



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

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Agenda item 4

**Human rights situations that require the Council's attention**

### **Written statement\* submitted by ArabEuropean Forum for Dialogue and Human Rights, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[16 May 2021]

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\* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.

## **Racism crisis in the USA throughout the past two years**

The United States witnessed a sharp increase in crimes committed on a racial basis. There were many signs of racial discrimination against African Americans, It is a crisis with origins in American society and related to the legacy of slavery and theories of superiority of the races. These are considered practices that represent a grave violation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination adopted by the United Nations in December 1965.

The Universal Charter of Human Rights and international conventions have emphasized that all forms of racism and racial discrimination, whether in their institutional form or resulting from official doctrines claiming to be superior or racial exclusivity, such as ethnic cleansing, are among the most serious violations of human rights in the contemporary world and must be combated with all available means. The United Nations has urged all governments to take all necessary measures to combat new forms of racism, in particular.

The United States is still one of the most countries in the world that suffers from the signs of racism and intolerance. A report issued by the FBI revealed the escalation of hate crimes in the United States during the past year, which recorded its highest rate in more than ten years. The report also indicated that hate murders have reached record number during 2019, as the number of hate murders last year reached 51, which is more than double the number of crimes related to the same motive in 2018 .

The rate of hate crimes in the United States continues to increase since 2014, especially by US police officers against African Americans, which results in the outbreak of violence and sabotage.

The scene of the killing of the American citizen George Floyd under the knee of a policeman and his screaming "I cannot breathe" repeated what happened before to the black man Eric Garner in New York in 2014, when a policeman strangled him with his hands. In both cases the policemen claimed that they were seeking to immobilize a suspect, in order to arrest him. In both cases the suspect was unarmed.

That situation sparked widespread and violent protests after the state attorney's office was two days late in filing charges against policeman Derek Chauvin and his three colleagues, and even a spokesman for the attorney general in the city announced an investigation into the incident in Minnesota two days after the start of the protests. Meanwhile, manifestations of discrimination and hate speech multiplied against the Arabs and Muslims and accusing them of terrorism by ordinary Americans in stores and public stores.

The anger in Minneapolis and other American cities has shown the depth of the racial and identity crisis in the United States. It became difficult to look at the developments of that tragedy without looking into the depth of the hostile or ignorant feeling for minorities in American society, whether consciously or unconsciously, and researching the existing structures and practices that excludes them from educational opportunities, health care and housing and also the continuing failure of positive discrimination programs. Without this understanding, which may be followed by attempts for radical change, the current reality will continue to generate anger and violence.

We call on the United States government to pay attention to implementing what is stated in the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and Combating Xenophobic Speech and to transform the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action (6) 1993 to eliminate racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and all forms of intolerance, and to continuously amend the methods used to combat them, Especially in the legislative, administrative, educational, media fields. It is also important to transform what was mentioned in the agreement into executable action programs in order to confront this escalation affecting human rights in the United States.

We also call on the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights in charge of contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, to have a visit to the United States to review the situation and follow up on programs and activities to combat racism and racial discrimination and to cooperate with the US government to confront this phenomenon that has become life threatening for millions of Americans.

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Arab Network for Digital Media and Human Rights, NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.