

***Communication between public  
authorities and civil society activists –  
models and effectiveness***

*Rokhaya Diallo, author, journalist film  
director and activist, France*

Kiev, ECMI, november 29, 2015

# Minorities in France

- the concept of minority does not exist.
- The Convention for the Protection of National Minorities have not been ratified because of this principle
- The constitutional framework has an impact on the policies that are defined by the government.
- The racial issue is avoided
- minorities issues and immigration issues are not similar.

# THE STRATEGIES OF THE GOVERNMENT TO ADDRESS MINORITIES ISSUES

- Controlling the narrative
- 1983 March for Equality and Against Racism—the first-ever response in France to a wave of racist crimes against people of Arab and African background

# THE STRATEGIES OF THE GOVERNMENT TO ADDRESS MINORITIES ISSUES

- Controlling the narrative
- Foundation of SOS Racism in order to make sure that the grassroots movements would not get all the media attention.

# THE STRATEGIES OF THE GOVERNMENT TO ADDRESS MINORITIES ISSUES

## reacting to tragedies

- Uprisings in early 1990's
- unprecedented wave of uprisings in 2005
- The president Jacques Chirac used the word “discrimination” for the first time

# THE STRATEGIES OF THE GOVERNMENT TO ADDRESS MINORITIES ISSUES

## reacting to tragedies

- In 2015 after the attacks that occurred in January against the cartoonist of Charlie Hebdo and the Jewish customers of a kosher supermarket
- French President, François Hollande, raised the status of “the struggle against racism and anti-Semitism to level of a national cause for the year 2015.”
- the first affected by the issues have not been consulted.

# THE STRATEGIES OF THE GOVERNMENT TO ADDRESS MINORITIES ISSUES

## Using minorities to gain votes

- Debate on national identity + minister
- Turning point to be so openly vocal on Muslims and Romas
- The minorities targeted mobilized these categories to build their organizations

# RESPONSES FROM THE GROUND

- Several strategies:
- assuming their minority status and highlight specific issues affecting their communities (Les Indigènes de la République, CRAN , Voix des Roms...)
- Identify a specific issue (Stop Le Contrôle au Faciès)
- Media Watch (Les Indivisibles)
- Involved organizations – European Level (ENAR)



# DENIAL FROM THE GOVERNMENT

- The inter-ministerial delegate in charge of the plan to struggle against racism and anti-Semitism appointed by the government is a person totally devoid of experience in this area.
- he condemned the movements specifically dedicated to islamophobia and racism against blacks, considering them as “communitarian.”

# Two parallel worlds

- The vision of the State
- The vision on the ground
- At a local level, elected officials who know the ground and understand the issues so that would support those grassroots organization.

# **In France, ethnic statistics are a subject of debate**

- The UN has asked France to publish detailed statistics on minorities in the future in order to ascertain the disparities that immigrants are victims of.
- Because of color blindness we cannot measure how race affects millions of citizen and nobody can measure the impact of anti racist policies.

# CHANGES NEEDED

- More independence
- Better representativeness

Rokhaya Diallo, author, journalist, film director and  
activist, France

[rokhayadiallo.com](http://rokhayadiallo.com)

**Blog :** [rokmyworld.fr](http://rokmyworld.fr)

**E** *@RokhayaDiallo*