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115th CONGRESS
2nd Session

Printed for the use of the
Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

Race, Rights, and Politics: Black and Minority Populations in Europe

SEPTEMBER 12, 2018

**Briefing of the
Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe**

Washington: 2018

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ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

The Helsinki process, formally titled the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, traces its origin to the signing of the Helsinki Final Act in Finland on August 1, 1975, by the leaders of 33 European countries, the United States and Canada. As of January 1, 1995, the Helsinki process was renamed the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe [OSCE]. The membership of the OSCE has expanded to 56 participating States, reflecting the breakup of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia.

The OSCE Secretariat is in Vienna, Austria, where weekly meetings of the participating States' permanent representatives are held. In addition, specialized seminars and meetings are convened in various locations. Periodic consultations are held among Senior Officials, Ministers and Heads of State or Government.

Although the OSCE continues to engage in standard setting in the fields of military security, economic and environmental cooperation, and human rights and humanitarian concerns, the Organization is primarily focused on initiatives designed to prevent, manage and resolve conflict within and among the participating States. The Organization deploys numerous missions and field activities located in Southeastern and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. The website of the OSCE is: <www.osce.org>.

ABOUT THE COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

The Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, also known as the Helsinki Commission, is a U.S. Government agency created in 1976 to monitor and encourage compliance by the participating States with their OSCE commitments, with a particular emphasis on human rights.

The Commission consists of nine members from the United States Senate, nine members from the House of Representatives, and one member each from the Departments of State, Defense and Commerce. The positions of Chair and Co-Chair rotate between the Senate and House every two years, when a new Congress convenes. A professional staff assists the Commissioners in their work.

In fulfilling its mandate, the Commission gathers and disseminates relevant information to the U.S. Congress and the public by convening hearings, issuing reports that reflect the views of Members of the Commission and/or its staff, and providing details about the activities of the Helsinki process and developments in OSCE participating States.

The Commission also contributes to the formulation and execution of U.S. policy regarding the OSCE, including through Member and staff participation on U.S. Delegations to OSCE meetings. Members of the Commission have regular contact with parliamentarians, government officials, representatives of non-governmental organizations, and private individuals from participating States. The website of the Commission is: <www.csce.gov>.

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Race, Rights, and Politics: Black and Minority Populations in Europe

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September 12, 2018

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe
Washington, DC

The briefing was held at 10:03 a.m. in Room 2220, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC, Dr. Mischa E. Thompson, Senior Policy Advisor, Commission for Security and Cooperation in Europe, presiding.

Panelists present: Hon. Gwen Moore, Commissioner, Commission for Security and Cooperation in Europe; Dr. Mischa E. Thompson, Senior Policy Advisor, Commission for Security and Cooperation in Europe; Alfiaz Vaiya, Coordinator, European Parliament Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI); MP Olivio Kocsis-Cake, Hungary; MP Killion Munyama, Poland; MP Aminata Touré, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany; MP Clive Lewis, United Kingdom; Nero Ughwujabo, Special Advisor to Prime Minister Theresa May, Social Justice, Young People & Opportunities, United Kingdom; Simon Woolley, Director, Operation Black Vote; Chair, Prime Minister's Race Disparity Advisory Group; Jeff Klein, Public Policy Advisor, Each One Teach One; and Ali Khan, Open Society Initiative for Europe.

Dr. THOMPSON. Good morning. My name is Dr. Mischa Thompson. And welcome to "Race, Rights, and Politics: Black and Minority Populations in Europe," a briefing hosted by the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, also known as the Helsinki Commission. For those who may not know, the Helsinki Commission is an independent U.S. Government agency focused on human rights, economics, and security in the 57 North American and European countries that make up the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. The commission is chaired by members of Congress, bicameral, bipartisan, and includes the executive branch.

The OSCE has had a focus on diverse and vulnerable populations, from Roma and Jewish populations to national minorities and migrants, in Europe and the United States since its inception. Over the past decade, our commissioners have also focused on the situation of people of African descent in Europe, or black Europeans, from hearings in the U.S. Congress to resolutions in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. Central to those efforts has been raising awareness about Europe's long history and contribution of African descent populations. It is one reason several of our commissioners were recently sup-

portive of the European Parliament's first-ever People of African Descent Week, held in Brussels in May.

We are very thankful to be joined today by some of the organizers and participants of what was called PAD Week, as well as some of Europe's leading legislators and voices on democracy and human rights. You can find all of today's speakers' bios in the blue folders and online. And we actually have several panels today—after each panel there will be time for questions and discussion with both our in-house audience and our online audience. We are also able to take comments via Facebook and can be followed under the Twitter handle @HelsinkiComm—so, Helsinki C-O-M-M. Please be certain to speak loudly into the microphone for our in-house audience as well as the persons on the panel.

And with that, I will turn us over to Alfiaz Vaiya from the European Parliament, to lead our discussion today.

Mr. VAIYA. Thank you very much, Mischa. And, first of all, thank you to the U.S. Helsinki Commission, to Dr. Mischa Thompson, and to Izmira for organizing today's briefing in Congress. We have an interesting panel of different policymakers from Europe who represent black and minority populations in Europe. We will try to split today's debate into three panels, the first panel being on the state of human civil rights in Europe, a second panel looking at ways forward and looking at the U.K. Race Disparity Audit with Prime Minister May's advisor on race issues, and then a final panel with representatives of civil society from Europe to talk about different policies and ways forward.

So I don't want to take up too much time. The idea is to make it an interactive discussion rather than speeches. So I will introduce our first panel. To my right is Clive Lewis, who is a member of Parliament from the United Kingdom. To my nearest right is Olivio Kocsis, who is a member of Parliament in Hungary. To my left is Dr. Killion Munyama, who's a member of Parliament in Poland. And finally, I have Aminata Touré, who is a member of Parliament in the German regional Parliament.

So we're going to have a little bit of a discussion on the issues in Europe. For those of you who aren't really familiar with what's going on in Europe, we seem to have had in the last few years a wave of different populist movements appearing in Europe—both left-wing and right-wing. And we see that all across Europe, these movements are breaking the traditional political center spectrum. And we're seeing these policies now actually have majorities becoming represented in Parliament, but also in governments. From Portugal, where you see left-wing parties in a coalition government, to other countries, such as in Austria and Italy, where you see populist parties who are right-wing in government. And so we see the normalization of these populist parties in Europe. And that has an effect on black and minority populations in Europe.

We will go a little bit away from black populations in Europe, because we have also speakers coming from countries where you have less of a black population. And we will broaden the discussion to minorities and refugees and asylum seekers. We also have a very good political balance in the first panel because we have members of Parliament who belong to the Christian Democrats, to Social Democrats, and to Greens. So I think we'll have a very interesting discussion.

Maybe I can first come to Olivio. So we see—in Hungary, the Christian Democrat Fidesz Party is in government. We've seen regularly attacks on different fundamental and civil rights in Hungary, from freedom of press, from academic freedom, to judicial reforms and also issues around press freedom. But one of the main issues we see also in Hungary

is a constant wave of populist messages targeting vulnerable communities—those who are migrant, asylum seekers, refugees, to Muslims, to LGBTI community, and others. So what is your perspective on what's happening in Hungary right now? And how do you see it playing out in the next couple of years?

Mr. KOCSIS-CAKE. First of all, thank you for the introduction and thank you for inviting me to this event. In the first place, let me just describe the Hungary situation. My name is Olivio Kocsis-Cake, and I am the member of the Hungarian Parliament and party director of Dialogue for Hungary Party. It's a brand-new party. It was established in 2013. Dialogue is a progressive green party whose agenda focuses on social issues, social justice, ecology and sustainability. Hungary, due to its historical background, lack of colonial past, and geographical position—being landlocked in Central Europe—Hungary has very limited African origins or black citizens. I think the same in Poland. They number approximately a couple of thousands, most of them being descendants of exchange students who met their future wives or husbands during their study. I came from such a marriage. My father came from Guinea-Bissau and studied economics in Budapest when he first saw my mother.

My personal background has always made me sensitive about minority and social issues and human rights, civil rights of my country. Solidarity is a key pillar of my own values and my party's political agenda. In Hungary, the minority facing the biggest social challenge is the Romas. Their situation in some respects resembled that of African Americans in the 1960s. In the legal and constitutional perspective the Roma are equal members of the Hungarian society, but the reality is very different. Their social status, coupled with brutal lack of opportunities, make their ordeals one of the biggest challenges and major responsibilities of any progressive political leader or political party. So briefly, this is the situation in Hungary.

Mr. VAIYA. Thank you, Olivio.

So maybe if I turn over to Dr. Killion Munyama. Olivio said that there are lot of similarities between Hungary and Poland. We see with the Law and Justice ruling party that a lot of the reforms that they're doing in Poland are very similar to the reforms we see Prime Minister Orban doing in Hungary. And we see that, the line of attack against, you know, vulnerable communities and minorities is also very similar to Hungary.

Now, you're a politician from the Christian Democrat party, the Civic Platform. You were in government—your party was in government previously and has been challenging the current government on their reforms. How would you assess what's going on in Poland in regards to minorities?

But also taking your own example—I mean, you're the only black member of Parliament in Poland. And you've done some work for the Council of Europe on improving representation of ethnic, religious, racial, and LGBTI minorities in Europe. So maybe you can talk a little bit about that as well.

Thank you.

Dr. MUNYAMA. Thank you very much, Alfiaz, for the introduction. It's such an honor to be here to present our work within the Council of Europe, as well as my work in the Parliament of Poland. I've been a member of the Polish Parliament since 2011. This is my second term of office in the Parliament. Correctly, I'm the only black representative of the Polish Parliament, out of 460 members. Poland, as it has been mentioned by Olivio, it's very much similar to Hungary, in the sense that most of the black community there

is based on former students who now work within Poland. They are professors, they are part and parcel of the health sector in Poland. And to be frank with you, we could say that most of us—[off-side conversation]. All right, yes.

So what is happening today in Poland is that there is a situation whereby the leading—the ruling party, Law and Justice, actually has been introducing some of the legal aspects that are not very clear to most of the expectations of the country today. But of course, it's been challenged by the European Union and also the Council of Europe itself on violating some legal aspects that have been going on for the last 30 years in the country. The country has been developing very well. It's still developing at the moment. And we can say that some of those legal changes that need to be changed are, of course, justified in some way. But they have to be conducted in a better way than it has been conducted so far.

But on the political ground or in Poland, and the fact that minorities are actually somehow recognized, and it's not an issue at the—you know, that they are completely outspoken. We can say that at the moment, working—I mean, I've worked on a report in the Council of Europe that has been a resolution—Resolution 2222—on promoting diversity in politics. And this involves people of different minorities and sexual orientation. People of minority background such that in the resolutions we have come up with some very important conclusions. We say that there should be a change of mindset, deconstructing the stereotypes according to which origin and competencies are interlinked.

We have put some recommendations to political parties in the 47 member countries of the Council of Europe. And most of those recommendations are there to encourage the progression of people from diverse backgrounds within party structures. We have also emphasized the fact that political parties should introduce mentorship programs and ensure that their beneficiaries come from a variety of backgrounds. Also, we have indicated that political parties should look to support the creation of group-specific causes within their ranks, and also to ensure that equality across the board is mainstreamed in political programs and the public discourse of their leaders.

So these are some of the recommendations that we have put in the resolution, which is from the Council of Europe. As I said earlier, it's a Council of Europe which consists of 47 member countries. Out of those, 28 are in the European Union and 19 are actually non-European Union members. So I'll go into details on some of the conclusions of the resolution in the latter stage.

Thank you.

Mr. VAIYA. Thank you very much, Killion. Before I go to the other two panelists, I want to introduce a good friend of ours and a very strong supporter of black and minority populations in Europe, Congresswoman Gwen Moore. Congresswoman Gwen Moore has been an active supporter of our work in improving political representation of black and minority populations in Europe, through sponsoring the Transatlantic Minority Political Leadership Conference, but also through the Helsinki Commission.

Congresswoman Moore is a member of the Helsinki Commission, a whip of the Congressional Black Caucus, and an active member in various caucuses, including the Congressional Progressive Caucus, the LGBT Caucus, and others. Congresswoman Moore is also the ranking member on the Financial Services Committee. And I think that's why we have this room today as well. [Laughter.] So a big thank you to you, Congresswoman Moore. If I can give you the floor to say some words?

Ms. MOORE. I'm also late. [Laughter.] I was just listening to honorable Munyama give this amazing report. And I do have some questions. I don't want to really interrupt the flow of the panel. I just want to comment on how proud I am of this organization, and the deepening relationship that is developing between African American parliamentarians and our brothers and sisters across the pond. They want to thank Dr. Mischa Thompson from the Helsinki Commission, my fellow commissioners—Representative Hastings, Representative Sheila Jackson Lee—also our outstanding staff, Bob Hand, who—last time I saw you was over there, I don't ever know where you're going to be. And of course, my own Izmira Aitch, who herself was educated in Europe and came to appreciate the importance of these relationships. I think she is not going to let me get away with not making sure that you all are all recognized.

I just want to say that this relationship is really deepening. And I'm really happy that these parliamentarians are going to participate in the Congressional Black Caucus conference this weekend and on various panels. They're going to participate—and if I'm repeating myself, Mischa, you're too far away to kick me. [Laughter.] They're going to be doing other work here—they're going to be in sessions with Representative Sheila Jackson Lee on her Judiciary Braintrust, and Representative Bobby Rush on voting rights on September 13th. And so we really look forward to their full engagement this weekend.

I'm really pleased that this briefing on "Race, Rights and Politics: Black and Minority Populations in Europe" really gets the traction that it needs. We're doing something beyond just, you know, Africans of the diaspora for a week or for a year or 10-year period. We're trying to build the relationship that is going to continue, because our challenges and our assets are the same. We have challenges with the police, with political inclusion, with lack of recognition of our gifts and talents and the contributions that we make in building our countries to be the best they can be.

And so like all politicians, I talk too long. So I will yield back to you, honorable Munyama.

Mr. VAIYA. Thank you very much——

Ms. MOORE. I'm sorry. [Laughter.]

Mr. VAIYA. Thank you very much, Congresswoman Moore. I think some of the points you make about some of the issues in the U.S. and in Europe—we face a lot of overlapping issues. And I think more so than now any time before, we see that those issues are really coming to the forefront and that black and minority populations, both in the U.S. and Europe, are facing similar problems, whether it's political rhetoric to issues around criminal justice to representation. And so it's good to bring politicians and policymakers from Europe to have these discussions. So thank you very much for always supporting us in that work.

Maybe I can now move on to Aminata Touré, who is a member of Parliament in the northern regional parliament in Germany. And so Germany's an interesting case because, until so long after the Holocaust, we really saw a strong resistance to the far right and to populist parties. And then suddenly in the last few years we see the rise of the AfD, the Alternativ fur Deutschland, which is a far-right populist party. We see that in the last general election they increased their vote share and entered the Parliament. And we see that they're changing the political discourse that both Social Democrats and Christian Democrats are now following. And we see a toughening in political rhetoric from the middle who have now shifted to the right in Germany. And we see that since, let's say,

this great intake in 2015 when Angela Merkel opened the borders, as some critics would say, we see a lot of tensions in Germany—between, let's say, the majority and the minority population.

And you're a spokesperson for the Greens on migration. So it would be interesting to hear what you think of the AfD and their influence on the political scene, especially as you're being a member of Parliament for the Greens, but also about the situation for migrants and refugees. Just this past two weekends we saw large protests. We saw Nazi salutes in the street. But we also saw something which was a bit more worrying, which was the reaction of certain policymakers, who normalized it, including the chairman of the intelligence agency who downplayed the incidents of far-right mobs. So maybe you can touch on those points. I know we're brief on time, but just some points.

Ms. TOURÉ. Yes. First of all, thank you for the invitation. I'm very happy and glad to be here. Yes, the situation in Germany is difficult because, for example, to describe the situation in the state where I live, in northern Germany, I was the first black woman ever in the Parliament. And, on the other hand [applause], it was the first time for the right-wing party to enter the Parliament at the same time. So you see, you have a very tense situation there. So every time I'm talking in the Parliament, I'm directly talking to them and telling them what they are not doing right. And so it's always very tense in this Parliament.

And as you mentioned, 2 weeks ago a person was killed by two refugees in Chemnitz, in eastern Germany. And so this happened. And the right-wing parties and neo-Nazis used this situation to go on the streets and to follow people who look different, or look not white, actually. And so they went out on the streets and were following them. And there were a lot of people going on the streets on the other hand—for example, myself and colleagues from Schleswig-Holstein—we were going there to demonstrate for the rights of migrants and minorities because the situation was very difficult. And we are talking right now in Germany—in the whole of Germany about this situation, that on the one hand you had 4,000 people demonstrating against right-wing parties and Nazis, and on the other hand you had 4,000 neo-Nazis saying that people who look like me or have a migration background should leave the country.

So this is a discussion we're having right now. And you see at this moment that we definitely need to talk about where are minorities and people with a migration background standing in our society, in Germany? And this is a difficult decision we are having. And if you look at the political situation in Germany, you only have, for example, six people who are black and are members of parliaments, for example, in the whole of Germany. And we have 82 million people living there. And if you look at the number of people who have a migration background, you see that we have 23 percent of people who have migration background. But they are not represented in the politics or are not policymakers.

So we have a long way to go, definitely. And I realize—I'm a member of the Parliament since 1 year. Last year we had elections there. And I realized that I have to travel all over Germany, because many organizations who are working with migrants realized, oh, there is a black person being a policymaking person or a politician, and I have to go there. And I want to go there, because I see we don't have enough role models in Germany. And you don't have representation as much as needed. And so I see there are a lot of things we have to do.

And I'm very thankful and grateful to be here to see how it's working in the United States because for sure we, as German blacks, for example, we always look to the United States. And we see that here people are working together, the Black Caucus. These are institutions we look at and we're very happy to see that this is working here. And we need something like this in Europe, in Germany as well. So I was very happy to attend the PAD in May, where I met many of you, because it's empowering you to continue what you're doing and that you're not alone in this way. Yes. [Applause.]

Mr. VAIYA. Thank you very much, Aminata. I think it's very important when you talk about the empowerment and coming together—I think that's one of the objectives we had in the European Parliament when we organized this first People of African Descent Week. But I think also the importance of the Congressional Black Caucus, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, which I think is also happening this week, is it brings together minority policymakers from different groups to talk about issues that sometimes overlap. And there is also the issue of demographics.

What was interesting about the case in Germany—for those of you who don't know—in the first case where two refugees had stabbed or murdered an individual, it was kind of ironic because the victim was actually a half-Cuban half-German anti-racist. And it was ironic that when this mob rule went out they were targeting anyone who was foreign. And I read somewhere that his friends were saying, well actually, if he was out on the streets the mob rule would have probably attacked him. So it's a very ironic situation that they're using the death of a half-Cuban half-German man to go and attack vulnerable communities and migrants. So thank you for bringing up those issues.

Our final speaker on this panel is Clive Lewis, who's a member of Parliament in the U.K. for the British Labour Party. Clive, you use to serve on the front bench——

Mr. LEWIS. Still do.

Mr. VAIYA. You still do? Not in the Shadow Cabinet. He resigned from the Shadow Cabinet over the Labour Party's Brexit policy. And so maybe a few questions for you on the situation in the U.K., but I think a lot of people would be interested to hear about the impact of Brexit on black and minority populations. What does that say for the U.K.? A country that always prided itself on being an outward-looking country but has sort of taking an inward-looking step. And what does that say? We see that after the Brexit referendum we saw attacks go up against migrants, against people from black and minority populations. So how do you assess the situation? And what impact do you think Brexit has had on that? Has Brexit had an impact on that?

Mr. LEWIS. Well, thank you very much. It's a pleasure to be here this morning. Well, first of all, I come from a city called Norwich. I'm one of two MPs. It's called the fine city of Norwich. If you ever have a chance to come and visit, please do. Bit of a plug there. And I'm also the first black MP to represent that city. And it's a city which is overwhelmingly a white city. It's only in the past, I think, decade that it's been connected by a major road to another city.

I think it's the last one in Western Europe that is in that situation. And so it's been very isolated. It's a medieval city. But it's a fantastic place. I'm very proud to represent it and very proud to have been chosen by my constituents to be in Parliament on their behalf.

Look, Brexit is—well, for approximately half the population, Brexit is a curse, where you say, you know, a thousand Brexits on your head. For the other half of the population,

Brexit is a blessing—may a thousand Brexits be upon your head. So, ultimately it depends which side of that—approximate side of the population you talk to. It's still an ongoing, unfolding situation. It's not over yet. I'm someone who understands the way that the referendum works. That's how democracy works. But democracy doesn't just then stop at one referendum. There's an ongoing process and we'll see what happens.

The vast majority of black people in the United Kingdom, according to the statistics—and they're not overtly clear—but it looked very much before the campaign that, the vast majority of black people were voting for remain. There was a group—one group in particular which we think may have been more leave, which was the South Asian community. And the reason for that is perhaps because this whole concept of European identity isn't something that washed with them. They were a group that particularly identified with so-called British values. And I think that was something that they identified with in terms of the leave campaign. But nonetheless, the vast majority of black people—black and ethnic minority people in the United Kingdom have been staunchly remain.

And the impact on black people—on black and minority communities in the U.K. after Brexit has been quite stark. We know that the number of attacks that occurred—race hates and attacks on U.K. citizens after Brexit—shot up by 20 to 30 percent, sometimes higher in different parts of the country. So we're quite clear that there has been a backlash, partly because one of the main reasons why they—the leave campaign was able to achieve success in the referendum was by basically what you would call playing the race cards. The pressures—so-called pressures of immigration and stoking up that fear of xenophobia has had knock-on effects on the black community.

And they've done that. They've achieved in part their ability to be able to push the U.K. on to the brink of leaving the European Union in part because of that. Now, it wasn't the only reason why people voted to leave, but it was an important reason. But we can already see there's been a shift in the U.K. as the economic implications of Brexit now become clear. And increasingly, if not the majority of people in the U.K., according to the latest research, say that actually they shifted and that the economy is more important than dealing with what's called freedom of movement within the European Union. So I think when the crunch comes, people understand that actually the message that migrant communities, black communities—and unfortunately, the two are very different but they get along together—but these two different communities contribute so much to our country.

I think for the future, in terms of where the United Kingdom goes—look, Theresa May is having a very, very hard time as regards to being able to sell this to Parliament. I'm not sure she's going to be able to do it. I'm not sure she's going to be Prime Minister by the end of the next 6 months. And that prediction could come home to bite me on the backside, but I don't think she will be. I don't think the numbers are there. However, what I will say is when you consider the situation that many black and minority ethnic people find themselves in the United Kingdom, because of structural racism, they already struggle in terms of universal access.

For example, we know that they're 21 times more likely to have their applications called in. We know they're eight times more likely to be stopped and searched. We know they have the worst housing. We know that they have the worst opportunities when it comes to the jobs market. So if leaving the European Union is going to be the economic disaster most economists say it is, it will be black people who disproportionately suffer within that. And I think that's one of the reasons why so many black people—black and

minority ethnic people within the United Kingdom are quite clear that Brexit is bad for them, not just in terms of the xenophobia and racism that has been ratcheted up, but also in terms of the economic impact on them. So it's a lose-lose for our black and ethnic minority communities.

Mr. VAIYA. Thank you very much, Clive. A bit of a bleak outlook for black and minority communities within the U.K., but, I mean, there have been some positives in the U.K. I mean in terms of political representation. We'll come to our second panel where we have Simon Woolley. But there's been a lot of work around increasing political representation of black and minority members of Parliament. I think in Europe we have the highest share of black and minority population represented in Parliament. So I think there are some good things. To her credit, Prime Minister May did carry out a race audit which looked at the impact for different minority communities. And we have Nero, who's a Special Advisor to Prime Minister May to talk about that in the next panel.

So there are problems in the U.K., I fully agree. I think but there are also some positive things that we have to look in the U.K. in comparison to our brothers and sisters in other European member states. And also in the European Parliament, where we only have around 20 black or ethnic minority parliamentarians out of 752. And we have around about 55 to 60 belonging to parties that are openly neo-Nazi and racist. So I mean we definitely see this imbalance in representation across Europe.

I want to open the floor up to some questions from the audience. I think we can group maybe three questions together. And the mic is there for people who want to take the floor. If you could introduce yourself when you ask the question. Do we have any questions?

Ms. MOORE. I had a question. I really appreciated this panel. And I guess what I would ask of the honorable Clive Lewis is whether or not you think—and I've asked this before, I don't know—do you think there's a chance of some reconsideration on Brexit. You say, we'll wait and see what happens. So that was a cliffhanger for me. [Laughter.] Finish that thought. Close the loop.

Mr. LEWIS. Yes. I do. I'll explain why. What's happened? We've seen a shift in the polling numbers of people who now understand that the debate that took place in the United Kingdom during the referendum, one of the key things that came back from vast swaths of the population was: We don't know who to believe. We don't know what to do. From a large number of people. And the level of debate, I think, was very poor. I think many commentators at the time and after believed that the level of debate was very poor. It was also ratcheted up in quite an appalling way by some of the right wing—Nigel Farage and others in our country. He's a good friend of President Trump. That should tell you what you need to know about Mr. Farage.

Ultimately, what we're now seeing in the United Kingdom is the debate that should have happened, the referendum now happening over the intervening 2 years since we triggered Article 50, which is the mechanism by which we leave the EU. Now, it was designed in such a way that no rational country would ever want to leave, because it is such a short time scale that no rational country would want to do it. We did it. We triggered Article 50, which is why I resigned. But we triggered it, and now the clock is ticking and it's running out.

And what you're now seeing is that people—you've got car manufacturers just yesterday who said—Jaguar, others—who've said as things are standing at the moment, we are

looking at tens of thousands of job losses in manufacturing in the U.K. The CBI, the very organizations that have historically and traditionally supported the Conservative Party are now saying, What the hell are you doing?

And so increasingly, the economic establishment of the United Kingdom is beginning to lose patience with this brinkmanship. And I think the public are beginning to understand that.

The bank of the government, the Bank of England, has been quite stark in what he's been saying. Even our own Chancellor of the Exchequer is now—you know, came under fire for kind of beginning to prepare the treasury and the government for what looked like quite severe drops in national income, given a hard Brexit, or a Brexit as was described by Theresa May in the exchequers plan.

So ultimately, I think if Theresa May doesn't have the numbers in Parliament, which we know she doesn't, her exchequers plan is probably dead in the water as things stand, because the core of her MPs, the hard Brexiteers want a hard Brexit. They don't want a soft Brexit. And on the other side of that, you've got an increasing number of members of Parliament who want to remain in the European Union. And she's caught in the middle. And I don't think she has the numbers. And that means that there is now increasing pressure on all of the political parties, including mine, for a second referendum. Whether that happens or not, I'm unclear.

But the reason I said it's likely to be a general election is because she doesn't have the numbers, and if she can't get the actual agreement through Parliament, then we have a constitutional crisis in the United Kingdom, which many people feel can only be resolved by dissolving Parliament and calling a general election. So who knows? Then it's open. It's a kind of open story there. And what could happen? You could have a Labour government. And then we don't know what would happen from there, because they have a somewhat different position on Brexit—Brexit nonetheless, but for a much softer Brexit. But it remains to be seen what happens then. So it's possible we could yet come back from the brink.

Mr. VAIYA. Thank you very much, Clive. I think we have a question here. If you can introduce yourself as well, please.

QUESTIONER. Hello. I am Demetrius Brisco [sp]. I'm an intern for Congressman Conor Lamb's office.

I'd like to thank you all for coming here today. And I'd like to thank Congresswoman Moore for having everyone here. It's very inspirational for me, a person who wants to grow up one day and run for Congress. I really thank you for having this panel here. My question is, how can African Americans here in the United States be aware of the problems facing African Europeans or African British folk to understand the problems that you're facing and how can we help to end those issues—not just in Europe, but around the world?

Thank you.

Mr. VAIYA. Do we have any other questions?

QUESTIONER. My name is Wyatt Red [sp]. I'm a journalism grad student at American University.

Mr. Lewis talked about the role of racism in Brexit. And I'd like to hear from some of the other representatives from other European countries about what role they think

racism might have played in Brexit and the implications it may have for their own countries.

Thank you.

Mr. VAIYA. Thank you very much. And a final question.

QUESTIONER. Hi. Thank you, again, for all of you coming today.

I'd like to hear more about the EU's decision to punish Hungary for the refugee situation in that country.

Thank you.

Mr. VAIYA. Thank you very much. So the first question, how can African American minority populations help European counterparts? The second question on the impact of racism—the role racism played in Brexit. And a third question, probably for me and Olivio, Article 7, and the European Parliament to trigger Article 7 against Hungary. We can probably start with the third question first because we can quickly explain exactly what happened.

Mr. KOCSIS-CAKE. Thank you. Yes, there is a report made by Judith Sargentini which focused on Hungary, rule of law and a lot of things, but the migration issue as well. Yes, when we talk about minorities we shall not avoid that issue of migration. In Hungary, it's a really hard issue. When was the migration crisis in 2015 or prime minister who won the third election in row in this year with supermajority, don't hesitated to use this tragedy for—to campaign. And the last time he won this—won the election because of the migration crisis, he made a—he ran a super-focused, excellently disciplined campaign. One simple message, that a vote for Orban is remaining Hungary, Hungarian. A vote for other opposition candidate means opening the floodgates to migration from the Middle East and Africa. So it was a really hard fearmongering campaign. And I hope this report, which accepted by the European Parliament, could cause Orban to rethink their policy on migration.

And there was another question of who can help African-origins people in Europe? I think the U.S. has to support democratic institutions in Europe. That is really important. Liberal rights and freedom of press. And that's the most important thing to do.

Mr. VAIYA. Thank you, Olivio. I think for some people in the room who aren't familiar with Article 7 and what exactly happened, the European Union can trigger Article 7, which is a loss of certain rights that a EU member state gets at council, which is when the 28 member states come together. And the European Parliament today in a landmark report, the first time ever, passed a report of Judith Sargentini that we actually contributed to, which actually calls on the European Commission and European Council to trigger Article 7. Article 7 can lead to the removal of voting rights of a particular member state. But what's very important about what happened today is the fact that Prime Minister Orban was at the European Parliament yesterday.

And for the fact that for the first time in this particular report you needed two-thirds majority. So it's not just the left of the Parliament, but you needed the Christian Democrats, some of the other parties, I think some members of even the U.K. Conservative Party to support this resolution. And I think it's a very strong signal of the European Union and of the European Parliament to show that they are worried about Hungary and they are worried about the implications of some of the reforms Viktor Orban's doing, but they're also the impact and how the reforms in Hungary are now moving to other EU

member states. We see this in Poland as well. So I think it's very important just to explain what Article 7 was.

Maybe I can go to Aminata. Maybe you want to answer some of the questions.

Ms. TOURÉ. Yes. I'd like to say something to the question: How can Afro American people help European black people. And when I was writing my bachelor's thesis, I was writing about the situation of black women in Germany. And I read there that, for example, Audre Lorde went to Germany and worked together with Maya Ayim, a German—an Afro German person, to work together and to ameliorate the situation of black people in Germany.

And I think exactly situations like these are important, to work together and help because, as I said when I was talking before, it's important that we have conferences like this, for example, the Black Caucus conference, where we are allowed, or we can come and see how you working here, and how it can strengthen our work as well. And so I think as well, the PAD week in Brussels was also important for me, for example, to learn how other African descendants work in politics and to bring it to Germany.

Because most of the time, especially when you're the only black person in politics, sitting there most of the time surrounded by white men, it's always a bit difficult to see what you're fighting for or how the way can go. So it's important to talk to others who made the same experience and to learn from it and to try to do the same thing in your country. And so I think this is important.

Dr. MUNYAMA. Yes. You know, as far as the help we can send, that is African Americans assisting what is happening in Europe, this is one of the best examples of what is happening, what Congresswoman Moore is doing, what Congressman Hastings is doing, and Lee as well. This is a very important role that they are doing to help people of African descent in European countries. And of course, we're looking forward to such meetings like these conferences, both in Europe and in America. But, of course, it's a light to the good relationship between people of African descent in Europe and people of African descent in the United States of America.

Inasfar as the question on the role of racism in Brexit—because actually I'm preparing a report on the implications of Brexit on migration today in the Council of Europe, and I'm the rapporteur for that actual report—and I realized that the issues which were raised, among which Clive has mentioned, was the issue of people living in the United Kingdom without knowing the language, people who don't know the language in the United Kingdom and they come and work, especially from our countries, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, and so forth. So it was one of those reasons why actually British people who thought probably they are being deprived of their labor capabilities or the possibilities to work, they decided, No, we have to vote against being in the European Union.

So it's not only an issue of racism, as such, but it's also an issue of language. We're talking about whites coming from other European countries who couldn't speak the language. Then they were actually—I mean, the target. Yes, I was watching one of the BBC 4 programs showing a Polish man overusing the benefits in the United Kingdom, and as an example, to be able to leave Brexit. But the other thing also we realized is that Britain was not really very attached, married to the European Union. You would find that most of the European Union countries, their flags, there are two, right? You have the national flag and the European Union flag. But it was not very symbolic in most of the British

places where you could go. You could only see the Union Jack alone, not with the European Union one. So those are some of the things I have observed with the first stages of the report that I'm writing on the implications of Brexit on migration.

Thank you.

Mr. LEWIS. So I'll address the issue of things that we can do to work closer with people of the African diaspora, black and ethnic minority communities across Europe, in particular the U.K. and the U.S. Of course, events like this, dialog such as this is helpful. But I also think understanding this—particularly with the United Kingdom and the United States, that the issues that affect African Americans in particular and black people in the United Kingdom come from pretty much the same place, which is structural racism, the justifying ideology of slavery, of colonialism. Understanding this—and it's still quite a novel idea and concept to even many of my colleagues in my own party that this is something that's real—concepts of cultural appropriation.

There was a bit of a hoo-ha in my own country over a famous white chef who decided to do something called "jerk rice," which doesn't exist as an actual food. But it became a kind of big issue of something called cultural appropriation, and it caused a complete storm on our social media, and so on and so forth. And you can see the level of ignorance of many people about these kind of quite basic concepts. So understanding that we have very similar issues in both countries, and also that structural racism also spreads over to Europe. I would say in Central Europe and Eastern Europe that often manifests itself more historically as a fear of Islam, because obviously the Islamic empire back in the 16th century almost overran—and 15th century—almost overran parts. And there's a long, visceral fear of Islamic expansionism, which kind of interconnects with and complicates some of the issues in Central and Eastern Europe.

But the other thing I would say is understanding that one of the things which I think unites us all is whether we're talking about the rise of the far right in Europe, whether we're talking about the rise of Donald Trump and right-wing populism in the U.S., or whether we're talking about Brexit, these are symptoms. These are symptoms of a number of other factors, such as 40 years of neoliberal economic policies which have driven inequality within European and Western economies to an extent where it's now coming across.

It's about climate change and the pressures of that. Again, with climate change we know that it will be predominantly black people who bear the brunt, and are already bearing the brunt, of climate change. Colonialism too in some ways. The irony that, our industrial revolutions in Europe were fueled by slavery and colonialism, and that every industrialization process now is driving climate change, first, in those countries that were pillaged and plundered first of all, you couldn't make it up. And obviously in terms of technology and the fourth industrial revolution. All these pressures are combining, I think, to make for potentially a very dangerous world, of which black people and scapegoating of minorities could well be a very, very blatant part of that. But there's also the opportunity for very many positive things to come of that.

And the last thing I will say is the issue of class. You know, I'm a socialist. Class is a big factor in this. And also I find the nuances of race within those class struggles. I also understand that there is a fight going on at the moment between the 99 percent and the 1 percent—those who own the vast majority of wealth and power in this world. And you're on the field. You don't get a choice in this. You're either part of the 99 percent or you're part of the 1 percent. And you have to pick a side. And ultimately, I think the

struggle of black people and black and minority ethnic people in my country and across Europe is very much related and connected to that class struggle.

Mr. VAIYA. Thank you very much, Clive. Thank you to all the panelists on this first panel. I think it's been a very interesting discussion, to talk about the different EU member states, but also about the impacts of Brexit and other issues on black and minority populations in Europe.

If I can now ask my second panel to come to the front. In the second panel we want to talk more about possible solutions and talk less about the situation. And we're going to use the example of the United Kingdom and the government's race audit. To her credit, the Prime Minister May, when she first became Prime Minister made a speech about protecting minority populations in the United Kingdom. And one of the things she committed to was a U.K. race audit. I think it's the first-ever race audit anywhere in Europe or in the world. And it's a very impressive piece of work. You can access the information on the government's website also. [1]

But we luckily have Nero Ughwujabo and Simon Woolley to talk about the U.K. Race Disparity Audit. Nero is a special advisor to Prime Minister May and is responsible in Downing Street for the race audit. And Simon is the chair of the task force of the race audit. And Simon is also the director of Operation Black Vote, which aims to energize and bring together black and minority policymakers and emerging policymakers to the Parliament. A lot of the good work in terms of representation in the U.K. Parliament of black and minority population has been done thanks to Simon's work. I think Clive was also one of the intakes of Simon's mentorship program, if I'm correct. So Simon's been doing a lot of excellent work.

But I think maybe we can start with Nero. And we also have to give credit to the Conservative Party. There are issues in every political party, but even in terms of political representation the Conservative Party has less than Labour but, for a Christian Democrat center-right party, we do see progress. We do see black and minority population achieving positions within the party. Right now in the Cabinet, we have Sajid Javid, who is holding one of the great offices of state. In the previous government of David Cameron, we saw Baroness Warsi. So we do see good representation in the party. But we also see this commitment of the Prime Minister and of the party in the form of the race audit.

So maybe, Nero, you can give some background on what is the Race Disparity Audit, why the Prime Minister decided to commit herself—and the government and all the departments—for pushing the Race Disparity Audit. And an interesting one maybe here also, why it's relevant for a conservative Prime Minister to do this. A lot of people will have doubts, and have had doubts, and have accused the Conservative Party at times of being discriminatory or not a safe space for black and minority populations. So why is it that that the Conservative Prime Minister decided to do this Race Disparity Audit. And we should give Nero credit for the work he's doing in Downing Street. I mean, to be there, working directly with the Prime Minister and advising ministers on how to implement some of the action points of the Race Disparity Audit, is very impressive work. That's something that we should bear in mind. So, Nero.

Mr. UGHWUJABO. Great. So thank you all very much. And I must say how delighted I am to be here. It's fantastic to be here, and to see the cooperation of people of African descent across Europe as well. I also participated in PAD Week and, again, found that

[1] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/race-disparity-audit

incredibly useful. Just to say, my actual title is Special Advisor to the Prime Minister on Social Justice, Young People, and Opportunities. So I lead across those range of areas. Also, I work quite closely on a civil society strategy, as well as the integration strategy. But I'll talk specifically about this audit, because this portion of the discussion is about the way forward. And I see this very strongly as a potential example for other places to take forward as well, focusing on that area of data.

When the Prime Minister first stepped on the street—so Downing Street, this was in July—she talked about tackling the burning injustices. It wasn't just about race equality. It was about a range of other injustices that you see in the society. And she wanted to make it her personal mission to focus on addressing race equality—addressing the burning injustices. And in August 2016, she launched this idea of having an audit of all public services to look at what the experience is for black and minority ethnic communities, to look at whether there are disparities or not, where those disparities are, and exactly what we can begin to do about them.

In October last year, the audit itself was actually launched. And as I said, this is an unprecedented audit. As Alfiaz has already introduced, there's nowhere else in the world where this has been done. So we do feel strongly that it's a good example for other countries to actually copy. That audit was launched in October last year, so we're actually approaching the first-year anniversary of this audit. What a lot of commentators said at the time was, okay, we know what some of these disparities are. We're quite familiar with some of these issues. So what exactly are you going to do about it? And during that October launch, the Prime Minister actually called on society as a whole, more specifically government, to explain or change. So this is the mantra, the call to action to all of us to look at these disparities and to look at what we can actually do to improve the experiences of people from different backgrounds in public services.

And since that time, we've actually moved onto another core wish she made to her department specifically. That issue come up with bold and ambitious policy responses to what was found in the audit. And I can tell you that from the launch of the audit, there are a number of responses that we've actually put in place in government to respond to the challenges. At the time of the launch, MP David Lammy also launched his report, which was looking into the experiences of black communities in the criminal justice system. So that was rolled into the audit response in terms of making sure that there is a kind of a wholesale criminal justice system reform. And that is still ongoing.

We launched a review of school exclusions because this was a particular issue in the audit, that young black men in particular are a number of times more likely to be excluded from school than others. And we wanted to make sure that we tackled that. That's likely to be reported by the end of this year. And, again, we will begin to see what policy responses we can put in place. At the launch of the audit is where we announced a project looking at hot spots—unemployment hot spots. So these are areas across the country where there's a high level of unemployment amongst ethnic minorities. And we wanted to do a focus project in those areas to help to tackle and alleviate the problem of unemployment.

We also launched a significant review of mental health, and a number of interventions in that area to help improve the experience of black communities. And most recently, we announced 19 million pounds—a fund of 19 million pounds to look at tackling specifically youth unemployment. Again, this is a significant issue. And as you can see, the response in terms of the financial contribution is also a significant response. And we're

in the process of designing exactly how that money is going to be used to tackle youth unemployment. And I can tell you that the model we're looking at is one that will be sustainable, so that this is not just a simple, quick intervention, and that maybe a few years down the line we'll go back to the same situation.

We actually want to be able to respond in a significant and sustainable way. One of the things that I can say clearly from the U.K. perspective and from the government's perspective is that the Prime Minister is personally committed to this agenda. And as part of that explain or change mantra that she put forward, she also established an advisory group made up of members from the black and ethnic minority communities to help to hold government to account, and also to contribute to the solutions. And we're delighted to have Simon Woolley to chair that group. He, being an independent person working in the volunteer and community sector, can bring that independent voice to the work that we do.

So there's a great deal of commitment. I can say there's a lot to learn from us. But part of being here is that there's a lot to learn from you and from other parts of Europe. And we'll be very keen to welcome you to the United Kingdom to see the audit for yourself and to learn from the interventions that we're putting in place.

So thank you very much for listening.

Mr. VAIYA. Thank you very much, Nero. Maybe you can later on share the actual website where the government has put all of the data, for those of you who are interested in it.[2] It's a very comprehensive list of ambitions and responses. I was also aware that when the government rolled the race audit out, I think we have to also give credit here that, you know, it was a full rollout, from the prime minister herself to members of the Cabinet. And I mean, I think that showed just how much priority the government was giving to this particular Race Disparity Audit.

And I think one of the interesting things—and we've spoken about this in Downing Street, when we met—was actually when we think about the Race Disparity Audit, we really think of black and minority populations. But actually some of the biggest disparities that the Race Disparity Audit showed was for the Roma Gypsy community, but also for the white working class—young men who are white working class. And so actually it's a very impressive piece of work, because although many people had in mind black men or the ethnic populations, actually it showed the discrepancies and disparities for other groups.

And they can also help us when we're trying to put policy recommendations in place. It can be an easy sell when you're saying that it's not just for particular minority communities but, you know, actually, the benefits of such a Race Disparity Audit are first of all to show us the data, but second of all the responses actually benefit other groups, not just the black and minority groups.

So thank you very much, Nero.

Now, Simon is chairing the advisory group of the Race Disparity Audit. Amongst other members, you have members from business, and members from civil society. I have already introduced Simon, but just to say that, we have one of the most respected members of the black and minority community in the U.K., who has not just been at the forefront of pushing black and empowering black communities, but also others. I mean, from

[2] https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/?utm—source=rdareport

my own community, the South Asian, but Indian, and Muslim. Just last week you and Clive were part of this Muslim-Jewish-Black alliance to welcome the decision of Jeremy Corbyn to adopt—and the Labour Party—to adopt the definition of anti-Semitism.

Simon is really one of those people. I'm really happy that Simon is the chair of the Race Disparity Audit because Simon really looks not just at his community but at intersections of different communities meeting together and having an approach that benefits all communities. And I think sometimes when we do this kind of work we sometimes get stuck in our own silos, you know? We sometimes become very tribal about our own community. But the work Simon has done throughout his career is a testament to see the representation in the Parliament, not only in black politicians but South Asian politicians and others. So, Simon, maybe you can talk about your role on the advisory group of the Race Disparity Audit.

Mr. WOOLLEY. Thank you. I wanted him to stop because I didn't want to get a swelled head.

[Laughter.] Yes. But I'm an activist. I'm an activist fighting—I'm an activist fighting for social and racial justice. And I often see myself and my organization, Operation Black Vote, as disciples of Dr. Martin Luther King and Malcom X, and Reverend Jesse Jackson. We've been passed the baton and we're running with it.

And what I like about coming to these events, and to the Congressional Black Caucus, because it reminds us about the global solidarity that we desperately need right now to, one, lay bare some of the challenges and the persistent inequalities. But to come together as brothers and sisters to find the solutions in a manner that's urgent. And as an activist, actually, I want to pay tribute to Dr. Mischa Thompson and Alfiaz, as a matter of fact, that bring us together, that bring us into this space to connect, to plot, to plan on a better—a better future. And as Alfiaz said, is that this family of activists covers the African diaspora, but also Latinos across the globe, and we know we've worked well with Maria Robles Meier, who's here, making that connection. And with the Asian communities in Europe.

And we're stronger together. And now more than ever—I mean, what you're facing here in the USA is a parallel challenge to what we're facing in Europe. You know, when you consider—when you consider there are political parties in Hungary, in Germany, in Belgium, in Holland that's whole raison d'etre is to attack people that look like me and Alfiaz. And when they attack us, they may attack us politically, but they give a green light to the very vicious, nasty thugs to say, This is okay. And that's what we are confronting. And you know, in the last session—I know people spoke about Brexit and they're kind of justifying some of the reasons that people hate foreigners. For example, one of the panelists said that people felt that those come to the U.K. don't speak English, and they are taking our benefits.

Nothing could be further from the truth. The majority of migrants that come to the U.K., as a matter of fact, speak excellent English. They just do. I mean, if I asked you—if I asked you honestly here how many—how many second languages do you speak—I don't want to embarrass you. [Laughter.] Right? But in Europe they make it—they make it their business. The other point too, of course, is the benefits. You know, those that are coming to the U.K., those that are coming to European countries from often war-torn and desperate places are young. They are energetic and vibrant. And they're not using social services. They're working from sun-up to way past sun-down, and often propping up societies. So that myth should be busted—busted.

But, you know, yes, we talked about the negativity. Yes, we've talked about the challenge. But there is some good news in all of this. And we must recognize that. Central to this good news, and central to potentially, but dramatically, moving the race equality dial, closing those persistent inequality gaps is leadership. Leadership. When we had a conversation as activists on the street with PM Theresa May, to say we want you to lead from the top right across government to do a number of things. One, research the persistent inequalities in education, in health, in housing, in the police. Why is a lifetime chance of a young black man so different to a young white woman? Why? Because of the structural inequalities that see one less superior, inferior, to another. No other reason. Lay those inequalities bare. As Nero said, explain those inequalities or change, simple.

Lay the inequalities bare, and then have a plan to close the gaps. Think about that for a second. That leadership, clarion call. And then, for that leader to call in all her ministers and say: Each and every one of you will have to lay the data bare and have a plan to close the gaps. So you've got the leader. You've got the ministers.

And then you've got me and Nero. And myself and Nero—particularly myself because, you know, he works for the government. I don't so I can say what I want. [Laughter.] Right? But being given the mandate from the Prime Minister to, in effect, for her to say to me: Hold my ministers' feet close to the fire. Crudely speaking, keep your foot on their jugular. Don't let them get away with it. And push, push, push.

My job then is twofold. One, to keep the foot on the jugular, in a nice way. [Laughter.] Now, this is good for you too, by the way. But also to take the community along too, because it has to be that link—the heads of government, the ministers, the policymakers, the activists, and the community—because it is the community that will be directly affected by these policy changes. And I'll just give you one example on how this translated, because I know we're short for time.

We spoke before about the great disparities in the education system. It's difficult for our communities to get to the top universities. When we get there, we can't get the same degrees, even though we've started at the same level playing field. When we have 14,000 professors, only 70 look like me, disparities at every juncture. Nero said to me, call a meeting. Call a meeting with the vice chancellors. Bring them to Downing Street. When they get an invite to Downing Street, they come. We sat around the table with them all—the top universities, Oxford and Cambridge, and all them type.

I tell you this, when these heads of the universities came into Downing Street one of them turned around to me and said: Simon, when I came into this building I came in with a flak jacket on and hard helmet. They came in prepared to be defensive, to be in a mode where they couldn't listen because they were defensive. But our approach was: This is about leadership. We're not going to attack you. We need to find out the persistent inequalities and, together, find solutions. They collectively had a sigh of relief. But the outcome was they were suggesting to government and to their fellow peers how they could dramatically close those gaps.

Let me say—let me say this, this is a new way of doing politics. The politics of these buildings, the politics of Westminster, the politics of Hungary, or Poland, are adversarial. You go in to do battle. You can't see the light when you're doing battle like that. This politics is grown up, predicated on leadership, inclusive, with clear solutions. I want you to lobby—to lobby your Congressmen and women and senators and say: You want a new way of doing politics. Something like they're doing in the U.K. [Laughter, applause.]

Mr. VAIYA. And more than best practice—very quickly, from my side, one question to both of you very quickly. How can we replicate this in other countries? What kind of enabling environment do we need where we can have—where we can do something like a Race Disparity Audit? In the U.K. we have a very different history, also a very different way of integrating and engaging with minority communities. But what would you recommend, Nero and Simon, for other countries where you don't have such a high black minority population, or you have a huge reluctance because of the political environment right now?

Mr. UGHWUJABO. Yes. I'll answer your question. But let me make my own statement first. [Laughs.] So there are a number of things I just wanted to touch on that I missed. One of them is that the website itself is Ethnicity Facts and Figures. So if you can have a look at that online, you will be able—if you can Google "ethnicity facts and figures" you can come to the website. 1A[3] One of the key things about it is that it's a permanent resource for the government of the U.K. So any government from now on will have access to that data to use in shaping policy.

And a key part of this project is about driving evidence-based policymaking, which I think is what Simon was referring to. And I think for other countries in Europe, that's really the focus—transparency, data, and evidence-based policymaking. If an audit—a similar audit is conducted anywhere, it's the role of government to focus on where the challenges are to do what they can to address those. And we have a Race Disparity Unit in government that's responsible for delivering the website and the project. So if any of the countries want to come and talk to them, we'd be happy to facilitate that.

Thank you.

Mr. WOOLLEY. Okay. What should be the drivers for you to lobby your government? Well, it's simple. It should be in society's, in government's self-interest—self-interest—to do this. Unlock talent on your doorstep. It's in everyone's interest—it's in everyone's interest that you have—I have a mantra in the U.K. that I believe, black or white, there is potential talent in every street, in every city, in every part of the U.K. That's a starting point. And so how do we—how is that fulfilled? By having an honest appraisal of the institutions that either support that talent or hold it back. When you listen to Donald Trump, when you listen to most presidents, when you listen to most leaders they want their countries to be great, right? They want their countries to be successful.

So you speak to their interests. Why are you leaving hundreds of thousands of people out of work, no hope, going either into criminality or, worse still, extremism? Because the system holds them back. Why not bring them into the family of our societies and get them to flourish? You've got to make—you've got to make the positive self-interest argument that drives this agenda, because if you are saying that this is morally the right thing, they often don't listen. If you're saying it's political correctness, they are definitely not listening. You've got to make it real to them. Show them the benefits of unlocking talent.

Mr. VAIYA. Thank you very much, Simon. I think the issue of demographic changes—I think that's a whole different conversation—but also the fact that you see this all across Europe—that we wage constant political attacks against minority or black populations, when actually if we'd done the opposite and we'd brought them in we could actually solve a lot of the problems that we see in terms of the economy, in terms of social progress.

[3] https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/?utm—source=rdareport

But there seems to be a reluctance more because of political maneuvering and the political realities rather than politics by facts. And it's very important to stress that, you know, in the U.S. by 2042 there will be no majority group. I think in Europe and many member states we see that—and I think Aminata said in Germany, 20-odd percent come from a migration background. And the trends are showing that's just going to continue to evolve in the future. So we might as well try to tackle these issues now, rather than waiting for when these issues then blow up into bigger problems.

Before I come to the audience, we have about 20 minutes. And I also take up a lot of time. But maybe very quickly, we have two representatives of civil society. We have Jeff Klein from Each One Teach One, which is an organization based in Germany that works with black Germans. And we have Ali Khan from the Open Society Europe initiative—sorry—the Open Society Initiative for Europe, which has been working a lot on promoting the rights of different black and minority population. The OSF has been a key supporter of our work in the European Parliament, but also in terms of PAD Week and this delegation. So thank you very much. So maybe Jeff and Ali, 2 minutes each, on the role of civil society and the role of your organizations in this work.

Thank you.

Mr. KLEIN. Thank you so much. Ladies and gentlemen, it's a great honor to be speaking here today, and also to be part of this delegation. So I wanted to start off giving a little bit of a historic background, because I think it's important to understand the situation we are in right now. And there are two misconceptions—two general misconceptions that I'd like to address as well. The one misconception being that Germany did not take part in the colonialization of black people, their minds and their lands, which nothing could be further from the truth. And the second misconception is that black people have been—have just been around Germany for a very short amount of time, when in actuality black people or people of African descent have lived in Germany since the late 17th century.

Enslaved Africans were first brought from West Africa to the ports of Hamburg as early as 1682. And 200 years later, during the Berlin Africa conference in 1884, Europeans powers met to basically negotiate their claims on Africa. And last, in 1908, German colonial authorities were responsible for the first genocide of the 20th century in what is today known as Namibia. So although there is a lack of specific data on African-descended populations in Germany, the estimates range between 800,000 to 1 million. And however, the contribution of black people in Germany, as well as the long history of discrimination against people of African descent, they are virtually invisible in the German public sphere, and largely also to the German Government.

However, the German Government has started to come around, so to speak. And to this end, EOTO, my organization, is the very first Afro-diasporic organization in Germany that receives structural funding from the German Federal Government. And this is a fact that is both as exciting as it is shocking, in a way, especially given that we are right now in the midst of the International Decade for People of African Descent. And the German Government, along with many other governments in Europe, still have not come around to provide adequate funding for self-organizing black organizations. But fortunately, there are other donors, such as, for example, the Open Society Foundation, who have emerged as great allies and supporters.

So given this context, we at Each One Teach One, we do our very best to provide services to black communities, but also to our allies that center around the well being of

people of African descent, in Germany and in Europe, and empower those communities to make contributions to themselves, strengthen their access to knowledge, and also their visibility.

Mr. VAIYA. Quickly go to Ali, and then maybe to Q&A. I'm really sorry, but we're really running out of time.

Mr. KHAN. Okay. Hi, everyone. My name is Ali Khan. I work for the Open Society Foundations. And specifically I work on the—what we call the anti-discrimination portfolio within Europe. The anti-discrimination portfolio is basically a funding portfolio where we focus on the rights of black Europeans and Muslim Europeans. This has become very specific, and there is reason for this.

And basically what I want to talk about and what I think is really important in the world of funding, and what we can change as grantmakers and funding organizations, is that traditionally even we as Open Society Foundations—which we call ourselves a social justice funder, a grassroots organization supporter—a lot of our funding ends up going to the big civil society organizations that work—you know, the Amnestys, the traditionally big, big organizations that actually already have quite a lot of money.

So what I'm trying to do, and what my goal with this portfolio is, together with my colleagues, is that our funding goes to organizations that are minority led. So when it comes to—Each One Teach One is a great example of that. We—I think what we try—what I'm trying to say and what I think is a really important message is that this group—minority groups in Europe don't need to be saved by the traditional NGOs and the big NGOs. But what we need is money—money going into those grassroots organizations, into those organizations who are led by people who are agents of change, but just never had the opportunity, because this is just unfortunately how the funding world works. And even within OSF, it is so much more difficult to fund an organization that is small, that is new, than it is to fund an organization that is established. And this is something that we are actively trying to change.

Mr. VAIYA. Thank you very much, Ali and Jeff.

We have some minutes, if we have any more questions? If you want to come here to the mic on the left. And then we can have final responses from members of the panel.

QUESTIONER. Hi. I'm Ben, an intern with Representative Steve Cohen's office.

I had a question about the Race Disparity Audit and its replication. Is this something that the government is looking at doing when it does more wider-spread social reforms, such as—after Brexit, certainly a lot is going to change. And with the expansion of grammar schools, looking at educational exclusion. That seems like something that really, really could affect BAME communities in the U.K. And I was wondering what—if this is something that is going to be looked at again and again.

Mr. VAIYA. Do you want to ask a question?

QUESTIONER. My name is Rosie Berman. I'm with the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission.

My question is for the civil society panel. I'm interested in learning more about the different black- and minority-led grassroots organizations that are operating across Europe.

Mr. VAIYA. Thank you very much. And the final question?

QUESTIONER. Hi. Good morning. First of all, thank you all so much for coming here today. My name is Henry. I'm with Congressman Al Green's office.

I want to ask this question as someone who studies international affairs. With all the great things, with all the great possibility that the European Union can do, and the member states of the EU can do to promote equality, we also have to face the fact that there is rising populism and far-right movements in Europe—the UKIP, the AfD, the PVV, these are just some easy examples. So what are the things that the European Union and European civil society should do in order to counter these acts, to build up a multicultural, more diverse society in Europe?

Thank you.

Mr. VAIYA. Thank you very much for the interesting questions. Do you have a final question?

QUESTIONER. Good morning. Nicolae Stefanuta, representing the European Parliament here in town.

I just had a question for Mr. Ali Khan. I was wondering how you guys deal with the challenge that is obviously happening to your organization in Hungary and other places. You know, we're talking about mostly people of African American descent, but also the anti-Jewish rhetoric, Mr. Soros being personalized as evil incarnate, that is happening both in this country and both in the EU.

Mr. VAIYA. Thank you very much. Just very quickly on the question of dealing with far-right or populist movements across Europe, I think one thing we have to recognize is that they're very different. The Steve Bannon plan to open an office in Brussels, there was a lot of worry amongst colleagues. But I think, we have to understand that they are very different movements in Europe. I mean, the Dutch far-right populist party is economically very, very similar to the left, but also socially liberal in terms of LBGTI rights, in terms of gender rights, often using those particular rights to attack—you know, to say that we should have worries about Muslim communities because they have an impact against Dutch LGBTI and Dutch women. Whereas in certain political parties in Hungary, in Italy, the far right is a traditional far-right and populist party. So I think that it's a very difficult response on how to respond—how to respond back to these movements because they are so different in the way they are structured but also in the outlook and their aims.

Saying that, there are a few issues that they agree on and they work on. But I think one thing—one response—and I think we said it, both Simon and I, is that we need to see how we can avoid differences within particular minority communities. For me, it's a big concern from the European Parliament side that we see different levels of attention paid to certain communities than others, but also the fact that we see that some minority communities are actually supporting the far-right populist movement. I myself have said it to some of my friends in the Netherlands who happen to be gay, to say that if you look at gay men in the Netherlands, there's quite a few, actually, who voted for the likes of Geert Wilders. And I say that, where is the solidarity? Where is the solidarity between movements? And that's the good work that Ali Khan and OSF, but also the work that Jeff's organization is doing in Germany, where they're bringing these different communities together and looking at it from an intersectional approach. And I think that's something that we can do, or something that as policymakers we're trying to encourage.

So that's my take on those questions. Maybe we start off with—let's start off with Jeff, and then we come down.

Mr. KLEIN. Okay. So traditionally black-led self-organizations in Germany have focused their work mainly on combating racism against black people, and this is something that we at Each One Teach One are also doing. But we've also shifted our focus more to black empowerment, and also what I like to refer to as decolonizing the mind. We have a very unique book and media archive with more than 6,000 books by African and Afro-diasporic authors. And with that, we try to really change the German curricula in terms of academia in order to make the perspectives and the ideas of black people part of the public consciousness. We do this, for example, with literature, festivals as well, writing workshops, or cultural events.

One of the things that we also do is focus on youth and on youth empowerment. We do that through after-school support, ant-discrimination counseling, and also in outreach activities. Last, what we do is engage in leadership and advocacy efforts to bring black perspectives to the consciousness. As people mentioned before, PAD Week is a prime example of this. Also, our contribution is here, as well as a network of black perspectives in academia that we will start in November. So these are just a couple of things that we do in order to bring forward black people and their perspectives in Germany.

Mr. KHAN. Yes, there were two questions, I think, that were somewhat addressed to me, and one directly addressed to me. The one on learning more about what European civil society organizations are doing—it's a lengthy conversation but I'd be happy to speak to you right after the panel to give you a bit more detail on that.

And then the question on how OSF is dealing with—well, with the fact that we're not very liked in many countries. [Laughs.] Our office in Turkey has been closed down. Our office in Moscow was closed down. Or office in Budapest wasn't actually closed down, but there were laws that were introduced that basically made it impossible for us to operate, which led to the closure of the office in Budapest. Unfortunately, it happened just a few weeks ago. The fact that we are an organization with money puts us in a privileged position, as in that we moved the 160 people that were working in Budapest to the new office in Berlin, which—so we're basically dealing with it, depending on how things are going on and how we are being forced into having to change.

It's something that I personally don't deal with that much, but I think we are very well aware that we find ourselves in a climate that the work that we do and the stances that we take on a lot of these issues have made us very, very unpopular across the world. And we're trying to see how we could do that differently. But I personally remain of the position that we shouldn't—we should stay strong and we should keep to our values and beliefs, and we should be outspoken, even if that means that we are at risk.

Mr. VAIYA. Thank you very much, Ali.

Nero, I'd give you the final word.

Mr. UGHWUJABO. Great. Thank you very much. So the question that you asked is a very important one because in reality if you do a one-off audit, that wouldn't consider the fact that people change, communities change, and things tend to move on. This audit, as I said, is a permanent resource. That's the Prime Minister's announcement and that's what it will be. At the time of launching the audit, we had 250 measures that we looked at for that launch period—measures as in looking at, say, the number of young people achieving 5 As to Cs in GCSEs.

That an educational outcome. But since the audit has been launched, it's been constantly updated. So there's a significant number of new measures that have been published there.

And the updating, we're not doing it in terms of periodic process of—so, maybe annually. They've been updated as new data come forward. And we're also designing processes that make it easier for government departments and those who are holding government data to publish with relative ease. So that process is ongoing. The data is there for everyone to access. And we will continue to update it.

One of the wonderful things about the future, in that sense, is that the opportunity will be there to be able to compare previous years, previous data updates, and to see whether we're actually doing what we set out to do, which is to close those gaps.

Mr. VAIYA. Thank you very much Nero. My final thank you is to you for listening to and engaging with the questions and listening to us and listening to our experiences in Europe. And I think it's important to take away that although times are bleak, there are some positives. But also, the importance of the transatlantic relationship, not only in terms of the political level, but also between civil society and communities. I mean, there are a lot of lessons that we can learn from civil society and communities in America, and likewise in Europe.

My final thank you goes to Dr. Mischa Thompson. I first met Dr. Mischa Thompson maybe about 2 years ago, or 3 years ago now. And since then, our friendship and our work relationship has grown very strong. But the one thing, when everyone keeps on asking the question, what can people in the United States do? I mean, if you tried to replicate Mischa Thompson 1,000 times—[laughter]—we could do with a thousand Mischas, because Mischa's really been at the forefront of pushing, you know, us to do this work in Europe. And, I mean, just the transatlantic minority political leadership conference that Mischa and I co-organized—and when we bring policymakers together, is one of Mischa's ideas, along with other things. So, I mean, a big thank you to Dr. Mischa Thompson, to the U.S. Helsinki Commission, to Izmira, and to all of you for listening and engaging.

Thank you very much. [Applause].

[Whereupon, at 11:48 a.m., the briefing ended.]

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