



PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**UN COMMITTEE URGES UK GOVERNMENT TO PUT RACE EQUALITY
BACK ON THE AGENDA**

In response to last month's presentation of government policy to the UN in Geneva, the Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) has concluded that the UK needs to do more to address racial inequality.

After hearing evidence compiled by a coalition of over 130 organisations across the UK and interrogating a team of government representatives, CERD concluded that the UK needs to 'adopt a detailed action plan. . . for tackling race inequality'.

CERD Committee members highlighted many areas for concern; including the disproportionate use of stop and search powers by the police, the persistent gap in employment and educational attainment experienced by some minority groups, the failure to regulate racist practices in the media, and the importance of accountability for race equality at a local level.

The Committee focused on the Dale Farm evictions as an example of the broader exclusion that Gypsies and Travellers face and called for the eviction to be delayed until 'alternative culturally appropriate accommodation' is identified.

CERD called on the government to protect the gains made under the recent Equality Act and to ensure that the Equality and Human Rights Commission is able to carry out its crucial functions independently.

Rob Berkeley, Director of The RunnymedeTrust noted;

'This verdict reflects the strength of feeling across the country that our government is not committed to addressing racial inequality. So many organisations have worked together to warn the government that it is failing its ethnic minority citizens and the UN now agree. We look forward to continuing to work with government and others to create a fairer society for all – whatever their ethnic background'

Ends

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. To speak to Rob Berkeley or another member of the UK NGOs Against Racism coalition contact Vicki Butler at 020 7377 9222 or email vicki@runnymedetrust.org

1. The concluding report of UN CERD can be accessed here:
http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cerd/docs/UK_COBs_CERD79.pdf

2. UK NGOs Against Racism is a coalition of organisations who conducted a series of consultations across the UK before compiling their report to UN CERD. Their report can be viewed here:
<http://www.runnymedetrust.org/projects-and-publications/projects/europe/cerd.html>

3. UK NGOs Against Racism is made up of the Runnymede Trust, Migrant Rights Network, Just West Yorkshire, the Discrimination Law Association, Equanomics UK, the Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights, the Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities, Irish Traveller Movement in Britain and Cambridge Racial Incident Support Project.

4. The Runnymede Trust is a social policy research organisation focused on race equality and race relations. We work by:

- Identifying barriers to race equality and good race relations
- Enabling effective action for social change
- Influencing policy at all levels through providing thought leadership and robust evidence

Further information is available on the Runnymede website:
www.runnymedetrust.org