

**OIC-IPHRC commemorates the ‘International Day for Women and Girls of African Descent’ and calls for combating all forms of structural racism and discrimination, promote social, economic and cultural inclusion to ensure realization of all rights.**

**Jeddah, July 25, 2025:** The Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC) of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) joins the international community in commemorating, for the first time, the International Day for Women and Girls of African Descent, which was declared by the UN last year 2024. This day acknowledges and honors the contributions, resilience, and rich cultural heritage of women and girls of African descent across the world. While recognizing the ongoing injustices they endure globally, it draws urgent attention to eliminate all structural and systemic barriers which are sources of discrimination and inequality against women and girls of African descent living in different parts of the world.

The Commission highlights that Islamic principles unequivocally affirm the inherent dignity, worth, and equality of all human beings, regardless of race, ethnicity, or sex. In this spirit, Islam recognizes and upholds the honor, and rights of women and girls of African descent, condemning all forms of racial or discrimination based on sex. The teachings of the Noble Qur’an and tradition of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) elevated the status of women. The Islamic values promote justice, compassion, and the empowerment of all individuals including women without any discrimination. Upholding these timeless principles, it is our moral and religious duty to support the rights, dignity, and full participation of women and girls of African descent in all spheres of life.

The Commission reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the promotion and protection of the human rights and dignity of all women and girls, particularly those in vulnerable situations. In line with its mandate and the principles of the OIC Charter, IPHRC reaffirms its collective commitment to the principles of equality, dignity, and justice as enshrined in international human rights law, the OIC Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women and the Cairo Declaration of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation on Human Rights.

The Commission recognizes that women and girls of African descent often endure disproportionate levels of discrimination driven by structural racism, socio-economic status, and migration status. These injustices are deeply rooted in historical legacies of slavery, colonialism, and racial segregation and persist in areas including access to education, healthcare, employment, justice, and political participation.

As part of its thematic priorities, IPHRC continues to advocate for human rights and social justice for women and the elimination of racial and ethnic discrimination, including through its focus on the rights of women and children. The Commission underscores the importance of inclusive policies, legal protections, and holistic approaches that specifically address the lived experiences of African-descended women and girls.

In recent years, IPHRC has observed with concern the escalation of hate speech and racial incitement, both online and offline, targeting racial, ethnic, and religious minorities, including women and girls of African descent. These toxic narratives perpetuate stereotypes, deepen divisions and fuel violence. IPHRC strongly condemns all forms of hate speech and calls on governments, international organizations and digital platforms to strengthen legal protections and accountability mechanisms to combat racial hatred and discrimination, particularly when directed at women in vulnerable situations.

The Commission emphasizes the need for inclusive and rights-based policy responses, coupled with robust public education and media awareness campaigns that foster tolerance, promote fair representation, and challenge racial-based bias. The media plays a pivotal role in shaping public perceptions, and it must be used as a force for inclusion, dignity, and social cohesion.

On this significant day, the Commission encourages the development of targeted initiatives that combat structural racism, promote cultural inclusion and ensure equitable access to all human rights. IPHRC stands in solidarity with women and girls of African descent, celebrating their strength, affirming their rights, and pledging continued support to the global efforts aimed at dismantling all forms of racial-based inequality. *noraalrshoud*

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