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COVID 19 and Racism

GCAP strongly condemns the recent cases of racism in relation with the Corona virus pandemic and calls for strong reactions from governments, civil society and the international community.

The Corona virus pandemic has shaken many and created an unprecedented disaster with an enormous impact with vast consequences. While fear and uncertainty have spread with the virus, there have been countless acts of generosity, support and understanding across the world. Yet Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP) is concerned about the concurrent rise of violent acts of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance.

There have been reports of overt racism against Africans in China, where many have been subjected to mandatory tests and quarantine and also evicted and denied services. Several media have reported that the African community in Guangzhou is on edge after widespread accounts were shared on social media of people being left homeless, as China has warned against imported coronavirus cases, which has led to xenophobia. Many have been evicted from their homes as well as hotels, despite not having traveled nor symptoms or contact with Covid-19 patients. This problem is not solved. GCAP strongly condemns this discrimination and calls on Chinese authorities to put an end to any act aimed at compromising human dignity.

GCAP also condemns any proposal of testing on unprotected populations in Africa. Africans, as all human beings, are not guinea pigs. Tests have to be developed according to international protocols. To speak irresponsibly, as recently happened in France, is a contribution for fueling racism.

GCAP also denounces the cases of racism against Chinese and East Asians in general, reported both on social networks and offline in several regions.

Such xenophobia and racism, as well as against communities discriminated on work and descent (DWD) before and during this crisis, are some of the main contemporary causes and forms of inequality, violence and conflict.

These acts not only violate the UN charter, but also the principles of equality and non-discrimination enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In addition, these acts also go against the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals agreed by all governments, which places human beings at the center of all issues.

States have the duty to protect and promote the fundamental rights and freedoms of all victims.

The fight against xenophobia and racism requires the urgent attention and intervention of States, civil society and the international community.

We are all born free and equal! The fight against inequality is now!