

Joint statement in response to the Sewell Report

The findings of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities, chaired by Dr Tony Sewell, are an insult to all those in Britain who experience racism every day of their lives.

The report's attempts to diminish the impact of structural and institutional racism on the lives of Black* people in the UK are all the more galling in the midst of a pandemic where minority ethnic communities have borne a hugely disproportionate cost. It demonstrates an astonishing complacency and ignores the fact that any progress made in improving the lives of Black people across the UK has been won by decades of determined campaigning against the odds.

The report's suggestion that the UK should be a 'model' for other countries in their response to racism also ignores the wealth of evidence which points to deeply unequal experiences faced by Black communities in the UK today. This includes the fact that:

- More than nine-in-ten (93%) doctors who have died of Covid in the UK are minority ethnic. The Royal College of Physicians recently found that over 75% of BME doctors were concerned about their health, as opposed to 48% of all doctors. The chair of the British Medical Association, Dr. Chaand Nagpaul, has said that "BAME doctors often feel bullied and harassed at higher levels compared to their white counterparts,' and that they are 'twice as likely not to raise concerns because of fears of recrimination'.
- Research by the TUC tells us that the unemployment rate for Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups is around 10% higher than for White groups, and that Black/African/Caribbean groups are more than twice as likely to be unemployed than their White counterparts.
- Fewer than 1% of the professors employed at UK universities are Black, and few British universities employ more than one or two Black professors. Only 140 academic staff at professorial level identified as black - equating to 0.7% out of a total of more than 21,000 professors (HESA 2018-19). Only 27 of these professors are women. More than nine in ten college Principals (93%) and University vice chancellors (94%) are white.
- Black students at university are three times more likely to drop out than their white counterparts. There is also a 26% gap in attainment of first or 2:1 degrees between Black students and their white counterparts (Universities UK / NUS).
- Nine out of ten children on remand come from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic background (Transform Justice/ Howard League for Penal Reform).
- In 2019/20, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people were over four times more likely to be stopped and searched than White people. For Black people specifically, this was almost nine times more likely. Black people were also 18 times more likely than White people to be searched (HM Inspectorate of Constabulary).

- Despite making up just 14% of the population, BAME men and women make up 25% of prisoners, while over 40% of young people in custody are from BAME backgrounds. (The Lammy Review).
- Exclusion rates for Black Caribbean students in English schools are up to six times higher than their white peers in some local authorities. Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children are also excluded at much higher rates, with Roma children nine times more likely to be suspended in some areas.

We are in no doubt about the purpose of this report. By attacking the well-evidenced existence of structural and institutional racism, the government hopes to dismantle any accountability for its own discriminatory actions.

Instead, the report blames black and brown communities themselves for inequalities because they are 'haunted' by historic, systemic racism. We reject this assertion wholeheartedly, and reaffirm our determination to work together in the fight to dismantle systemic racism in all its manifestations.

Signed -





**The term Black in this statement is used in a political sense to refer to all those who are descended, through one or both parents, from Africa, the Caribbean, Asia (the middle-East to China) and Latin America. Where third party sources are referenced in this statement we have used the terminology which was used in those reports.*