

MUN POSITION PAPER

UNHRC

TOPIC: COMBATting RACISM, RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, XENOPHOBIA AND RELATED INTOLERANCE

Racism is the belief that there are human groups with particular (usually physical) characteristics that make them superior or inferior to others. Racist behaviour can be not just overt, such as treating some people according to their race or colour, but also covert, when society systematically treats groups according to some form of discriminating judgement.

Some groups of people are more vulnerable than others and often become the victims of one or several forms of discrimination, such as:

- [migrants](#)
- [people living in extreme poverty](#)
- [women](#)
- [people of African descent](#)
- [indigenous peoples](#)
- [national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities](#)

Racism is unacceptable—all people deserve dignity and respect. But unfortunately, racial discrimination and intolerance are prevalent problems in all societies, including the United States.

Human rights are **not** guaranteed for black people in America. In many cases, they are actively oppressed, overlooked, and denied. As a country that is supposed to be a leader on the world stage, this is our most dangerous shortcoming.

The United Nations Association of the USA (UNA-USA)'s advocates work continuously to uphold human rights and expose racial injustice everywhere, not just over the past eight days but over the past 75 years. Our movement is built on the stories of our UNA-USA members and our mission is guided by their actions. We call upon our members, advocates and allies to demand our systems be changed. We will voice these demands to leaders at every level, from our city council to the White House.

The **Pulitzer Prize-winning food critic Jonathan Gold**, best known for extolling the virtues of nomadic taco trucks and under-the-radar noodle vendors in his native Los Angeles, once said that he wrote "to try to get people less afraid of their neighbors."

With accounts of **coronavirus-related anti-Asian discrimination and harassment** spreading as rapidly as the **COVID-19 pandemic**, Gold's message is more important than ever. Across the United States, Chinese Americans are facing **growing racism in the form of verbal and physical attacks**. In February, Jonathan Mok, a college student from Singapore, reported being **punched and kicked on the street** in London. His attackers, he **told the BBC**, shouted, "We don't want your coronavirus in our country." Mok posted photos of his injured face on

social media, writing, "Racism is not stupidity — racism is hate. Racists constantly find excuses to expound their hatred — and in this current backdrop of the coronavirus, they've found yet another excuse."

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DELEGATE OF USA