

# *Racism, a systemic problem in the United States.*

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By María Josefina Arce.

One of the largest and most important mobilizations for social justice and equality in the United States took place in Washington on August 28, 1963. Six decades later racism continues to eat away at American society.

"...America has failed in its promise to its citizens of color," said civil rights fighter Martin Luther King in his memorable "I Have a Dream" speech to more than 250,000 people that day.

Today, racism, police brutality, poverty and inequality continue to be a harsh reality for the African-American population, whose most basic rights are violated every day.

Racial hatred is unfortunately part of society. In the last few days, a new incident of this kind has been added to the already long list. An individual, who in various writings had expressed his hatred towards blacks, shot three black people to death in a store in Jacksonville, Florida.

In addition, African-American citizens are routinely suspected, questioned and arrested by law enforcement on the streets at a much higher rate than whites.

They have also been subjected to excessive use of force by the police, which in many cases has resulted in their deaths. Let's remember the murder in 2020 of George Floyd, which provoked the largest protests in decades on U.S. soil. However, in just three years, more names have been added.

The COVID 19 pandemic came to deepen the inequality. According to experts, this important segment of the population will take longer to recover from the economic and health impact of the disease caused by the new coronavirus. Experts describe the recovery of most black people as sporadic and uneven. Limited access to health care, food and housing insecurity and setbacks in education are all contributing to this slow

recovery.

In fact, several studies revealed that in 2021, 19.5% of the African-American population in the United States was living below the poverty level.

Other data confirm the prevailing racism. Three times as many black people are in prison as white people, and the incarceration rate of black women is 1.7 times higher than that of white women. Also, in 2020, nearly 39% of this sector of society was homeless.

Martin Luther King's dream has unfortunately not been fulfilled. Racism is undoubtedly a systemic problem in the United States, which paradoxically ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination in 1994.

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