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Tackling racism in law-enforcement institutions

Motion for a resolution

tabled by Ms Tina ACKETOFT and other members of the Assembly

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

Racism is a plight affecting society at large. Unfortunately, law enforcement officials are not immune to it. Many cases have emerged in recent years, in which the police have failed to perform their duties and have acted in breach of laws and regulations when dealing with people from visible minorities. Similarly, the impartiality of courts has been questioned.

The expression 'institutional racism' has been used to indicate 'the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin'. It has often been associated with high profile cases, such as the Stephen Lawrence murder in the United Kingdom which has been mentioned in several Parliamentary Assembly reports and statements.

However, cases of institutional racism by the police and the courts that appear in the media, give rise to a public enquiry and result in a court judgment are only the tip of the iceberg. Many more cases are not publicised; the victims are left alone, without adequate assistance and means of redress; the perpetrators enjoy impunity.

The Assembly should address the issue of racism amongst law-enforcement institutions, with a view to identifying best practices in Council of Europe member States on how to prevent this phenomenon and ensure transparency and accountability in the work of law-enforcement officials.

This work would be an important contribution to the implementation of the report Living together in 21st century Europe, as trust in fair and non-racist law-enforcement institutions is crucial to ensure the peaceful coexistence of the many groups and communities which make up Europe's society.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democrat Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialist Group
NR: Representatives not belonging to a Political Group