency of the Council of the European Union.

- Maria Daniella Marouda, Council of Europe, Chair of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)

Maria Daniella Marouda (MDM) drew attention to the publication of ECRI's annual report. She highlighted the need for equality bodies to devote more efforts on communications strategies, so that they can adequately communicate their work.

MDM mentioned the joint statement by ECRI, ODHIR, FRA and UN CERD¹ on the importance of deep diving into new forms of racism, of field work and data as being vital to change mindsets.

She highlighted an impact study commissioned by ECRI which showed that while most MS do have legislation, there are still gaps, and generally EU legislation has helped to bridge some of these gaps. 96% of respondents agreed that stakeholder consultations had influenced national legislative change. Over half said that this had contributed to adapting legislation to new forms of discrimination.

MDM called for the enforcement of more effective sanction for race-related offenses. She also mentioned the issue of cutting funding to racist political parties.

She recognised the difficulties in effective implementation and that detailed action plans and strategies were key to this. She also underscored the key role of independent equality bodies.

¹ Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)

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Finally, MDM spoke about the need to tackle racism at the roots, investing in younger generations through inclusive education.

- **Tena Šimonovic Einwalter, EQUINET, Chair of the Executive Board**

Tena Šimonovic Einwalter (TSE) introduced EQUINET: 47 national public institutions which are working to promote equality and tackle discrimination. She reiterated that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated inequalities. That the broadening of the scope of the Black Lives Matter movement had triggered important conversations in Europe.

TSE was encouraged to see that the EU Anti-racism Action Plan foresees an important role for equality bodies. She called for not only a better enforcement of existing legislation, but also the development of new legislation to bridge the gaps. She said that it was important to shift the burden of proof away from victims and to address indirect discrimination. TSE stressed that a combination of mainstreaming across policies is necessary, as well as targeted measures and positive action measures. She noted the importance of acknowledging that poverty intersects with racial and ethnic discrimination.

TSE called for new legislation to strengthen the role of equality bodies and that binding measures would be key to the success of the EU Action Plan. She noted that MS have a wide measure of variation on how equality bodies are set up, with variations in mandates and independence. She closed with a plea to strengthen the mandate and resources of equality bodies within the EU.

- **Alfiaz Vaiya, EQUINOX, Co-Founder**

Alfiaz Vaiya (AV) said that he spoke on behalf of racialised people, for those who are made to settle 'for the minimum'. He said that commitments are one thing but what is needed is action. He said that all forms of oppression need to be called out and that being anti-racist is a choice which must be made every day. AV recalled that 'European values' are in fact universal values and cautioned against the dangers of European exceptionalism.

AV drew attention to the publication of EQUINOX's first paper detailing recommendations for the EU to create lasting change in the area of anti-racism. Highlights of the recommendations include:

- The EU's approach has been reactive and focused on combatting singular individual acts rather than tackling structural and institutional.
- The EU works in silos on multiple initiatives without coordination. There is an erasure of certain racialised communities in initiatives.
- The EU must be coherent in anti-racism policy and it should not be confined to certain policy areas only, it must be mainstreamed. e.g., EC actions in area of migration.
- Political commitment is needed. Certain activists are still silenced for calling out white supremacy.

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- The EC must ensure adequate resources and restrictions, for example, in setting up the Anti-Racism Coordinator team
- The Council must adopt Conclusions on discrimination.
- EU leadership must condemn racism by other leaders.
- The EC should update its guidelines on human rights defenders.

- **Detlef Schröder, European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL), Director**

Detlef Schröder (DS) took note of criticism levelled at law enforcement services and acknowledged the need to address organisational culture within services. He is aware of acts of racism by officials and condemns them completely. The role of law enforcement is to solve problems and serve communities. He drew attention to the need to focus not only on services, as racism is rooted in society and reflected back in its services.

DS said that key to tackling the issue is educational training, that CEPOL provides training which is complementary to national initiatives and that some 30 thousand officials have already been trained.

DS welcomed the role foreseen for CEPOL in the EU Anti-Racism Action Plan. He also agreed with calls to engage more meaningfully with civil society and an expert group is being set up to examine this issue.

He called for a stronger orientation of EU European Police Code of Ethics, that the document should be revised and its components on Anti-Racism sharpened.

- **Elena Bonetti, Minister for Equal Opportunities and Family, Italy**

Elena Bonetti (EB) pledged Italy's strong support to the EU Action Plan. She drew attention to a public consultation which has been launched in Italy to renew the national strategy against racism.

The consultation will be 'bottom up', involving civil society, private and public bodies, and equality bodies. EB stated that it is essential to complete the existing European legislation. The process is an opportunity to support vulnerable people and Italy is ready to actively participate in this common project.

Concluding remarks:

- **Roberta Metsola, Vice President of the European Parliament, European's People Party (EPP) Group**

Roberta Metsola (RM) emphasised the importance of the EU Anti-Racism Action Plan. She expressed concern for the racist rhetoric around recent elections in the EU and stressed how easily these narratives can take root in society. She recalled how throughout history, 'the stranger' is the easiest of scapegoats to channel frustration. RM stressed the importance of challenging false narratives, and

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confronting populist policies which finding the simplest answers to the most complex issues. It is not just about removing disinformation but countering it. She spoke about the need to defend common values, and that the European Parliament is an ally in the struggle to end racism.

- **Janez Cigler Kralj, Minister of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Slovenia**

Janez Cigler Kralj (JCK) said that discussions have shown that there are many good practices at EU and MS level. Slovenia has established a wide range of protection measures, including promoting social inclusion of Roma people, and facilitating their participation in the labour market. He said there was a need to take on a more active role in anti-racism in education and training, to encourage participation in the public space. He detailed programmes and measures to help integrate and include minorities and vulnerable groups, such as Roma women.

JCK noted with concern the increased presence of hate speech. Slovenia will convene a High-level conference during its presidency of Council, on combatting online hate speech and online violence against women and girls.

He stressed the importance of turning principles into actions and welcomed the Summit as an indicator of readiness and joint commitment to defending core values.

- **Věra Jourová, European Commission, Vice-President for Values and Transparency**

Věra Jourová (VJ) thanked all participants for an active and engaged discussion throughout the Summit. She recalled hearing from many interventions during the Summit how deeply embedded racism is in society and the need to identify and acknowledge the root causes to turn the tide. This includes acknowledging slavery and Europe's colonial and the holocaust, to reconcile with the past.

VJ reiterated that the most effective ways to address racism is through targeted measures, equality mainstreaming into legislation, and adequately funding programmes. She underlined the need for an intersectional perspective, as racism is often combined with religion, gender, sexual identity and disability.

VJ called on MS to implement National Action Plans against Racism and to maximise all tools, including funding from Next generation EU and the Citizens Equality Rights and Values programme. She called on MS to mobilise adequate budget, and that resource mobilisation should be part of national action plans. She said the EU will support MS throughout whole process of action plan drafting and implementing.

VJ encouraged MS to step up efforts to prevent racist law enforcement and boost prosecution of hate crimes. She also encouraged the effective implementation of other EU legal frameworks, such as the Racial Equality Directive Report.

VJ spoke about the role of the Anti-Racism coordinator, and that they will play a key role in effectively consulting with stakeholders and racialised communities themselves.

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VJ acknowledged that structural racism can prevent minority leaders from participating in decision-making and reiterated the Commission's commitment to improving diversity of staff, through measures targeting recruitment and staffing.

She stated that the EU Action Plan against Racism is a key tool to advance change across the EU. It includes not only provisions for legislation, but also addresses cultural attitudes and economic concerns. VJ foresees the development of further legislation under the Action Plan, in particular around the issue of online hate speech.

VJ concluded by thanking all participants. She acknowledged the many challenges ahead but that this is only the beginning of many processes.

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