

**EU Statement – United Nations General Assembly:  
International Decade for People of African Descent**

**Summary: 10 December 2014, New York - Statement on behalf of the European Union delivered by H.E. Mr. Thomas Mayr-Harting Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, at the United Nations General Assembly Launch of the International Decade for People of African Descent**

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Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, Montenegro\*, Serbia\* and Albania\*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the EFTA countries Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia, and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

At the outset, I would like to thank the South African facilitator, Ambassador Mamabolo, for his stewardship of the process leading to the agreement on the programme of activities of the International Decade for People of African Descent and the launch of the decade today. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the African and CARICOM groups, Brazil, Colombia as well as other delegations that have been engaged interlocutors during this process.

The EU has been, is, and will remain a firm believer in the international fight against all kinds of racism, xenophobia and intolerance, and will always advocate for the promotion and protection of human rights of all, in particular also those of people of African Descent.

It is only through true ownership and engagement of all States that the decade can successfully achieve its objectives. The EU and its Member States look forward to continue playing an active role in the implementation of the decade.

In this light, we expect that the decade will be implemented in an effective and collaborative manner at the local, national and international levels. National action and political will are paramount to this end. The programme of activities contains many forward-looking actions, inter alia on the need to strengthen national action to fight discrimination in relation to the full enjoyment of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights for all, including those of African Descent.

Let me conclude by reiterating the EU's commitment to ensuring a successful decade, focusing on the added value and concrete improvements in the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance everywhere in the world.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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*\* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.*