



## Commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March 2018, UNESCO Headquarters)

**Deconstructing racial narratives: challenging assumptions and fostering diversity**

**Panel discussion featuring a lecture by Evelyne Heyer, Professor of Anthropological Genetics at the *Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle*, co-curator of the exhibition “Us and Them – From Prejudice to Racism” (Room IV, 3:00 to 4:30 pm)**

**Travelling exhibition: “Us and Them – From prejudice to racism”**

**(Miro Hall, 19-23 March 2018) Official launch on 21 March following the panel discussion**

The current societal context compels us to rethink about new ways of enhancing “living together” and creating inclusive societies free from any forms of discrimination. The renaissance of ethno-nationalism in many societies and the increased vigilance against cross-border movements of populations have boosted the cautionary tale of mistrust, intolerance and hatred against the “Other”. These narratives dispel the international community’s efforts for multiculturalism, global citizenship and intercultural dialogue. Moreover, deep-rooted historical evolutions that legitimized differences, including racism and xenophobia, have contributed to still persistent prejudices against people who do not belong to the same sociocultural constructs. In fact, even if scientific evidence has proven the nullity of “race”, the *concept* of “race” remains a futile ground for discriminations, injustices and even violence.

UNESCO’s Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice, adopted in 1978, still echoes its relevance in contemporary debates, attitudes and practices. UNESCO’s collaboration with the Musée de l’Homme, through the temporary exhibition “Us and Them – From Prejudice to Racism”, provided an open forum to shed light on racist behavior and prejudices, and served as an opportunity to showcase global efforts for inclusion and diversity, notably through the International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities – ICCAR.

This panel seeks to understand and deconstruct the racial narratives that have proliferated in history, including during the present time. It aims to capture and explain the scientific evidence that could contribute to the dissipation of racism, racialization and discriminations. The lecture will be followed by a discussion with international experts.

Invitees will include Member States and various UNESCO networks including UNESCO Chairs, NGOs, ASPnet schools, academic and scientific communities, media and the general public.

The lecture will be followed by the inauguration of the travelling exhibition in Miro Hall. As it was in the original version, this abridged version will highlight the work of the International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities – ICCAR. This exhibition was conceived and produced by the *Muséum national d’Histoire naturelle – Musée de l’Homme*. The event will also include the artwork from the contest ASPnet contest “Opening Hearts and Minds”.

In addition to the above, an event with slammers and rappers, members of the Coalition of Artists for the General History of Africa, will be organized at “La Colonie” (128 rue La Fayette, 75010 Paris) from 7:00 pm. It aims to exchange about how urban artists use their art to address racial prejudices, racism and discriminations.

**Keynote lecturer:** Professor Evelyne Heyer

### **Discussants:**

- Dr Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- Ms Rita Izsák-Ndiaye, Expert member of Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Mayor Lukwago Erias, Mayor of Kampala City, Uganda