

**1st session of the UN Permanent Forum on People of African Descent
5 December 2022
Room XVIII, Palais des Nations, Geneva
General Debate**

Statement by Ambassador of the Republic of Lithuania, Darius Staniulis

Thank you Madam Chair,

Lithuania aligns itself with the EU Statement, delivered earlier.

We welcome the convening of the 1st session of the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent. It is crucial to expand the opportunities for us all to gather and listen to each other.

Lithuania, as a member of Human Rights Council, is committed to hear every voice and to strengthen relevance of multilateral system. Participation in decision-making processes is not a privilege; therefore, we especially encourage participation of human rights activists of African descents, as well as women, youth and children in international fora. Involvement in processes is a way to showcase their situations and to discuss the issues of concern.

Lithuania remains fully committed to the principles and objectives of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Our Constitution and laws prohibit direct or indirect discrimination on any ground and guarantee equal opportunities of participation. We remain supportive of joint efforts to eliminate systemic racism. There should be no place for any form of systemic oppression to all persons in cultural, social and economic life, as well as in public affairs.

More interregional dialogue is needed and we look forward to the discussions. We are open to broader cooperation on various related topics, such as gender equality, sustainable development, climate change, and digitalisation.

We believe this Forum will contribute greatly to further actions that we can take together in order to eliminate racism, and promote peace, justice, freedom, and dignity.

Thank you.