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## ENAR STATEMENT

### 1ST SESSION OF THE PERMANENT FORUM ON PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT GENEVA, SWITZERLAND 5 – 8 DECEMBER 2022

4<sup>th</sup> December 2022

Madame/mister Chair(-lady)(-man), Excellencies, fellow Human Rights Defenders,

I hereby raise to make a statement behalf of the European Network Against Racism – ENAR We are a Pan-European Network with about 180 grassroots organizations across the EU. We are very pleased to be present in Geneva with you all to engage in this much needed United Nations Permanent Forum for People of African Descent.

ENAR is the only pan-European anti-racism network that combines advocacy for racial equality and facilitating cooperation among civil society anti-racism actors in Europe.

One of our projects is Afrophobia where we work to end racism and racial discrimination targeting black people and African immigrants. People of African descent experience widespread racism and discrimination across the EU and in all areas of life, including employment, education, policing, and the criminal justice system. Recognising and addressing Afrophobia as a specific form of racism that affects people of African descent and Black Europeans is essential to ensure their inclusion in Europe.

There are an estimated 15 million people of African descent and Black Europeans living in Europe, making them one of Europe's largest marginalised communities. People of African descent and Black Europeans constitute a diverse group: while a part of the Black population are migrants, others have been present in Europe for several generations with a long history of citizenship, forming large and established Black communities. Discrimination and stigmatising perceptions due to their physical traits or visibility, regardless of their nationality or immigrant status, are often common experiences.

Our Network applauded the General Assembly's passing of Resolution **68/237**. As a Pan-European Network headquartered in Brussels, we look back at highlights such as EU some Member States' adoptions of National Action Plans, our successful lobbying for the EU's first ever People of African Descent Week in 2018 and the European Commission's

appointment of a Commission coordinator for anti-racism following the EU Anti-racism Action Plan 2020-2025.

As we now near the close of the Decade in 2024, as a pan-European network of grassroots organizations we would like to draw your attention to the following?

- There is currently no EU or national policy developed specifically to combat racism and discrimination against people of African descent and Black Europeans. Despite EU and national legislation providing legal remedies for discrimination, Afrophobia in the EU is still a reality.
- We call on EU nations to adopt strong and specific policies that are geared to address Afrophobia, including its structural dimensions and impact on economic and social outcomes for people of African descent and Black Europeans including in employment, housing, education, health, political participation, criminal justice, and other sectors.
- We call for national action plans that addresses all forms of racism to be implemented in all EU member states similar to the Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies adopted by EU Member States in 2011.
- The framework will serve to develop targeted and effective strategies to counter the structural and everyday racism that prevents the inclusion of many Black people in European society.

I thank you for your attention.