

News

President Trump Continues to Deride African Nations

Civil Rights Groups, U.S. Lawmakers Condemn Trump's "sh-hole countries" Remarks

By **Freddie Allen**
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Trump made the comments during a meeting with Republican and Democratic congressmen about immigration reform and President Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program.

The *New York Times* reported: "When Mr. Trump heard that Haitians were among those who would benefit from the proposed deal, he asked whether they could be left out of the plan, asking, 'Why do we want people from Haiti here?'"

Congressional Black Caucus Chairman Cedric Richmond said that the Diversity Visa Program "greatly benefits immigrants from African countries and provides an opportunity for them to achieve the American Dream."

Civil rights groups and lawmakers on Capitol Hill condemned racially hostile comments that President Donald Trump made during a recent meeting about immigration reform with Democrats and Republicans at the White House.

The *New York Times* reported: "President Trump on Thursday balked at an immigration deal that would include protections for people from Haiti and some nations in Africa, demanding to know at a White House meeting why he should accept immigrants from 'sh-hole countries' rather than from places like Norway, according to people with direct knowledge of the conversation."

The U.S. congressmen that attended the meeting, according to *The New York Times*, included: Senator Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.); Senator Richard J. Durbin (D-Ill.); Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.); Senator David Perdue (R-Ga.); Senator Tom Cotton (R-Ark.); Representative Robert W. Goodlatte (R-Va.).

Trump's disparaging comments received quick condemnation in the civil

rights community and across the political spectrum.

Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr., the president and CEO of the National Newspaper Publishers Association tweeted: "It is a glaring contradiction that as the US is preparing to celebrate the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr as a national holiday, President Trump utters racist statements against Africa and people of color."

In a statement about the President's comments posted to her Twitter account, Rep. Mia Love (R-Utah), the only Republican serving in the U.S. House of Representatives of Haitian descent, said that his "behavior is unacceptable from the leader of our nation."

Love continued: "My parents came from one of those countries but proudly took the oath of allegiance to the United States and took on the responsibilities of everything that being a citizen comes with. They never took a thing from our federal government.

“His ‘behavior is unacceptable from the leader of our nation’

They worked hard, paid taxes, and rose from nothing to take care of and provide opportunities for their children. They taught their children to do the same. That's the American Dream."

Love added that Trump must apologize to "the American people and the nations he so wantonly maligned."

Rep. Cedric Richmond (D-La.), the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, said that President Trump's comments are yet another confirmation of his racially insensitive and ignorant views.

"It also reinforces the concerns that



President Donald Trump called Haiti and African nations "sh-hole countries," during a meeting about immigration reform with U.S. lawmakers.

we hear every day, that the President's slogan Make America Great Again is really code for Make America White Again," said Richmond.

Richmond continued: "All of the reservations we have had about negotiating with him on immigration are well-founded. President Trump is clearly more concerned with ending the future flow of immigrants from Africa and the African diaspora than providing relief to Dreamers who came here through no fault of their own. Unfortunately, there is no reason to believe that we can negotiate in good faith with a person who holds such vile and reprehensible beliefs."

Marc Morial, the president and CEO of the National Urban League, said Trump's crude statement regarding immigration from Haiti and African nations is appalling for its lack of compassion, and stunning for its ignorance about the contributions of Haitian and African immigrants.

"Even more troubling was the fact that his slur was coupled with a desire for more immigration from overwhelmingly White countries like Norway," said Morial. "Congress must reject this divisive and racially-discriminatory approach to immigration policy."

Rev. Al Sharpton, the president and founder of National Action Network (NAN), said that Trump's deplorable

statements while meeting with a bipartisan group of lawmakers at the White House regarding an immigration deal go beyond racial insensitivity.

"For the President to make these remarks just after he was quoted as saying all Haitians have AIDS and Nigerians live in huts, demonstrates a consistent pattern of racism and bigotry. It is further concerning that he is doing it in policy meetings that will impact laws in this country and abroad," said Sharpton.

"Trump uses White nationalist rhetoric to continue to explicitly defile, disrespect, and destroy communities of color. His lack of presidential decorum is a disgrace to our country's highest office."

Sharpton continued: "We must challenge the Senate and Congress to repudiate President Trump's comments and every Senator that was in that meeting should publicly denounce him. They should also explain why they didn't say anything in the meeting—and if they fail to answer they should be targeted by the civil rights community as accomplices."

Sharpton said that Trump's comments were the ultimate disrespect to hundreds of communities who believe in the American Dream — the same dream of equality and justice that Dr. King had.

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