

Committee: Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian Committee (GA3)

Issue: Discussing the application of social re-engineering and accountability mechanisms to achieve Net-Zero racism

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Position: Co-Chair

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Dear delegates,

It is my honor to welcome you all to the 7th ACGMUN conference. My name is Thalia Filippopoulos, I am an 11th grade student at the German School of Athens, and I will be serving as one of your Co-Chairs in the Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian Committee (GA3).

First and foremost, I would like to congratulate all of you for being selected as delegates in this committee and I hope, that during those few days we will get to know each other, debate, and leave this conference with a great experience. This study guide will provide you with useful information about the topic “Discussing the application of social re-engineering and accountability mechanisms to achieve Net-Zero racism”. You may use this document as a guide to do your research and as a general overview of the topic. However, I would suggest that you conduct your own research as well, to understand your own country’s policy better and to develop a better understanding of the issue.

Don’t hesitate to contact me if any questions arise about the topic. My email is: tthaliafilippopoulos@gmail.com

I am looking forward to meeting all of you.

Kind regards,

Thalia Filippopoulos

TOPIC INTRODUCTION

Achieving Net-Zero racism is an essential objective for advancing fairness and social justice. Similar to how environmental organizations strive for Net-Zero carbon emissions, combating racism requires comprehensive approaches and accountability frameworks. Throughout this study guide, we'll explore how to combat systematic racism and advance toward a more equitable society by utilizing the ideas of social re-engineering and strong accountability frameworks. Restructuring social structures and encouraging a sense of shared accountability are key components of these strategies, which aim to end racial inequities and build an inclusive and just society for all.

Social re-engineering entails a careful analysis and modification of current laws, rules, and policies that uphold racial inequities. Addressing discriminatory behaviors in sectors such as employment, housing, education, and criminal justice is part of this. Restructuring educational institutions to support diversity, inclusion, and cultural competency is crucial. This entails updating curricula to reflect truthful historical accounts and promoting awareness of structural racism. Re-engineering economic structures is also necessary to achieve Net-Zero racism.

Although racism is unquestionably a global emergency, there does not seem to be an equivalent amount of acknowledgment at the subnational and international policy level to prioritize and address it as an existential danger. One important aspect that has been missing from the arguments, talks, and debates around racism is accountability. From here, we should endeavor to realize the concept of Net Zero Racism. The world requires a new global compass—a plan for swift action to end racism in all its forms in all nations, localities, workplaces, educational institutions, commercial enterprises, and all areas of human existence.

All in all, to build a more equitable and inclusive society, the world urgently needs to embrace Net Zero Racism as a means of achieving its ambitious, time-bound goal of ending racism. The world must embrace a comprehensive framework that considers and makes up for the past injustices of colonialism, slavery, and the violent extractives that have shaped not only international relations but also racial relations. All facets of life should be redesigned for a Net Zero Racism future, with the educational institutions and systems serving as focal points for reimagining a society free of racism in all its forms.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Accountability

Accountability is “the fact of being responsible for what you do and able to give a satisfactory reason for it, or the degree to which this happens”.¹

Discrimination

Discrimination is defined as “the practice of treating somebody or a particular group in society less fairly than others.”²

Jim Crow

The term refers to “the former practice in the U.S. of using laws that allowed black people to be treated unfairly and kept separate from white people, for example in schools”³

Net-Zero racism

The phrase net zero racism can be defined as “zero tolerance of racism” and will be used to express the objective of totally eradicating racism or reaching a situation in which racism has no effect at all on society.

Re-engineering

Re-engineering describes “the process of changing and improving the design of a product or system”.⁴

Segregation

Segregation is “the act or policy of separating people from different groups, for example people of different races, religions or sexes, and treating them in a different way”⁵

¹ Cambridge Dictionary. “Accountability.” Cambridge.org, 13 Nov. 2019, www.dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/accountability.

² “Discrimination Noun.” Wwww.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com, www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/discrimination?q=discrimination.

³ “Jim-Crow Noun.” Oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com, 2024, www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/american_english/jim-crow#jim-crow_11.

⁴ Cambridge Dictionary. “Re-Engineering.” @CambridgeWords, 29 June 2022, www.dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/re-engineering.

⁵ “Segregation Noun .” Wwww.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com, www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/segregation?q=segregation.

Social engineering

Social engineering is “the attempt to change society and to deal with social problems according to particular political beliefs, for example by changing the law”⁶

Sustainability

“As a concept, sustainability goes far beyond just climate protection. It means dealing responsibly with the earth’s limited resources while creating a sustainable society and promoting social justice.”⁷

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Striving for Net Zero and Combatting Racism

The concept of "Net-Zero Racism" can draw an analogy between the environmental term "Net-Zero," which is frequently used concerning climate change and carbon emissions. "Net-Zero" in the context of the environment refers to the concept of ensuring that there is no net increase in emissions by balancing the amount of greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere with an equivalent amount removed or offset.

Similarly, when "Net-Zero Racism" applies to the idea of racism, envisioning a state where racial injustices, systemic inequalities, and discriminatory practices are reduced to the point where no net increase occurs. This means recognizing that racism, like carbon emissions, has spread widely and has impacted society in the fields of employment, criminal justice, healthcare, and education.

Reaching Net-Zero Racism is viewed as an ongoing process of continuous improvement, much like the ongoing efforts in environmental sustainability. To comprehend and handle developing challenges, one must be dedicated to learning, adjusting tactics, and actively interacting with communities.

The Evolution of Racism

Racism has a complex and long-standing history that spans several centuries and continents. It is crucial to prioritize systemic and structural concerns to comprehend the evolution of racism.

⁶“Social-Engineering” | Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary at OxfordLearnersDictionaries.com.” Oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com, 2024, www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/social-engineering.

⁷ “What Is Sustainability, Exactly?” Wwww.myclimate.org, www.myclimate.org/en/information/fag/fag-detail/what-is-sustainability/.

Origins of Slavery and Colonialism

Racism originated during the European colonial era when the dehumanization of indigenous people served as a justification for the economic exploitation of colonies. Racial hierarchies were further institutionalized by the transatlantic slave trade, which laid the groundwork for systematic discrimination.

Institutionalization of Racism

Slave codes and later Jim Crow laws, especially in the United States, contributed to the institutionalization of racism during the 18th and 19th centuries. These laws denied Black people basic rights and strengthened segregation.

World Wars and the Civil Rights Movement

After World War II, calls for civil rights grew as it became evident how hypocritical racial discrimination was. Prominent social movements that fought against systematic racism and promoted equal rights emerged in the middle of the 20th century, including the American Civil Rights Movement.

Modern Structural Racism

Structural racism still exists today in several settings, including the criminal justice system, healthcare, employment, and education. Racial and ethnic minorities that are marginalized continue to be disproportionately impacted by differences in opportunities, resources, and treatment. Racism is a global issue that manifests in various forms across different regions.

Accountability mechanisms

In the fight against racism, "accountability mechanisms" refer to the systems and procedures established to guarantee individuals, organizations, and establishments are held accountable for their acts and choices, especially those that exacerbate or maintain racial inequities. These systems are essential for encouraging accountability, addressing systemic racism, and advancing transparency.

People are responsible for their own behaviour and any acts that they may have taken that support racism. This covers prejudiced acts, discriminatory behaviour, and the use of language that is racially biased. This can be resolved by implementing procedures for people to receive anti-racism instruction and training to foster cultural competency. Maintaining the implementation of reporting systems that let people report racist incidents without worrying about facing reprisals will guarantee a secure and private procedure. Going forward, companies are responsible for creating and

putting into practice strong policies pertaining to diversity and inclusion that actively address racial disparities in the workplace or community. Institutions that review and amend policies that could exacerbate racial inequality are held accountable.

This encompasses hiring, housing, education, and criminal justice policies. Transparency is also essential for fostering trust among stakeholders and within communities. Being transparent about anti-racism initiatives builds credibility and shows a dedication to accountability. Through transparent reporting, organizations and institutions can proactively address issues by identifying limitations and shortcomings in anti-racism initiatives.

Those who contribute to racial disparities may face consequences as part of accountability mechanisms. This could entail corrective actions like counselling, sensitivity training, or disciplinary measures. In order to address the underlying causes of racial disparities, consequences may also involve more extensive systemic changes, such as policy revisions, the implementation of diversity initiatives, or the reorganization of organizational practices. Restoring relationships and addressing the effects of discriminatory actions are two goals of restorative justice practices, which are sometimes used as accountability mechanisms when harm has been done.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED

Australia

Australia has a complicated history of racism that is based on discriminatory laws, colonization, and current issues. Racial dynamics have been altered by immigration policy, while indigenous groups have experienced displacement and inequality. Australia has taken action in response, launching programs like the National Anti-Racism Strategy to spread awareness and encourage community-led initiatives. Workplace biases are addressed through cultural competency training and reconciliation action plans which foster cross-cultural understanding. Notwithstanding these endeavors, obstacles endure, underscoring the continuous requirement for all-encompassing approaches to achieve net-zero racism.

Brazil

Brazil has struggled with racism for a long time, stemming from colonization, slavery, and socioeconomic inequality. For Afro-Brazilian communities, the legacy of slavery has had a lasting effect that exacerbates institutional racism and inequality. Brazil has responded by taking action to resolve racial concerns. University affirmative action programs seek to enhance representation, while events such as the National Day of Black Consciousness raise awareness and honor Afro-Brazilian culture.

Notwithstanding these initiatives, obstacles nevertheless exist, highlighting the continuous requirement for all-encompassing plans to bring about a net-zero racism society in Brazil.

France

Because of its colonial heritage and migratory patterns, France has struggled with racism throughout its history. The nation's assimilationist policy has occasionally resulted in the continuation of prejudice, especially against populations with a variety of ethnic backgrounds. France has taken steps to solve these issues by promoting equality and combating racism. Reducing inequities is the goal of affirmative action programs, like those that support diversity in public administration. The public conversation is further aided by educational programs that promote intercultural understanding and holidays such as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Even with these initiatives, sustained dedication is necessary to make France a net-zero racism society.

Germany

Germany recognizes the Nazi era and the horrific atrocities that took place during that time. Even as Germany attempts to move past its wartime past, racist events continue to occur. As a result, the country has taken action to stop discrimination. People are protected from ethnic discrimination by anti-discrimination legislation and programs like the Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency. Through raising awareness of many cultures, educational initiatives support diversity and tolerance. Maintaining vigilance and making continuous efforts are necessary to create a German society that aspires to achieve net-zero racism.

Netherlands

Like many other countries, the Netherlands struggles with racism due to both historical and current difficulties. Discrimination has been a result of a varied society and historical ties to colonialism. The Netherlands has responded to this by putting policies in place that support equality and fight prejudice. The country's commitment is shown in laws supporting workplace diversity and in educational programs that educate people about cultural sensitivity. In addition, groups like the Dutch Institute for Human Rights strive to guarantee equitable treatment for all. Even with advancements, continuous work is necessary to make the Netherlands a net-zero racism society.

South Africa

Deeply ingrained institutionalized racism has plagued South Africa's history, especially during the apartheid period. Even after making great progress during

apartheid, the country still struggles with racial discrimination and inequality. South Africa has implemented several policies and programs to address these problems. By addressing historical injustices, affirmative action programs seek to ensure fair representation across a range of industries. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was essential in promoting national healing and recognizing historical wrongs. Education initiatives provide a strong emphasis on diversity and inclusivity, which helps to dispel racial prejudices. Even though there has been progress, ongoing work is necessary to make South Africa a net-zero racism society.

United Kingdom (UK)

The UK faces issues with racism because of its historical involvement in colonization and immigration. Because of a complicated historical and social background, diverse ethnic populations can experience discrimination. The UK has responded by taking action to combat racial inequality and advance inclusivity. While programs like the Race Disparity Audit examine discrepancies in public services, legislation like the Equality Act aims to prevent prejudice. The emphasis of educational programs is on understanding and awareness of culture. Even with these initiatives, sustained dedication is necessary to make the United Kingdom a net-zero racism society.

United States of America (USA)

The USA continues to face discrimination-related issues because of its complicated history of slavery, segregation, and institutional racism. Comprehensive steps to eliminate racial inequality are necessary since marginalized populations are still affected by the legacy of past injustices. The United States has responded by putting in place several efforts to combat racism. Discriminatory behaviors are intended to be eliminated by civil rights laws, such as the Voting Rights Act and the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The goal of affirmative action laws is to encourage diversity in the workforce and in education. Movements at the grassroots level, like Black Lives Matter, push for systemic change. Persistent discrepancies show that comprehensive policies are still needed to establish a net-zero racism society in the United States, despite these efforts.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

The NAACP was established in 1909 with the goal of eradicating racial prejudice and achieving equality. The NAACP participates in lawsuits to combat discriminatory practices through legal advocacy. The goal of legislative work is to pass legislation that advance equality, whereas community mobilization encourages citizen engagement and grassroots activism. Systemic racism is exposed through educational programs and imbalances are addressed through economic empowerment strategies.

The NAACP uses a comprehensive strategy to fight racial inequity and advance civil rights in the US.

European Network Against Racism (ENAR)

ENAR was founded in 1998 and is a leading force in the fight against racism throughout Europe. The organization focuses on capacity building to empower activists and employs advocacy and lobbying to change policies. Research is conducted to provide evidence-based insights. ENAR supports diversity and opposes prejudice through awareness-raising campaigns. The group, which places a strong emphasis on coalition building, works with a range of stakeholders to address the underlying causes of racism and makes a vital contribution to the ongoing struggle for racial justice and equality throughout Europe.

Amnesty International

Amnesty International was founded in 1961 and constitutes a key instrument in the realm of human rights advocacy. Using a multimodal approach, the organization upholds civil, political, social, economic, and cultural rights as part of its broad mandate. Amnesty International exposes violations of human rights, such as racial discrimination, via rigorous investigation and lobbying. Through campaigns and activism, the group inspires people to oppose systems of oppression. It advocates for policy reforms and pursues justice for victims through the legal system.

World Bank

The World Bank was established in 1944 to promote sustainable development and lower global poverty. Economic and racial inequities are addressed by the organization through research, policy advice, and financial support. The World Bank seeks to fortify institutions and advance inclusive development through capacity-building programs and data-driven monitoring, thus assisting in the indirect mitigation of racial inequities across different regions.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of event
12 February, 1909	The NAACP is founded and goes on to hold a critical role in the fight against racial discrimination.
19 January, 1920	founding of ACLU which has worked to protect and defend individual rights, particularly those pertaining to racial equality.

July 1944	The World Bank is founded in 1944 to eradicate global poverty and advance sustainable development
28 May, 1961	Amnesty International is established and goes on to become a major force in the world of protecting human rights, particularly the struggle against racial discrimination.
1998	The goal of the newly established ENAR is to promote racial equality and fight racism throughout Europe.
1 October, 2010	In the UK, the Equality Act is implemented, offering a legal framework to combat discrimination based on a range of factors, including race.
July 2013	Black Lives Matter (BLM) was founded. After being established, Black Lives Matter (BLM) became well-known for its advocacy against institutionalized racism and police abuse, especially in the US.
August 2016	The UK launches the Race Disparity Audit to detect and resolve racial inequities,
2018	Australia introduces the National Anti-Racism Strategy with the goal of fostering cultural understanding and increasing public awareness of racism.
2020	Global demonstrations against racism are sparked by the death of George Floyd on the 25th of May 2020 in the US. The incidents spark new conversations about accountability systems and social reengineering.

RELEVANT UN RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

- UN International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024)⁸
- UN International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)⁹
- UN Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (2001)¹⁰
- UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), SDG 10.3¹¹
- UN Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance¹²
- International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (March 21)¹³

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

Civil Rights Act of 1964

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was enacted with the intention of eliminating racial discrimination and segregation in several areas, including public accommodations, education, and employment. It was a noteworthy attempt to use legal reforms to address systemic racism in the United States and advance social re-engineering. An important step toward achieving equal rights and opportunities for all citizens was taken with the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which effectively ended institutionalized discrimination and segregation by making it illegal to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Nevertheless, some US citizens continue to discriminate fully knowing that their actions are frowned upon by the law.

South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)

The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was founded in 1996 by the South African government as a post-apartheid measure. The TRC aimed to foster accountability and healing by allowing both victims and perpetrators of egregious human rights violations to testify and request amnesty, even though it did not explicitly address "Net-Zero racism." Recognizing historical injustices and

⁸ United Nations. "International Decade for People of African Descent." United Nations, www.un.org/en/observances/decade-people-african-descent.

⁹ United Nations. "International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination." OHCHR, United Nations, 21 Dec. 1965, www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-convention-elimination-all-forms-racial.

¹⁰ United Nations. "Durban Declaration and Programme of Action." United Nations, www.un.org/en/fight-racism/background/durban-declaration-and-programme-of-action.

¹¹ United Nations. "The 17 Sustainable Development Goals." United Nations, United Nations, 2023, www.sdg.un.org/goals.

¹² "OHCHR | Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism." OHCHR, www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-racism.

¹³ Nations, United. "International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination." United Nations, www.un.org/en/observances/end-racism-day#:~:text=The%20International%20Day%20for%20the.

promoting a more just society were the goals of the process. Established in the wake of apartheid, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in South Africa was a singular and inventive undertaking. Even though it was criticized for certain issues, it was a major factor in the healing of the country since it gave victims and offenders a forum to discuss their experiences, encouraged accountability, and helped the country move toward reconciliation and a more inclusive future. Yet, the effectiveness of this measure can be subject to controversy as many still believe that the TRC has failed.

Affirmative Action Policies

Affirmative action law has been put into place in several nations, including the US, Brazil, and India. These laws, which include for example laws that detail the employment of individuals with disabilities or individuals who are part of minorities aim to correct historical injustices and advance the representation of underrepresented groups in fields like work and education. Affirmative action is a contentious attempt to reshape social structures to lessen inequality. Globally, affirmative action laws have been put into place to remedy systematic and historical injustices, especially in the fields of work and education. Despite their stated goals of advancing equality and diversity, they have come under fire for possible reverse discrimination and meritocracy worries. Such policies must be carefully implemented and continuously reviewed to ensure that their intended goals are met without creating new kinds of inequality. Only then can they be considered equitable and effective.

Black Lives Matter (BLM)

Black Lives Matter (BLM) is a movement that was founded in 2013 in response to the Trayvon Martin case. Its goals include racial justice advocacy and fighting systematic racism. BLM addresses issues like racial profiling and police brutality through media involvement, policy advocacy, community empowerment, and protests. The movement contributes to the larger objective of attaining long-lasting racial equality by using a comprehensive strategy to increase awareness, challenge narratives, and empower Black communities. Especially in the US and abroad, BLM has become a potent grassroots movement that has greatly impacted discussions about institutional racism, the need for social reengineering, and accountability.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), which was founded in 1920, is committed to defending the liberties and rights of individuals as guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution. In order to address racial justice issues, the ACLU engages in community engagement, public education campaigns, policy advocacy, and litigation. The ACLU seeks to defend civil freedoms and against racial discrimination through the

use of litigation, lobbying, and community outreach. As a result, it makes a substantial contribution to the pursuit of justice and equality in the US.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Legislation and Policy Reforms

First and foremost, it is an undeniable fact that in order to tackle net-zero racism member states shall uphold and enforce anti-discrimination laws and policies. Such laws should tackle systemic racism, create transparent accountability frameworks, and give people legal channels to file complaints against unfair treatment. Still, achieving Net-Zero racism calls for significant legislative and regulatory changes in addition to strategic alliances. It is crucial to implement thorough anti-discrimination legislation and data collection procedures. Accountability can be ensured through working with corporations, research institutions, and civil rights groups. Partnerships with educational institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and community leaders are necessary for social re-engineering programs, community engagement efforts, and police accountability reforms. These initiatives can promote fairness and inclusivity by addressing systemic racism holistically through partnership.

Diverse Representation

It is crucial to promote varied representation in order to achieve Net-Zero racism. Equal representation in all spheres—from boardrooms to media—should be required by law. Implementing social re-engineering programs requires working with media outlets, educational institutions, and diversity and inclusion organizations. To guarantee open and efficient implementation, collaborations with advocacy groups and industry associations must be formed to provide accountability measures, such as diversity audits and reporting. These initiatives can promote a society with Net-Zero racism by means of inclusive representation and accountability through strategic collaborations that drive systemic change.

Corporate Accountability

With the aim of achieving net-zero racism it is also imperative to hold businesses responsible for their diversity and inclusion initiatives. Systemic change is facilitated by transparency initiatives like required diversity reporting and penalties for companies that ignore racial disparities in the workplace. In order to attain Net-Zero racism, corporate responsibility is essential. Anti-bias training, diversified employment practices, and open reporting on diversity indicators should all be required by law. Designing efficient accountability systems requires cooperation with

NGOs, industry associations, and diversity and inclusion organizations. Initiatives like inclusive workplace policy and mentorship programs can be put into action through partnerships. Together, businesses and outside groups can take the lead in eradicating systematic racism and promoting a transparent, inclusive corporate culture.

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