



*The Academic Committee of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence, in its capacity as the Cluster's highest decision-making body, has released the following statement to clarify its stance on racism and the Black Lives Matter movement. The statement is the result of extensive discussion among the members of the Africa Multiple Cluster.*

### **The Cluster's Stance on Racism and Black Lives Matter**

As scholars committed to the reconfiguration of African Studies, we are troubled by the most recent manifestations of anti-Black racism and white supremacy in the United States, whether in the form of lethal police brutality or the disproportionate losses of African American lives in the course of the Covid-19 outbreak.

Moreover, we are deeply concerned by racism more broadly as constituting global realities in all its facets, both historically and in the present. We stand firmly with the struggle for justice and equality of Black people and people of African Descent, whether in the US, Germany, or elsewhere on the globe. Black Lives Matter!

However, physical violence is only the tip of the iceberg. Racism dehumanizes People of Color and Black people in particular, exposing them to structural and discursive modes of discrimination. Systemic inequalities are evident in the lack of institutional representation, and they also permeate academia and knowledge production, as reflected, for instance, in the frequent marginalization of scholars of Color in Germany and elsewhere in the Global North.

As a transcontinental and transcultural network comprising more than 130 scholars from Germany and African countries (and including members and institutional partners in Europe, Africa, the Americas, and Asia), the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence is committed to make a difference on both the institutional and the epistemological levels. We propose to do this by:

- systematically interrogating the history of our respective academic disciplines and their entanglements with colonialism and racist thought;
- critically reflecting our own knowledge practices, including the theories and methods we use, the curricula we design, and the literature we cite;
- engaging with decoloniality and theory from the South;
- actively working towards changing discriminatory structures (especially those of us who represent predominantly white institutions);
- living up to our responsibility as academics by speaking out in public whenever and wherever we can.

The work starts at our own doorsteps.

*June 29, 2020*

*The Members of the Academic Committee, Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence*