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OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

SPECIAL PROCEDURES OF THE
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

**Mandates of the Working Group on people of African descent and the Special Rapporteur on
contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance**

REFERENCE: AL Af. Descent 2012 G/SO 214 (78-15)
USA 15/2013

29 August 2013

Excellency,

We have the honour to address you in our capacities as Chairperson of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent (WGPAD) and Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance pursuant to Commission on Human Rights resolutions 2002/68 and 2003/30 and Human Rights Council resolutions 9/14, 18/28 and 16/33.

In this connection, we would like to draw the attention of your Excellency's Government to the information received on the **on-going review of the case involving the death of Trayvon Martin in February 2012**.

According to the information received:

The Department of Justice's Criminal Section of the Civil Rights Division, the United States Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Florida and the Federal Bureau of Investigation continue to evaluate the evidence generated during the federal investigation, as well as the evidence and testimony from the state trial.

While we do not wish to prejudge the accuracy of this information and the outcome of the evaluation, we would like to appeal to your Excellency's Government to finalize without undue delay the on-going review of the case involving the death of Trayvon Martin in February 2012, along with the delivery of justice and appropriate reparations.

In this connection, we would like to refer to Article 2(1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) which states: "Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to respect and to ensure to all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction the rights recognized in the present Covenant, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status."

In addition, Article 2(2) states: “Where not already provided for by existing legislative or other measures, each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to take the necessary steps, in accordance with its constitutional processes and with the provisions of the present Covenant, to adopt such legislative or other measures as may be necessary to give effect to the rights recognized in the present Covenant.”

We would also like to appeal to your Excellency’s Government to examine its laws that could have discriminatory impact on African Americans and to ensure that such laws are in full compliance with the country’s international legal obligations and relevant international standards. In this connection, we would like to refer to Article 2(c) of the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, which states: “Each State Party shall take effective measures to review governmental, national and local policies, and to amend, rescind or nullify any laws and regulations which have the effect of creating or perpetuating racial discrimination wherever it exists.”

In light of the implications of the issue, we are considering to publicly express our concerns we deem appropriate in the near future.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Verene Shepherd
Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on people of African descent

Mutuma Ruteere
Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial
discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance