



All in! “Protecting our communities – protecting ourselves”

The participants of ENAR’s 16th General Assembly 2017 (Brussels, Belgium/22-24 June 2017)
(photo credits: ENAR official FB account)

During its 16th General Assembly, the European Network Against Racism (ENAR) called on all its members to protect themselves and their communities from the real harm brought about by the racism and discrimination now spreading like wildfire all over Europe.

The three-day assembly, held from 22-24 June in Brussels, Belgium started with a visit to the European Parliament where ENAR delegates were able to attend key meetings and exchange views with parliamentarians on main issues such as migration, integration policy, and migrant rights.

Francisco Fonseca Morillo, Deputy Director General, Directorate-General Justice and Consumers shared the functions and guiding principles of his office, which include going into the battlefield of hate crimes due to racial, religious and sexual discrimination. He pointed out that tools have already been implemented and civil society, including anti-racist groups like ENAR play a crucial role in the struggle against discrimination. However, he said a long and hard fight still lies ahead, and called on everyone to promote social cohesion and real integration.



Graphic reporting of Day 2

Various workshops were held also on the second day, with skilled key speakers on the following main topics: Self-care, Ensuring online protection, Protecting our communities and our activists, Addressing hate speech on Twitter, Advocating for National action plans against racism (NAPAR), Challenging toxic media, Monitoring Counter Terrorism measures and Mainstreaming Antigypsyism in EU and national public policies.

Following the year's main theme, "Protecting our communities – protecting ourselves," ENAR was able to bring out some of the most widespread issues in terms of threats, violence and crimes committed due to racism. Most important, ENAR provided a comprehensive look on how and what we can do to protect ourselves and our communities from the terror of discrimination.

As representative of the Filipino Women's Council, I based my participation in the third workshop on the core principle of the council, which is providing assistance and protection to the Filipino migrant community especially for the vulnerable group of women and children. We tackled what can be done and how to carry out basic protection of one's community and activists. The workshop identified important lessons and know how::

- distinguishing internal and external threats
- identifying and addressing the danger of both physical and digital aggression
- reassessing vulnerability of community and especially the group itself
- knowing and giving importance to security protocol and capacities of the group to address the threat or danger
- organizational and security planning
- understanding and addressing motives, access and resources of attacker or perpetrator
- *preventing digital aggressions
- awareness of the devices being used in professional and personal communication
- type of information that we store/ and what type of information we care to store

- *what types of attacks we try to avoid and how much the attack costs us*
- *probability of attack*

One of the other workshops that I attended dealt with an important and pervasive issue – the challenge of toxic media.’ Participants were presented with many news and articles and social media posts that came from both fake and legitimate sources. The challenge was how to identify and help the community especially the target and vulnerable group, in utilizing the power of social media.

During the assembly’s last day, two new board members were elected, and ENAR called on its members to move forward with a new and collective perspective in the continuing fight against racism and discrimination.

Aubrey Abarintos