

World Against Racism and Fascism Statement for 19 March 2022, UN Anti Racism Day

United against all forms of racism, Islamophobia and antisemitism – United against the rise of fascism

We will come together once again for a global day of protest on Saturday 19 March 2022, to mark UN Anti-Racism Day. Across many countries, #WorldAgainstRacism demonstrations will take place against all forms of racism, Islamophobia and antisemitism, in opposition to racist scapegoating of refugees, migrants and Roma, Muslim and Jewish communities, and in solidarity with the #BlackLivesMatter movement.

A major focus for many of this year's demonstrations will be to say refugees and migrants are welcome, and to oppose racist hostile environments and “push backs”, where armed patrols drive back refugees at the borders. The continuing horrifying deaths of refugees at sea and the appalling situation on the Poland Belarus border are just two recent flashpoints reflecting a much wider crisis. The vast displacement of people we can expect to come, as a result of governments’ failure to take action to address climate chaos, means we will see many, many more refugees facing racist border policies, and further underlines the urgency with which anti racist movements must respond. We must insist that people cannot be left to drown, and that refugees must be welcomed. The “push back” policies currently being applied on many borders are not only inhumane: they also break international law concerning asylum seekers.

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic —combined with the failure of governments to properly protect their populations and the looming impact of a major economic crash— has created the situation where the most abhorrent forms of racism can thrive. From the beginning of the pandemic, the disproportionate impact of the virus on black and minority ethnic (BAME) communities, reflected in the starkly disproportionate deaths in these communities, has been a major feature. This racism is also reflected in the shocking failure to provide vaccines to the vast majority of the population in the global south.

In many countries, fascist and far right parties and organisations continue to pose a serious threat. These forces are trying to build through the mobilisations of the Covid deniers and anti vaxxers. Their conspiracy myths fuel antisemitic and racist prejudices.

The far-right also attack the rights of LGBT+ people and women in general, as a key element in their attempt to push back the rights of everybody. We must offer a united response to these attacks, leaving no opening for them to promote their hatred.

As anti-racists we celebrate the departure of Trump, while recognising that much of his terrible legacy still remains in place. On 19 March we will highlight the importance of our unity in the face of division, and stress that we must stand together to challenge the threat of racist populism, the far right and fascism.

In the wake of the #BlackLivesMatter movement, the deep levels of institutionalised racism in society continue to be exposed, with campaigns developing across the globe to decolonise, and calls for reparations, to be paid by the people, places and organisations that profited from slavery. A reflection of the reach of the #BlackLivesMatter was the number of football teams in the UEFA European Football Championship who carried out #TakeTheKnee anti racist actions, spearheaded by the England team — despite concerted attacks by the British government which refused to condemn racist booing.

As has been shown by anti-racist and anti-fascist movements in Greece, with the defeat and jailing of fascist Golden Dawn at the end of 2020, and in Austria with the huge drop in the FPÖ's vote, the key to driving back the threat of fascism and the far right lies in building mass, broad united campaigns to expose, oppose and defeat racism, fascism and the far right.

The danger of racism and the far-right is now worldwide; political forces that promote and feed on hatred are emerging on every continent on the planet, threatening the wellbeing of the vast majority of the population. That is why it is urgent to build a united response to that threat at a global level: north and south, east and west.

On 19 March 2022 we are organising across the world to hold demonstrations (with Covid safety in place) and other protest actions, that can show our unity and develop and build the anti-racist movement that is so critical to ensuring we oppose all forms of racism, Islamophobia and antisemitism and resist the rise of fascism and the far right.

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