

# United Nations Association

## Westminster Branch

Campaigning for a strong, credible and effective UN



**The UK response to the UN's race audit: blueprint for change or empty promises, to gather dust until the next submission to the UN in 2021?**

**Barbara Cohen, Runnymede Trust**

**Andrea Murray, Equality & Human Rights Commission**

**Ian Naysmith, Dept. for Communities and Local Government**

**6.30pm, Monday 5 December 2016**

**Room 3, House of Lords**

**Chair: Lord Ouseley**

In 2014, Westminster UNA reviewed the UK's progress in implementing recommendations made in the 2011 audit conducted by the Committee for the International Convention for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). That report had criticised the UK for its treatment of gypsies and Irish travellers and its record on the disproportionate use of 'stop and search' powers.

The CERD Committee's recent Periodic Review for the UK, published 29 August, has expressed concern on funding cuts to the Equality and Human rights Commission (EHRC) and the dilution of its powers and noted with alarm the sharp rise in race hate crime during the recent EU referendum campaign.

A key CERD recommendation urged the UK to develop a race strategy. Also, the EHRC has called on the Government to take urgent steps to tackle deep-seated racial inequality or risk societal disintegration. It proposes tough new race targets covering criminal justice, education and employment. Concerns for the state of UK race relations are supported by its own research which evidences painfully slow progress and disproportionate outcomes in the life chances of black and minority ethnic people.

Now, upon becoming Prime Minister, Theresa May has committed the Government to an audit of public services to identify and tackle racial disparities and injustice. But does this indicate that 'Race' is back on the UK policy agenda after a prolonged period on the side-lines? What has triggered this renewed interest? Is the UN Treaty Monitoring process starting to pay dividends?

Our panel of experts will review the UN Report, assess prospects for action to tackle racial inequality, and discuss where action by Government and the EHRC is most needed and will have greatest impact.

**Enter by Cromwell Green, facing Parliament Square**

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