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111TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1592

Recognizing persons of African descent in Europe.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 30, 2010

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

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RESOLUTION

Recognizing persons of African descent in Europe.

Whereas the 109th Congress passed H. Con. Res. 60 and S. Con. Res. 90, recognizing African descendants in Latin America and the Caribbean, raising awareness of the racism and discrimination faced by those communities, and leading to numerous public and private sector initiatives between the United States and Latin American and Caribbean countries to improve the situation of African descendants;

Whereas the persistence of racism and discrimination in Europe similarly necessitates congressional action to raise awareness and promote public and private sector initiatives to stem this trend;

Whereas the terms ''Afro-European'', ''African European'', or ''Black European'' refers to people of African ancestry or descent born in, citizens of, or living in Europe;

Whereas more than an estimated 7,000,000 individuals of African descent currently live in and have long had a presence in Europe, forming an influential part of the African diaspora;

Whereas the story of Black Europeans remains untold, rendering many of their past and present contributions to the political and social life of Europe invisible or forgotten;

Whereas, unlike more contemporary figures, largely unknown Blacks have made significant contributions to European history and culture, including Spanish poet Juan Latino, Italian Duke Alessandro Medici, French novelist Alexandre Dumas, German scholar Anthony William Amo, French Composer Le Chevalier de St. George, British abolitionist Oladuah Equiano, and Russian General and Governor Abram Hannibal, great-grandfather of Russian poet Aleksandr Pushkin;

Whereas the largest estimated populations of Black Europeans can be found in France (approximately 2,500,000), the United Kingdom (approximately 1,500,000), and the Netherlands (approximately 500,000), in addition to sizeable populations in Germany, Italy, Portugal, Sweden, Norway, Ireland, Russia, Switzerland, Spain, Belgium, Denmark, and Austria;

Whereas the presence of Blacks in Europe can be traced to voluntary and forced migration resulting from the geographical proximity of Europe to Africa and the Middle East, including the transatlantic slave trade, the coloniza-

tion of Africa and the Caribbean, African and African-American military deployments, the movement of refugees and asylum seekers, and educational and other professional exchanges;

Whereas, although Black Europeans have made significant achievements in and contributions to European society, large numbers have and continue to be more likely than the general population to experience discrimination and be underrepresented in leadership roles in the public and private sector as a result of the color of their skin and ancestry;

Whereas, on April 29, 2008, before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, at a hearing entitled ''The State of (In)visible Black Europe: Race, Rights, and Politics'', Dr. Philomena Essed stated, ''Probably the only common European experience among many, if not all, Afro-descendants is their exposure to [. . .] racism and systemic discrimination, regardless of country, socio-economic conditions, gender, age, or level of education'';

Whereas racism has long been, and continues to be, a problem in Europe;

Whereas the 1997 European Commission opinion poll entitled ''Racism and Xenophobia in Europe'' reported a ''worrying level of racism and xenophobia in [European Union] Member States, with nearly 33% of those interviewed openly describing themselves as 'quite racist' or 'very racist' '';

Whereas the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (EUFRA), formerly the European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia, found in its 2007 through 2010 annual reports that racial and ethnic minorities were dis-

proportionately experiencing discrimination in housing, education, healthcare, employment, the criminal justice system, and access to political participation;

Whereas the 2009 European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey (EU–MIDIS), the first European Union-wide survey of ethnic minority and immigrant groups' experiences of discrimination and victimization in everyday life in the 27 Member States of the European Union found that persons of African descent experienced higher incidents than most other minority groups of discriminatory treatment, racist crime, and victimization, and lacked an awareness of their rights;

Whereas the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights annual report on Hate Crimes in the OSCE region has identified racist violence and crime or hate crimes a continuing problem, the EUFRA has found an ''upward trend in recorded racist crime within the European Union'', and the SOVA Center recorded over 70 racist murders and 300 violent attacks in Russia in 2009, yet in many countries adequate data collection on hate crimes and funds to assist victims with legal assistance and financial support while recovering from violent attacks does not exist;

Whereas prejudice and discrimination towards Black Europeans has also been linked to changes in immigration and asylum laws as a result of anti-terrorism initiatives and the growth and mainstreaming of nationalist and anti-immigrant political parties and groups, including neo-Nazis and skinheads, who believe Europe should be a monoracial society or that other races are inferior;

Whereas the Open Society Justice Initiative 2009 report, entitled ''Ethnic Profiling in the European Union'', found that police officers in the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Germany, and the Netherlands routinely use racial profiling, including targeting Blacks, when deciding whom to target for stops, searches, raids, and surveillance;

Whereas Black Europeans encounter everyday racism, including denials that racism exists despite the blatant use of stereotypes and derogatory terms to refer to Blacks in everyday language, the media, and textbooks;

Whereas there have been numerous efforts by the public and private sector to address racial discrimination and inequality in Europe, including the introduction of anti-discrimination and equality laws that include the legal support for special measures or positive (affirmative) action, creation of equality bodies, media campaigns, and efforts to increase minority political participation;

Whereas these efforts also include the June 1–2 Transatlantic Minority Political Leadership Conference in Brussels following the successful April 15–16, 2009, ''Black European Summit: Transatlantic Dialogue on Political Participation'' held in Brussels at which the Brussels Declaration called for increased minority political inclusion;

Whereas these efforts also include the September 9, 2008, official launching of the Black European Women's Council at the European Union headquarters and the September 27–29, 2007, Vienna Declaration of the Black European Women's Congress, which calls for Members of the European Union to enforce and implement laws to eradicate all forms of discrimination, provide anti-racist education

and training for personnel working in educational institutions and the civil service, increase political representation, participation, and employment opportunities for Blacks, and address racial health disparities, including by providing cultural competency training to health professionals;

Whereas, despite these efforts, international entities, such as the OSCE Personal Representative on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination, EUFRA, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, and the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Independent Expert on minority issues, and Experts Working Group on People of African Descent, have documented ongoing racism and xenophobia, and racial and ethnic discrimination, and called for an increase in initiatives to combat racism and inequality; and

Whereas, throughout the history of the United States, members of both the public and private sectors have exchanged information on best practices for antidiscrimination measures and racial equality with committed parties in other countries, including recent initiatives such as the ''Joint Action Plan Between the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Government of the United States of America to Eliminate Racial and Ethnic Discrimination and Promote Equality'', also known as the United States-Brazil Joint Action Plan Against Racial Discrimination: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved,* That the House of Representatives—

(1) encourages the United States and the international community to recognize and honor the historical and present-day contributions of Black Europeans;

(2) recognizes that, as a result of their skin color and ancestry, many Black Europeans have wrongfully experienced injustices in the public and private sector;

(3) calls upon European parliamentarians, including the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Parliamentary Assembly, to engage in efforts to promote racial equality and combat racial discrimination through efforts such as introducing legislation, speaking out in their parliaments against racism, increasing the political participation of racial minorities, and working with Black European and other minority communities to develop relevant policies;

(4) urges European governments and members of civil society and the private sector, in consultation with Black European communities, to develop and implement initiatives to combat racial discrimination and promote racial equality in Europe, by—

(A) drafting and implementing anti-discrimination, special measures, hate crimes,

migration and integration, and other laws and policies to address discrimination and disparities and promote equality, noting the recommendations of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Experts Working Group on People of African Descent (WGPAD), the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (EUFRA), the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism and Independent Expert on minority issues, the OSCE Personal Representative on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination, and the Black European Women's Council;

(B) promoting and funding research, including the collection of national census data on Black Europeans and their inclusion in the annual reports of the EUFRA;

(C) providing technical support, training, and funding to Black European civil society groups working to combat racism, discrimination, and inequality, and uphold basic human rights in Europe;

(D) introducing national measures to counter stereotypical images of persons of African descent, by revising textbooks, increasing efforts to include Black Europeans in history and heritage institutions, and remembering victims of colonialism, slavery and other atrocities;

(E) developing or increasing financial support for funds to assist victims of hate crimes with legal assistance and compensation when incapacitated due to physical or emotional injuries;

(F) developing specific initiatives that address the special concerns of Black European women and youth;

(G) actively promoting racial and ethnic minority participation at all levels of national, regional, and local government through the education of civil and political rights, including the legislative process and advocacy of legislative issues relevant to racial and ethnic minority communities, development of targeted professional development and hiring strategies, increased youth and community outreach, and self-organization and other empowerment initiatives; and

(H) recruiting, training, and hiring Black Europeans for professional positions in support of these initiatives; and

(5) urges the Secretary of State to—

(A) provide technical assistance and other support for European governments and members of the civil society and private sector to fulfill the initiatives outlined above; and

(B) increase support for the WGPAD.

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