

**Memorandum received by Mohammed Aziz, Chair, European
Network Against Racism (ENAR)- 7 November 2009**

Dear Sirs,

I write as a founding member of the Equality & Diversity Forum (EDF), a former Commissioner at the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) and the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC), and as a member of both the Taskforce and the Steering Group that helped to construct the Commission for Equality & Human Rights (CEHR - now EHRC). Having watched the recent evidence to your Committee from recently resigned Commissioners at the EHRC, I would like to make the following points:

1) I do not feel the problem lies primarily with the structure of the Commission. The structure is not perfect (eg, I have always maintained that it should be accountable to Parliament and not to a Government Department), but it is structurally one of the most inclusive and robust equality/human rights commission anywhere. The inclusivity and representation elements of the Commission are in my view critical to its credibility with those whom it hopes to serve.

2) I do feel quite strongly that the problem lies with the leadership style. Listening to the evidence brought back many sorrowful memories of my time at the CRE. What the EHRC requires is the consultative collegiate style leadership that I have witnessed at the EDF, under two chairs at the EOC, and at the Taskforce and Steering Group that helped give birth to the EHRC - not the closed, cliquey and manipulative type of leadership I witnessed at the CRE, and now seems to be the case at the EHRC.

3) With the right leadership, I am confident that the EHRC, with its generous but much needed powers and resources, can flourish - and help to create a greater Britain where all people are treated with dignity and equality, thus promoting good relations between people and communities resulting in greater cohesion in society, and thereby a country we can all be proud of. The work of the EHRC is critical and needs to be given every chance of success possible.

I hope the above is helpful to your deliberations, and wish you well in your work.

Yours sincerely,
Mohammed Aziz,
Chair, European Network Against Racism (ENAR)