

20 March 2023

UN Day for the Elimination of Racism 2023

The UN Day for the Elimination of Racism is marked every year on 21 March to remember the Sharpeville Massacre, when police opened fire on peaceful protestors against the apartheid regime of pass books for black people, killing 69 people.

The 2023 theme of the International Day focuses on the **urgency of combatting racism and racial discrimination, 75 years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)**.

I have spent all of my adult life fighting racism, we pass to the next generation of black people, a worse future than that passed to us by our parents' generation – many of whom were first generation migrants to the UK, including the Windrush Generation – the majority of whom have still not received compensation following the horrific impacts of the Windrush Scandal, where they were criminalised for being black and migrating to the UK to help the country to recover post World War Two.

This year also marks the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the Empire Windrush and there will be a range of commemorative events organised across the UK including, by trade unions.

As the curator of the TUC Roots Culture Identity Art Exhibition, our theme for this year is Windrush 75. It's not too late for you or any budding artists you know to submit expressions to participate in the exhibition. [Read more information.](#)

75 years on and we are still fighting for racial justice in all aspects of life including at work where we as Black workers face the adverse impacts of over ten years of austerity, the pandemic and also institutional racism meaning we are discriminated against, harassed and bullied and victimised disproportionately by our employers.

Earlier this year I spoke at the UN symposium on People of African descent to a UN panel of experts on the discrimination faced by black people and double

impacts on black women in the labour market and at work. Some of what I said is captured in this in their damning interim findings [as reported in the Guardian](#).

Following collective actions including legal action by PCS and others and by my organisation [BARAC UK](#) we successfully challenged the government's small boats push back policy but they have now introduced a draconian and inhumane bill which targets the most vulnerable, disproportionately black and brown refugees once again.

There is much to be done to challenge racial discrimination at work and in wider society and trade unions can play a crucial role in not just speaking out but taking action including taking forward the recommendations from [the TUC Anti-racism Taskforce](#).

There are many ways that members can get involved in campaigning against racism whether in the workplace or in your community. Educate yourself by learning about the history and impact in your community and society, attend PCS courses from [The PCS Academy courses](#) or webinars and talk to people who have experienced racism. Speak out or volunteer with organisations by joining your local organisation who work towards ending racism in your community. Remember, it takes a collective effort to make a significant impact against racism. Every action, no matter how small, can make a difference in creating a more equitable and just society.

Please join the new [TUC Black Network](#) and be part of a bigger movement.