



Permanent Mission  
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to the other International Organizations  
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**Geneva, 25 September 2017**

**Report of the  
Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent  
on its mission to Germany**

**German Statement**

Mr. President,

Germany has a standing invitation to the special procedures in the United Nations' human rights framework. On this basis the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent undertook a visit to Germany in February 2017. We would like to thank the Working Group for the visit and the report following the mission. The outside perspective can provide valuable insight, helping us to identify problems and to further improve the situation of People of African Descent in Germany.

During their visit, the Working Group met government officials on federal, state and local level, as well as a considerable number of representatives of civil society, in various parts of the country. We highly appreciate this, as we consider civil society as a partner of particular importance, especially in all issues related to human rights. When talking about the situation of People of African descent, it is of paramount importance to hear the voices of those concerned.

The protection of human rights is a core element of the German policy, on the national level as well as globally. This entails close cooperation with all relevant stakeholders. Therefore, the German government has established a wide range of instruments to closely cooperate with civil society and international partners. We highly value findings and recommendations offered by experts whose international expertise offers a different perspective and valuable insights. The Working Group's findings and recommendations can contribute to a fruitful discussion and will be studied in detail.

During their visit, the Working Group followed an extensive schedule through eight cities, and tried to meet with as many institutions and civil society representatives as possible. This inevitably led to some time constraints. Therefore, during the journey, a number of important issues could only be addressed briefly, which may have led to some misunderstandings or contributed to some inaccuracies. Germany has used the opportunity to comment on some of these in a written statement (A/HRC/36/60/Add.4), to which we would like to explicitly refer to.

Fighting discrimination is an ongoing challenge. In accordance with its constitutional principles and human rights obligations, the German government is fully committed to making sure that everybody enjoys equal rights and respect, independently of their ethnic background. We appreciate the Working Group's positive and encouraging remarks regarding many of the resulting policies, some of which have been described as best practice.

In 2006, the German parliament passed the General Equal Treatment Act. While the German constitution had already outlawed any discrimination by state actors, the General Equal Treatment Act was a milestone, as it established the prohibition of discriminatory practices also in private contracts, for example in the labor and housing market.

One area in which further efforts are needed is the recruitment in the public sector. Government should reflect the growing diversity of the German society. To reach this goal, government institutions have established a variety of strategies. All federal states put considerable efforts into recruiting more teachers, police officers and other public servants with a migrant background.

In order to overcome prejudices and other discriminatory practices, special attention is given to the education sector. Reaching young people plays a crucial role in this regard. Additional funding is given to schools with a high proportion of students with a migrant background, as well as to programs that contribute to the general awareness. This included several initiatives from NGOs formed by people of African descent.

The German government would like to use this opportunity to express its gratitude to those in civil society who work relentlessly to fight discrimination and racism, in Germany and around the world. Together, we can make racism history.

Thank you, Mister President