



Name of Session: Evidence-Based Approach to Recognizing and Addressing Systemic and Structural Racism

Date of Session: June 1, 2023

Name of Organization: AI for the People in affiliation with the ICSWG

Country of Operation: United States of America

Name of Speaker: Mutale Nkonde, AI for the People, founder

REMARKS

AI for the People, speaking on behalf of the Article X Coalition, a global group of digital rights organizations who are affiliated with the International Civil Society Working Group for the PFPAD. In terms of data gathering we have the following recommendations

1. Members of the Permanent Forum consider how racial proxies, which are elements that seem color blind but become racialized because of racist policy making. This is especially true when we consider data generated by AI and other advanced technologies.
2. For example during the COVID pandemic millions of Black people were affected by an algorithm used to assign hospital beds to gravely ill patients was found to discriminate against Black people. This is because the metric “cost of treatment” becomes a proxy for race in the United States setting because Black people have less access to health insurance¹. This is because health insurance is linked to employment where Black people face discrimination during recruitment, are more likely to attend underfunded schools due to housing discrimination and have a

¹ Heidi Ledford (October 24, 2019) *Millions of black people affected by racial bias in health -care algorithms*, Nature Magazine, read the article here <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-03228-6>



history of being discriminated against in a medical setting so less likely to pursue preventative care.

We therefore have the following recommendations:

1. The PFPAD should collect qualitative and quantitative data so we can place numeric data into social and political context
2. Special attention should be paid to how race and racism are conceived and discussed in their local contexts
3. The Article X Coalition calls on global experts on technology and race who can help PFPAD identify potential racial proxies and offer interventions on how to avoid them.
4. Algorithmic systems are used in decision making systems that impact every aspect of human endeavor and so the PFPAD needs to work alongside the other bodies within the UN impacting industry because the innovation economy is driven by industry.