

## **Recommendation on the European Union's position at the World Conference against Racism, Xenophobia, Anti-Semitism and Intolerance**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Rule 107 of the Rules of Procedure,
- having regard to the provisions of the EU and EC treaties which commit the Union and its Member States to the observance of high standards of human rights and non-discrimination, and in particular to Articles 6, 7 and 29 of the EU Treaty and Article 13 of the EC Treaty, and to the European Charter of Fundamental Rights,
- having regard to the relevant international legal instruments to which the Member States are parties especially the 1965 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the 1995 Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms,
- having regard to the establishment in 1997 of the EU's Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia and the important role it can play in the fight against racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism,
- having regard to the European Union's emphasis on the role of civil society in combating racism and racial discrimination and welcoming activities in this field,
- having regard to the welcome existence now of European Union legislation banning race discrimination (in the form of Council Directive 2000/43/EC<sup>(9)</sup>) and much progress towards acceptance and celebration of diversity in Europe, which gives the EU authority in contributing to the deliberations of the World Conference,
- noting however that there is room not for EU complacency but for learning too from the rest of the world since much individual and institutional racism persists in Europe, opinion surveys give considerable cause for concern regarding attitudes towards minority groups, racist violence seems to be on the increase, and there is a worrying degree of political exploitation of prejudice including against immigrants and asylum-seekers,
- having regard to the regional preparatory conferences in Dakar, Tehran, and Santiago, and especially to the conclusions of the 'All different, all equal' European preparatory Conference of October 2000, whose subtitle 'from principle to practice' is an injunction we need to follow,
- whereas the rise in racism and racist violence against minorities are posing a serious political problem in the Member States, which must deal with it particularly by working for a proper intercultural dialogue and respect of the different cultures,
- whereas the Member States' colonial history is one of the origins of racism, and Europe has been the site of the holocaust in its recent history, and whereas this makes it necessary for that history to be acknowledged in the education system as well as in teaching the history of Europe,
- whereas, in spite of the efforts at international legal level in the European Union, the number of acts of racist violence against members of immigrant communities and minorities has increased in Europe and the rest of the world,
- emphasising that the European Union rejects theories which assert the racial superiority of particular groups of peoples,
- whereas the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance will be held in Durban, South Africa, from 31 August to 7 September 2001, to which Parliament pledges its support,
- expressing its dismay at the human tragedies taking place daily at and within the European Union's frontiers, in which large numbers of refugees and immigrants are denied entry into the European Union or are deported; and the determination of the Member States of the European Union to tackle clandestine immigration in a humane way, by combating the Mafia networks that are exploiting human poverty, rather than taking repressive measures against their victims,

- convinced that the European Union has a key responsibility as well as opportunity to take the lead in ensuring a successful outcome to the World Conference Against Racism, because racism and xenophobia are the antithesis of the spirit and practices of European integration, discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin undermines the objectives of the EC Treaty, and the European Union is developing an area of freedom, security and justice and has a constructive role to play in international relations,

1. Puts to the Council the following recommendation;

2. Recalls to the Council the Resolution of the European Parliament of 21 September 2000 concerning the European Union's position at the World Conference against Racism;

3. Believes that Member States and the Union should put principle into practice and make the fight against racism and xenophobia a priority both domestically and internationally, including actively opposing ethnic cleansing and genocide and stressing the fight against racism and xenophobia in the context of negotiations with applicant countries;

4. Points out that the equality of the political, social and cultural rights of minorities and immigrants is the basis of democratic life and deprives racist movements of their ideological source by giving additional safeguards to the most underprivileged,

5. Urges the Council to incorporate in the Common Position it presents on behalf of the European Union at the World Conference Against Racism 2001:

- firm condemnation of attacks on immigrants and members of minorities, and of racist or discriminatory arrangements against any group of people,
- a proper pride in progress the European Union is making in combating racism but also a proper humility about the challenges we still need to address,
- an acknowledgement of Europe's history and contemporary experience; that slavery and colonialism, the Holocaust, ethnic cleansing and religious intolerance have caused suffering; and a recognition of their long-term and continuing impact,
- awareness and acknowledgement of the connection between, on the one hand, combating racism and on the other, pursuing a coordinated European policy on asylum and immigration and promoting the equal legal position of immigrants,
- a commitment by the Member States of the European Union to take practical measures to combat racism: training programmes to combat intolerance; legal recourses for the prosecution of parties and groups with racist or xenophobic ideology; programmes for the social integration of immigrants etc.,
- a commitment to help achieve a consensus with parties from other regions of the world on assisting future international development, not least in offering technical and financial assistance to countries at the forefront of the fight against racism and xenophobia,
- acknowledgement that full respect for basic rights, including the right to development – established as a fundamental right at the World

Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993 – is an essential factor to prevent conflicts of an ethnic nature, particularly in the developing countries,

- emphasis of the importance of the participation of civil society and the NGOs, as essential players when proposing strategies to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and any other form of expression of intolerance,
  - expression of the determination of the European Union Member States to treat the immigration phenomenon as part of a global strategy that includes cooperation with the immigrants' countries of origin and immigrants' integration in social and employment terms,
  - the need to take account of situations of multiple discrimination, giving especial attention to women, as it is essential to include the gender perspective in action to combat racism and xenophobia,
  - emphasis on the need to promote policies and programmes that foster and develop the civil, political, economic and social rights of the victims of intolerance, racism and xenophobia,
6. Calls on the Presidency, in accordance with Articles 19 and 21 of the EU Treaty, to inform and consult Parliament at an early date on the main aspects and basic choices concerning the common position for, and coordinated action at, the conference;

7. Instructs its President to forward this Recommendation to the Council, the Commission, the governments of Member States, the Council of Europe and the General Secretary of the World Conference against Racism.

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(1) OJ L 180, 19.7.2000, pp. 22-26.