

[HRC47 | Call for UN inquiry into police violence and systemic racism in the United States](#)

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ISHR joined 171 families of victims of police violence in the United States and over 270 civil society organisations from more than 40 countries in sending letters to the UN High Commissioner and the African Group regarding the UN Human Rights Council's role to ensure effective accountability and follow-up to [HRC Resolution 43/1](#) on anti-Black racism and police brutality in the United States and globally.



The signatories to the letters are calling on the Council to establish an independent commission of inquiry into police killings of Black men and women as well as violent law enforcement responses to protests in the United States, as well as a thematic commission of inquiry empowered to investigate systemic racism in law enforcement globally, especially where it is related to legacies of colonialism and transatlantic slavery, as [called](#) for by the UN Special Procedures.

In a [letter](#) sent to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet today, the groups urge the UN to support the calls made by victims' families and others to mandate an independent inquiry into police violence and provide recommendations for a national plan of action to eliminate systemic racism and racial discrimination in the United States. This includes the allocation of resources to achieve racial equality through the adoption of reparations and other programmes to remedy historic racial injustices.

In a [letter](#) sent by victims' families and the groups to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of African States, the signatories expressed their appreciation for the African Group's leadership at the Council and their support to the demands made by victims' families, civil society organisations, and Special Procedures in the context of the urgent debate on the "current racially inspired human rights violations, systemic racism, police brutality and violence against peaceful protests" and urged the African Group to continue supporting these demands in the follow up resolution expected at the upcoming 47th session of the Council.

In June 2020, the African Group [called](#) on the Council to establish a commission of inquiry following the police murder of George Floyd and subsequent racial justice protests, but the Council instead [adopted a watered-down resolution](#) due to diplomatic pressure from the Trump administration and US allies. Instead, the adopted resolution mandated the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to prepare a report on systemic racism and police violence globally, which will be presented on 12 July 2021 at the Council.

The letters state that a robust international accountability mechanism would further support and complement, not undermine, efforts to dismantle systemic racism in the United States, especially in the context of police violence against Black people.

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