

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515

March 2, 2022

Ms. Ursula von der Leyen  
President  
European Commission  
Rue de la Loi 200  
Brussels, Belgium

Dear Madame President;

We write with concern regarding the treatment of people of African and Asian descent who are trying to flee Ukraine. Thank you for clarifying that the borders of the European Union are open to everyone fleeing the war in Ukraine. Nonetheless, numerous press and social media reports indicate that many Black families, immigrants from the African diaspora and other people of color are subject to discriminatory or inhumane treatment as they seek to flee Ukraine for the safety of other European countries.

Racism, discrimination, and cruelty are always unacceptable, but even more so during a war and humanitarian crisis. Anyone in Ukraine seeking refuge from this blatant attack on Ukrainian sovereignty must be treated with dignity and respect. Governments have an obligation to take every step necessary to protect the human rights of all people fleeing conflict, regardless of race or ethnicity.

We applaud that you have publicly rejected discriminatory treatment of refugees. We ask for more information about how European Union institutions and its member states are working to implement equitable and humane policies and procedures towards refugees. We further ask that a representative of the Commission brief us on the progress of these efforts.

Thank you again for working to ensure all people fleeing conflict are treated equitably and humanely. We look forward to your response.


Sincerely,



Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress



Joyce Beatty  
Member of Congress



Gregory W. Meeks  
Member of Congress



Stacey E. Plaskett  
Member of Congress



Karen Bass  
Member of Congress