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Declaration
of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments
of the Member States meeting within the Council
on Racism and Intolerance in relation to Young People

The European Union is founded on the principles of liberty, democracy, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and on the rule of law, principles, which are common to the Member States.¹

Young People "believe that a great deal more must be done to guarantee the fundamental rights of each individual and, even more importantly, to guarantee the rights of minorities and tackle all forms of discrimination and racism by all available means."²

Therefore:

The Council and the representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council:

Recalling that:

1. The European Commission White Paper entitled "A new impetus for European Youth" presented on 21 November 2001 proposes a new framework for European Cooperation on Youth Affairs, which the Council (Education and Youth Affairs) of 14 February 2002 recognised as the starting point for the establishment of a framework for European cooperation on youth affairs.

¹ Treaty on EU, Preamble.

² EU Commission White Paper 'A new impetus for European youth', 2001, p.19.

2. The Council (Education and Youth Affairs) and the representatives of the governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, in their Resolution of 27 June 2002 establishing a new framework for cooperation in the youth field, recognised that in this new framework, the Commission's White Paper on Youth identified among the horizontal issues in the context of taking greater account of youth in other policies that of combating racism and xenophobia.
3. The Council at its meeting of 28 June 2001 adopted a 'Declaration by the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, Meeting within the Council, on Combating Racism and Xenophobia on the Internet by Intensifying Work with Young People'¹.
4. The Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin.
5. The Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000, establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation.
6. The Council Decision of 27 November 2000, establishing a community action programme to combat discrimination (2001 to 2006).
7. The Council Regulation (EC) no. 1035/97 of 2 June 1997 established the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia.
8. The Council at its meeting of 24 November 1997 adopted a declaration on 'The Fight against Racism, Xenophobia and Anti-Semitism in the youth field'².

¹ OJ C 196, 12/07/2001, p.1.

² OJ C 1, 03/01/1998, p.1.

9. The Youth Programme includes, as one of its objectives:

‘...to develop understanding of the cultural diversity of Europe and its fundamental common values, thus helping to promote respect for human rights and to combat racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia...’¹.

Recognising that:

1. The Governments of the Member States of the Council of Europe adopted a Political Declaration on Friday 13 October 2000 at the concluding session of the European Conference against Racism “ALL DIFFERENT ALL EQUAL: FROM PRINCIPLE TO PRACTICE”, (The European contribution to the United Nations World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance) held in Strasbourg, from 11-13 October, 2000.
2. The United Nations World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, Durban, South Africa, August – September 2001, adopted a Declaration and Programme of Action containing measures to combat racism and racial discrimination at international, regional and national levels.
3. The 6th Conference of the Ministers responsible for Youth of the Council of Europe entitled "Youth constructing Europe", Thessaloniki, Greece, November 2002, concluded by deciding to give priority, among Council of Europe youth activities, to intercultural dialogue, democratic participation and citizenship and to prevention of violence.

¹ “Article 2 (1) a) of Decision 1031/2000/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 April 2000 establishing the “Youth” Community Action Programme; Article 2 “Objectives of the programme”, paragraph 1 (a)”.

Emphasise that:

1. Article 13 of the Treaty provides for "appropriate action to combat discrimination, based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation". Racism, discrimination and inequality affect young people in a particular way and young people may be both victims and perpetrators of racism and violent acts and, consequently, have a central role to play in effecting positive change in this area.

2. Racism is both overt and covert, subtle and blunt; yet, in all its forms, it is a pernicious phenomenon and is an infringement of fundamental human rights. Its manifestations may take the form of racism at different levels of society, which may often be unintentional and caused by ignorance or lack of thought; racism may take the form of, for example
 - Assaults, abuse and harassment
 - Misinformation and circulation of offensive material

or of discrimination in relation to, for example

- Job opportunities
- Housing
- Health
- Education System
- Access to goods and services

In relation to racism there is a growing concern at the apparently increasing number of assaults involving violence.

Declare as follows:

1. Confirm the importance of the role of young people in combating racism, xenophobia and antisemitism as well as related intolerance and all forms of discrimination, and in promoting cultural diversity, mutual respect, tolerance and solidarity.
2. Young people should be supported at local, regional, national, in recognising the dangers of racism and intolerance.
3. Call for concrete measures by the European Commission and the Member States for providing young people with opportunities of playing an effective role in combating racism, xenophobia and antisemitism as well as related intolerance and all forms of discrimination, and in particular:
 - To reinforce cooperation at all levels and between all actors engaged in this combat and make it one of the priorities of the YOUTH Programme in 2005.
 - To highlight youth issues in the context of the EU-wide awareness-raising campaign on diversity and anti-discrimination entitled “For Diversity – Against Discrimination” on youth in 2005.
 - To take concrete actions on youth in programmes and activities related to these questions.
 - To develop, where appropriate, Internet platforms of and for young people based on existing examples and experience in this field.
 - Organise in 2005 a follow-up conference to the conference “Youth for Tolerance and Democracy – European perspective” in 2001 in Berlin.
 - To aim at gaining a greater appreciation and knowledge of the reasons that lead to these phenomena among youth and on successful strategies to combat them.

Whenever possible, young people should take part in the definition and implementation of these measures.

4. Call for concrete measures by Member States for the same purpose in their programmes on activities for young people, at national, regional and local levels.

5. Call for cooperation with relevant European and international institutions to reinforce measures in this field.

 6. The actions and measures referred to in paragraph 3 above and the progress made should be reviewed in an appropriate manner by the end of 2005.
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