



NAACP

Derrick Johnson
*President and
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March 9, 2022

Ms. Ursula von der Leyen
President
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
Brussels, Belgium

Dear Madame President:

We write today with an urgent concern regarding reports that Black families, immigrants from the African diaspora, and other people of color who reside in Ukraine have been treated in a discriminatory manner as they flee the escalating war in Ukraine. Press reports and online video reflect the use of racial hierarchy, violence, and state action taken against refugees of color as they attempt to flee Ukraine and enter bordering states of the European Union.

We appreciate the European Union's public rejection of discrimination. Even in the face of challenges and threats as serious as war, we must be vigilant in protecting the human rights of the most vulnerable populations from the worst forms of discrimination. As you are aware, the provision of humane treatment to refugees is embedded in sovereign law, international treaties, and customary law. Parliamentarians have a critical role to ensure the implementation of policy through actual practice.

We understand the difficulty and fluidity of monitoring border agents across sovereign states. We urge swift and proactive action to ensure the fair and humane treatment of all refugees with special attention to nondiscrimination.

Thank you for your continued commitment to secure the safe passage and humane treatment of displaced persons fleeing the attack on Ukraine's sovereignty. We further request additional information on measures undertaken to ensure the safe passage of all refugees.

We are united in our fight against all forms of racism and discrimination – no matter where it occurs.

Sincerely,

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law (LCCR)
National Action Network (NAN)
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (NAACP/LEDF)
National Coalition on Black Civic Participation / Black Women's Roundtable (NCBCP/BWR)
National Council of Negro Women, Inc. (NCNW)
National Urban League (NUL)