



GENEVA CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
ADVANCEMENT AND GLOBAL DIALOGUE

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Interactive Dialogue with the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent

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PRESENTATION OF THE THEMATIC REPORT

Ms. Bina D'COSTA, Chair, Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent

Ms. Bina D'COSTA introduces the Working Group's thematic [report](#) illustrating [principles, provisos and pathways to reparatory justice](#) for people of African descent, which is the result of numerous consultation and written responses to the Working Group's call for submissions from States and civil society, and its 35th session, thereby thanking the experts who provided very useful insights during that session, the participants, and those who submitted written inputs.

Reparatory justice for the [enslavement](#), the trade in enslaved persons, including the [transatlantic trade](#) in enslaved Africans for centuries, subsequent colonization and ensuing diverse forms of segregation is a matter of priority. Separated from their families, their communities and their cultures, millions lost their liberty, their identity, their religion, as they were physically, sexually, and psychologically abused, and subjected to degrading and dehumanizing treatment. They were taken from their families and communities that were torn apart, fearful, and scarred physically, materially, and psychologically.

Today, people of African descent still face the [legacies of these tragedies](#). As acknowledged by the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA), slavery, the slave trade, especially the



transatlantic slave trade, are among the major sources and manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and that people of African descent were victims of these acts and continue to be victims of their consequences. The Working Group appreciates the initiatives taken at the international and regional levels for the sake of reparatory justice. It also notes the various initiatives taken at the national and local levels irrespective of their forms. These initiatives are a testament that different actors - including universities and churches - are more and more open to debate reparatory justice for Africans and people of African descent and to take action in their respective contexts.

The Working Group's thematic report seeks to discuss the various dimensions that reparatory justice should cover - political, economic, social and cultural. The Working Group found that although reparatory justice is necessary and should be inevitable, **obstacles at the legal, political and social and economic levels** still persist and hinder the narrative for reparatory justice. From the legal point of view, proposals were put forward as a solution to overcome the legal argument of the application of the intertemporal law, which according to some actors, may prevent any pursuit of reparations for past injustices in particular the transatlantic slave trade. The Working Group draws some conclusions.

Enslavement, colonialism, and related abuses targeted Africans and their descendants as a group. **Reparatory justice must be collective, comprehensive**, and pursued with their full, gender-sensitive participation, given the enduring impact of these legacies. **Core common principles** should be considered in the pursuit of reparatory justice among others:

- Africans and people of African descent should be considered as the main victims who may put forward any claims for reparations.
- States that were involved in or benefited from enslavement, the trade in enslaved persons, including the transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans, and colonialism – and their successors – should be considered as the main responsible actors.
- International recognition of enslavement and colonialism as crimes against humanity should be pursued.
- There should be **no statute of limitations** on the pursuit of reparatory justice for the crimes of enslavement, the trade in enslaved persons, including the transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans, and colonialism. The cost of pursuing reparatory justice should be borne by the countries and their successors and the private entities that perpetrated enslavement and colonization or benefited from them.
- **Reparatory justice** should:
 - seek to eradicate the legacies and ongoing manifestations of these crimes and injustices;
 - be comprehensive in its forms, namely compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition, be acceptable to Africans and people of African descent and comprise as a central tenet restitution, including the return and protection of ancestral lands given the spiritual, sociocultural and economic ties that Africans and people of African descent have to these lands and the resources they contain;



- include monitoring and evaluation, as well as clear lines of accountability and responsibility; and
- include a system of incentives and sanctions.

The Working Group emphasizes that **reparatory justice for Haiti** should remain at the forefront of the pursuit of reparatory justice for and by people of African descent. In terms of **pathways**, the Working Group considers that the diverse history, geography, lived experience and contexts of people of African descent require flexible, responsive and evolving approaches and strategies in the pursuit of reparatory justice. Based on its findings and conclusions, the Working Group made several **recommendations**, key among these are the following. The **United Nations** shall facilitate the formal recognition, **acknowledgment and apology owed to Haiti** for the discrimination suffered through enslavement and colonization, compounded by the financial demands made upon its independence, and the restitution of those payments as an integral element of reparatory justice for Haitians. **Member states** shall:

- Recognize the principle of reparations for enslavement and the trade in enslaved persons, including the transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans, as a norm of international law.
- Adopt a resolution in support of the delivery of reparatory justice in a comprehensive manner, notably through restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and non-recurrence, that considers each historical and country context and is grounded in international human rights law; consider designating a United Nations mechanism to guide the process; and refrain from excluding prima facie compensation as a form of reparation.
- Hold a high-level meeting to examine the issues, concerns and pathways related to reparatory justice for Africans and people of African descent with a view to establishing the appropriate international body or mechanism to provide technical support to Africans and people of African descent in their claims, monitor progress, ensure accountability and oversight and ultimately bring resolution and closure.
- Adopt research- and evidence-based approaches to assess the harm caused to people of African descent by the legacies of the past, racism and racial discrimination as a prerequisite for reparations.

PRESENTATION OF ANNUAL ACTIVITIES

The Chair of the Working Group is pleased to report on the numerous activities in which the Group has been engaged since August 2024. In particular, the Working Group held its **thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth sessions in New York**, respectively from 2 to 6 December 2024, and from 21 to 25 April 2025. These two sessions offered the opportunity to bring a great number of people of African descent together to discuss the issue of reparatory justice as well as to deepen its cooperation with experts of reparatory justice, civil society organisations, bar associations and universities for a renewed partnership as we begin the Second International Decade for People of African Descent, proclaimed in December 2025 by the UN General Assembly. As funding has continuously been constrained in 2025, the Working Group has only been able to conduct one **country visit to Suriname in 2025** and regrettably could not conduct the technical visits it is mandated to undertake for the second year in a row.



PRESENTATION OF COUNTRY VISIT REPORTS

The Chair of the Working Group presents the report on the country visit to **Colombia** carried out from 15 to 24 May 2025 at the invitation of the Government of Colombia. First, the Chair expresses the appreciation of the Working Group to the Government of Colombia, including to its Vice-President for their welcome and receptivity to the visit, as well as facilitating meetings and travel within Colombia. The Working Group met with the Vice-President of Colombia, the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, senior officials from the ministries of Education, Health, Labour, Justice, Culture, Housing and Environment, as well as the Directorate for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law, the National Administrative Department of Statistics, the Ombudsperson, the Supreme Court, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, and local authorities. It visited **Bogotá, Tumaco, Cali, northern Cauca, Buenaventura and Quibdó**.

The Working Group also **met with people of African descent**, in particular victims and their families, human rights defenders, lawyers, academics, civil society organizations led by people of African descent - especially youth groups, community leaders, and women's groups, including from rural and remote areas in the Pacific coastal region. It further **met with demobilized guerillas** of the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia Ejército del Pueblo (FARC)*. Having received written input preceding, during and after the visit, the Working Group expresses its appreciation to all contributors, including women, men, LGBTIQ+ persons and young people of African descent who shared their valuable testimonies, research, and their connection to their territories and lands.

In highlighting the **main findings of the visit**, the Chair explains that Colombia has in place the requisite legislation, legal and policy frameworks against racial discrimination and a number of laws and constitutional court decisions were passed in favour of people of African descent. Nevertheless, these still **need for full implementation**. The Working Group noted and documented a number of 'good practices' that the Government of Colombia has put in place notably recent decrees advancing Law 70 of 1993 and the Ethnic Chapter of the 2016 Peace Agreement mark a historic step toward securing collective rights and improving conditions for Afro-descendant communities in Colombia, with transformative potential in areas like land, resources, and cultural preservation. The Working Group recognizes **recent institutional advances** in reparatory justice, including legal reforms, ethnic inclusion in rural development, and the creation of the National Intersectoral Commission for Historical Reparation.

Turning to the **main concerns** raised, the Working Group notes first that people of African descent experienced a **lack of recognition** at multiple levels, spanning from the absence of a positive narrative of their contributions to Colombian society, the absence of their history in textbooks, to the slow implementation of the right of self-governance as recognized in the provisions of the Constitution of 1991 and other relevant legal provisions, especially Law 70. Results of both the 2005 and 2018 censuses have been widely criticized for **undercounting the Afro-descendant population**, as the Afro-descendant population went from totalling 4.3 million people in 2005 to 2.98 million in 2018. This decrease has been deemed inconsistent with the growth rate of the Afro-descendant population.



Second, **development disparities** between the capital and Afro-descendant regions like Buenaventura, Tumaco, and Quibdó are stark, with poor infrastructure, high poverty, and unmet basic needs, especially in Tumaco and Nariño. Corruption and illicit economies further deepen state neglect and insecurity in these marginalized areas. Third, despite having long-standing, legally recognized self-governance structures, communities **lack full autonomy and legal protections**, with poverty and poor infrastructure undermining local authority.

Fourth, there was an evident **general lack of representation** of populations of African descent including among areas such as housing projects in the territories, and state-sponsored spaces for ethnic art and music. The underrepresentation of people of African descent is also claimed in political and public affairs, including in parliament, high-level decision-making positions in the administration, the diplomatic service, the judiciary and the army.

Fifth, significant **barriers to access justice** persist including to free legal aid as people of African descent mainly live in impoverished, remote and dispersed areas with limited access to courts also due to the insufficient number of lawyers and attorneys. Sixth, **land rights** remain a major challenge for Afro-descendant communities in Colombia, with ongoing barriers to securing collective titles despite existing laws, impacting their identity, livelihood, and cultural heritage.

Seventh, people of African descent lag behind in terms of **access to employment** and to the labour market due in part to the institutional racism they face, driven by deeply rooted false and harmful stereotypes and negative prejudices, such as laziness and low intellect. In cities such as Bogotá, the majority of people of African descent are employed in less skilled jobs resulting in lower wages. The Working Group learnt that territories inhabited by people of African descent have the highest unemployment rates.

Finally, with regard to the **right to education**, the Working Group found insufficient measures to ensure full access to schools for all children of African descent. Several families are extremely reluctant to send their children to school due to risks of forced recruitment in armed groups, for example in Tumaco and Buenaventura. For people of African descent living in the most remote areas, distance to schools and high school dropout rates remain a challenge. To address these issues, the Working Group made **specific recommendations**, most notably:

- Operationalize Law 70 fully and recognize local leaders, especially community councils, as authorities in their territories and equip them with instruments of authority, guarantees of legal and other protections to correspond with the level of responsibilities assumed by them. Ensure adequate representation of people of African descent at all levels of political and public affairs, and ensure that the governance of territories is effective by guaranteeing and allocating sufficient funds for development purposes.
- Take corrective measures to ensure people of African descent are visible in official data sources. In this regard, as a first step, the Working Group invites the State to collect accurate and reliable disaggregated data regarding people of African descent at the next National Population and Housing Census, and ensure accurate counting and reporting in future censuses and surveys. Colombia is invited to publish the decree relating to the date of the next Population Census.



- Confront all inequalities in access to education for people of African descent. Reform curricula to ensure that people of African descent are appropriately represented in textbooks, including their history and contributions to society.
- Adopt concrete and urgent steps to promote access by people of African descent to employment through special measures, such as quotas in the public sector and incentives for the private sector. Financial facilitation, including access to loans for people of African descent, must be specifically oriented to them, with due regard to the tenets of a differential approach and policies of income generating activities.

REPLIES AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

During the interactive dialogue, the Working Group has noted the **growing demand for reparatory justice** among the populations of African descent in different regions as well as increased interest from civil society organisations and member states. Reparatory justice is needed not only to repair the past wrongs but also to tackle the current consequences of these past injustices, with the ambition of healing these wounds, reconciliation and restoring the dignity of people of African descent on an equal footing with others, and reversing the consequences of exclusion and discrimination.

It is **time to move from recognition to accountability and adequate redress**, which also means to break the institutional and structural barriers at the international and national levels that have prevented people of African descent to fully realize and enjoy their human rights. It is also about learning, disseminating and teaching their history and to re-appropriate it. It further means to consider, acknowledge their contribution in societies they live in various areas but also globally. The enslavement of Africans generated colonialism in its worst forms. States that could be liable for those crimes are called to be part of discussions on reparatory justice. Political will is necessary.

The Working Group takes note of the **approaches suggested for the pursuit of reparatory justice**, namely establishing legal proceedings through courts or a specially established mechanism, setting up truth and reconciliation-type bodies, considering state-to-state negotiations that ensure the meaningful, inclusive and safe participation of people of African descent, considering mediation through or supported by a United Nations body, establishing State-supported commissions or committees at the national and subnational levels, and engaging community, grass-roots and civil society-led organizations for reparatory justice.

The Working Group recommends that member states, the UN and the international community integrate the pursuit of reparatory justice for people of African descent into the implementation of the Second International Decade for People of African Descent, provide the necessary technical and financial resources for implementation and guarantee the protection of activists and advocates for the rights of people of African descent; and ensure that reparatory justice is a central theme of the draft UN Declaration on the Respect, Protection and Fulfilment of the Human Rights of People of African Descent. People of African descent are **subjected to statistical invisibility by state institutions**. The Working Group's recommendation is to fulfill the commitments under the pillars of the second international decade for people of African descent, **recognition, justice and development**.



VIEWS EXPRESSED BY COLOMBIA AS CONCERNED COUNTRY

The delegation of **Colombia** reaffirms its firm commitment to constructive cooperation with United Nations human rights bodies and Special Procedures. Colombia welcomes the kind appreciation expressed by the Chair of the Working Group on her presentation regarding the country visit and the welcome received by the Colombian authorities and society, especially by the Colombian Vice President Francia Márquez.

Colombia has taken note of the Working Group's valuable recommendations and reiterates its commitment to eradicating racism, racial discrimination, and colonialism by eliminating the structural barriers that impede access to justice and ensuring the fight against impunity. Colombia pays special attention to the recommendations mentioned by the President in her report regarding the importance of strengthening the implementation of Law 70. The country recognizes it must take corrective measures to ensure the visibility of Afro-Colombians in the data, adopt measures to guarantee access to employment, and also strengthen measures related to the education of the Afro-Colombian population. Colombia further recognizes the **centuries of structural and systemic racism** and assume the reparation of the historical debt to Afro-descendant peoples as a priority of the Colombian government.

One element present in the report that Colombia believes requires further development is the exploitation of the vulnerabilities of the **historical marginalization and exclusion of Afro-descendant communities** by drug trafficking groups. In Colombia, drug trafficking has fuelled land grabbing practices and fragmented collective territories, impeding state efforts to create favourable conditions for addressing the structural gaps faced by Afro-descendants. This is just one of the manifestations that reinforces the observation made by various Special Procedures that indicate that the 'war on drugs' has been more effective as a system of racial control than as a tool for reducing drug markets. For these reasons, Colombia invites the Working Group to deepen its analysis and contributions on the multiple harmful impacts of drug policies on Afro-descendants so that evidence is available to reorient actions and empower changes that benefit them.

The national government is working to overcome the effects of the **internal armed conflict**, which have directly impacted Afro-descendant peoples, generating poverty, forced displacement, illegal mining, and drug trafficking. The protection of the human rights of Afro-descendant girls, boys, women, men, and leaders is also a priority for the national government. Colombia reiterates its commitment to the full implementation of Law 70 of 1993, which guarantees the right of Afro-descendant peoples to govern their territories, manage resources, and exercise special jurisdiction in accordance with their customs and laws. Colombia will continue to adopt positive measures to promote and protect the human rights of Afro-descendant peoples and foster the sustainable development of their territories.

At the **international level**, Colombia promotes the full recognition of Afro-descendant peoples within the general framework of the United Nations system. Consequently, it strongly supports the negotiation and prompt adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Afro-descendant Peoples as the first universal document for the recognition, justice, and development of Afro-descendant peoples. Colombia invites the Working Group and all states to support the recognition of the



category of Afro-descendant peoples within the framework of the United Nations system in order to advance their recognition as a collective subject of international law.

Colombia promoted and supported the adoption of the **Second International Decade for People of African Descent**. The full implementation of its programme of activities must complement the initial efforts of the first decade and translate into the effective guarantee of rights for people of African descent. Colombia invites states and international organizations to provide all the political will and resources necessary to achieve successful results from this and all multilateral efforts in this area. The belonging of Afro-descendant peoples to Colombian nationality enriches its culture and instils a profound appreciation and zeal for the respect, protection, and promotion of their rights, as required by compliance with international law, but also, and above all, by the appreciation of the relevance and necessity of achieving a prosperous and peaceful multicultural society in Colombia based on respect for human rights.

INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE

Regional and Cross-Regional Groups

The **European Union** thanks the Working Group for the work carried out and the report presented which provides a clear indication that there needs to be a new consensus on the issue of reparatory justice, to move ahead as a global community. Only through consensus can actions unravel. Fortunately, we are not starting from scratch. The Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA) offers a clear framework on where to anchor discussions. In those discussions, the European Union acknowledged and deplored the immense suffering caused by the past and contemporary forms of slavery and the slave trade wherever they have occurred. The DDPA also recognises that colonialism has led to racism, with consequences that persist still today. The EU is committed to transforming structures in society which are perpetuating these injustices from the past. States should provide effective remedies wherever relevant, and all States that have not yet done so should address their negative legacies. A new consensus could allow to advance on the issue of accountability, truth and memory, with a view to identifying and fulfilling responsibilities regarding appropriate redress and effective remedies for Africans and people of African descent in Africa and throughout the African diaspora. In addition to bilateral initiatives of its member states to redress negative legacies of the past, the EU is committed in supporting African countries to reach their sustainable development goals and strengthen their economy. From 2021 to 2027, the EU is providing close to € 30 bn in funding for sub-Saharan Africa, about 40% of its total financial envelope for development cooperation. As stated by EU and AU leaders in May 2025, this work is carried out ensuring that experiences of Africans and people of African descent are acknowledged, respected, and meaningfully integrated into global development frameworks. The EU looks forward to continuing an inclusive discussions, which can seek consensus including views of all stakeholders.

Ghana on behalf of the African Group thanks the Working Group for the instructive report on the people of African descent, whose conclusions are fully in line with the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action as it acknowledges that Africans and people of African descent were victims of slavery, the slave trade and colonialism, and continue to be victims of their consequences. Furthermore, the focus of the report is perfectly aligned with the theme of the



African Union for the year 2025, namely ‘Justice for Africans and people of African descent through reparations to a Decade for Reparations.’ Accordingly, the African Group supports the Working Group’s view that the Africans and people of African descent should be considered as the main victims who may put forward any claims for reparations. Moreover, states that were involved in or benefited from enslavement, the trade in enslaved persons, including the transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans, and colonialism - and their successors - should be considered as the main responsible actors. It remains unfortunate that no state has shown political will to address the past or for the current impact of systemic racism. For this reason, the African Group calls on States that have not done so, to initiate a comprehensive approach to address the legacies of the past through a plurality of measures, including through formal apologies, truth-telling processes and reparations in various forms. The African Group condemns the surge of violent manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance precipitated by scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous ideologies, such as white supremacy, as well as by extremist nationalist and populist ideologies.

Trinidad and Tobago on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Group welcomes this interactive dialogue, which provides an important opportunity to reflect on the insights and recommendations of the Group on advancing efforts toward reparatory justice for people of African descent. Given general recognition that this Second International Decade for People of African Descent should be one of concrete and robust action, centred on reparatory justice in all its dimensions, including climate and cultural justice, the CARICOM Group signals the continuing relevance of the Revised CARICOM Ten-Point Plan for Reparatory Justice as a useful model. The CARICOM Group also highlights the significance of Haiti, in these discussions, particularly against the backdrop of the ongoing humanitarian crisis. More broadly, the CARICOM Group underscore the need to anchor reparatory justice in international human rights law, and encourage the continued strengthening of collaboration between the Working Group and other UN anti-racism mechanisms. In closing, the CARICOM Group reiterates the ongoing commitment of CARICOM Heads of Government to continued high-level advocacy and collaboration, particularly within the context of this Second Decade, which was most recently evidenced during the ongoing session of the UN General Assembly and the recently concluded Second Africa-CARICOM Summit held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 7 September 2025.

State Delegations

Algeria thanks the Working Group for the report and echoes the Experts’ view that colonialism, foreign occupation, apartheid, slavery and the transatlantic slave trade inflicted many historical injustices to Africa, Africans and people of African descent. Algeria echoes the calls for reparatory justice for Africans and people of African descent as a moral, historical and legal imperative. Algeria affirms that reparation should entail recognition, rigorous and guarantee of non-recurrence. It should also include resource mobilization for Africa, financing for development, technology transfer and capacity-building. The Algerian delegation calls upon governments, the international community and international organizations and institutions to commit to long-term efforts to work justice for people of African descent and take concrete actions at the local, national and international levels to redress these wrongs in meaningful and transformative ways.



Finally, reparatory justice is essential to addressing and healing the painful past and to building a just and equitable present and future.

Benin congratulates the Working Group on the quality of its report and commends its ongoing commitment to promoting the rights of people of African descent. The issue of reparations for historical injustices, particularly those related to the transatlantic slave trade and slavery, is of crucial importance in this regard. It is in this spirit that Benin adopted a law in 2024 recognizing Beninese nationality for people of African descent, in tribute to the historical and indissoluble ties that bind them to the African continent. In the same context, Benin continues its efforts to promote and preserve the memory of the slave trade and slavery in the historic city of Ouida, which hosts a dedicated museum and the annual Vodou Days festival dedicated to Vodou arts, culture, and spirituality. Benin also stands out for its pioneering role in Africa on the issue of cultural property restitution, which the working group rightly identified as one of the avenues of reparation to be explored. Finally, Benin calls on all states to implement the working group's recommendations and fully supports the Second International Decade for People of African Descent.

Bolivia appreciates the presentation of the report and the recommendations of the Working Group. For Bolivia, the past and future of people of African descent are inextricably linked. Slavery, the Atlantic Treaty, and colonialism were not isolated acts; their consequences are still being experienced today. A first consensus is to accept that, as serious human rights violations inflicted on Africans and people of African descent, they require restorative justice. Reparation is not a symbolic gesture but a historical, political, and human process that must strengthen unity and a common future. Secondly, the responsibility of those who participated in slavery and colonialism and benefited from them must be recognized. We cannot accept the preclusion of ethical and legal obligations of those who must answer to the collective victims. Reparation is not limited to economic compensation; it includes the restitution of ancestral lands, the recognition of historical truth, and cultural and social rehabilitation and guarantees of non-repetition. Only a process of this magnitude can eradicate the current manifestations of structural racism and pave the way for truly just and inclusive societies.

Brazil thanks the Working Group for its report and its targeted focus on reparatory justice. As recognized in the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, slavery and the slave trade were appalling tragedies in human history and are considered a 'crime against humanity' in the present day, as they should always have been. Its legacy must be addressed with courage. The lack of effective memory and historical reparation policies for Afro-descendants is one of the facets of institutional racism and a key root cause of contemporary manifestations of racial discrimination. Domestically, Brazil has taken decisive steps to implement the Durban Programme of Action by addressing reparation through transformative public policies, including affirmative actions, measures of non-repetition, and memory and truth initiatives, as well as the promotion of cooperation for development. Within COP30 and its Circle of Peoples, the knowledge of Afro-descendants is being integrated into collective efforts to enhance climate solutions, while respecting their rights and combating environmental racism and inequalities. In closing, Brazil would like to know from the Working Group how its experts planning to integrate the issue of reparatory justice at the high-level event to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.



China recalls that historically, Western countries exploited the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America through colonial rule, artificially interrupting their historical progress. To this day, colonial thinking and hegemonism persist, and Africans and people of African descent continue to endure systemic racism and discrimination, with their aspirations insufficiently addressed. To redress this historical injustice, we must first firmly oppose the toxic legacy of colonialism and hegemonic practices. Western countries should truly shoulder their historical responsibilities, cease erroneous practices such as external interference, pressure, and sanctions, earnestly fulfill their compensation obligations, and take concrete actions to support developing countries in accelerating industrialization and modernization. China urges relevant countries to effectively implement the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and safeguard the human rights of Africans, people of African descent, and other groups. Guided by President Xi Jinping's global governance initiative, China will work with all parties to promote a more just and collaborative global governance system to help all share the dividends of development.

Cuba appreciates the presentation by the Working Group of Experts and recognizes their important work against racism and racial discrimination for more than 20 years. Regrettably, the objectives agreed upon at the historic Durban conference remain unmet. Manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, and xenophobia are increasing alarmingly, primarily in developed countries. Police brutality, disproportionate incarceration, marginalization, racially motivated violence, economic deprivation, poverty, and discrimination continue to mark the lives of the Afro-descendant population. Economic reparations for Africans and Afro-descendant peoples for the consequences of slavery, colonialism, and the Atlantic slave trade are still pending. Restorative justice must be comprehensive and collective. Slavery and colonialism, the consequences of which still persist, must be recognized as crimes against humanity. Cuba will maintain its firm condemnation and repudiation of racism and racial discrimination in all its forms and manifestations. Cuba will actively participate in the negotiations of the United Nations Declaration for the Full Recognition of the Rights of People of African Descent, in the hope it will be adopted as soon as possible.

The **Dominican Republic** values the work of the Working Group in promoting restorative justice in the follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Program of Action (DDPA). As a nation with a rich Afro-descendant heritage, the Dominican Republic recognizes that slavery constitutes a crime against humanity whose tragic consequences unfortunately still persist in societies. Therefore, restorative justice must include comprehensive measures of restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, guarantees of non-repetition, as well as historical and cultural recognition that dignifies our collective memory. As a neighbouring country of Haiti, the Dominican Republic underscores the recommendations aimed at improving the living conditions of the Haitian people. In this regard, the Dominican Republic welcomes the UN Security Council's decision to establish a gang-suppression force in Haiti. International cooperation is essential to advance sustainable development and restorative justice, generating concrete responses that translate into a better future for the Haitian people. The Dominican Republic reiterates its commitment to building societies where restorative justice and international solidarity become pillars of transformation.

Egypt appreciates the work of the Working Group and commends the principles and recommendations contained in its report, which aim to establish clear foundations and practical



paths for achieving reparative justice for people of African descent. Egypt believes that reparative justice represents a fundamental pillar for addressing the roots of racism and racial discrimination, and that it requires a comprehensive and multidimensional approach that includes restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, and guarantees of non-recurrence, in addition to supporting sustainable development efforts, adapting to climate change, and ensuring fair participation in the global economy. In this context, Egypt appreciates the African Union's choice of 'Reparative Justice for Africans and People of African Descent' as the theme for 2025, embodying the collective political will within the continent to strengthen a unified African position in this area. Egypt also emphasizes the importance of developing transparent, participatory, and accountable reparative frameworks based on international human rights law, developed in close cooperation with relevant regional and local organizations, ensuring that these frameworks respond to the priorities and needs of the communities concerned. In conclusion, Egypt emphasizes the need for reparative justice to be a tool for enhancing international cooperation and building solidarity, thus contributing to overcoming the legacy of the past and opening up broader horizons for more just, equal, and inclusive societies in the future.

Ethiopia thanks the Working Group for its comprehensive report and its resolute advocacy for justice, dignity and reparation for peoples of African descent worldwide. The Ethiopian delegation reaffirms its full commitment to the declaration and program of action and to the effective implementation of international decade for peoples of African descent and support its continuation through a second decade. Ethiopia has long stood as forefront of the Pan-African solidarity and championing the liberation movement from colonialism and apartheid. Ethiopia views reparatory justice as a moral and historical imperative rooted in principle of fairness, dignity and equality. Ethiopia aligns with the Working Group's assertion that reparatory justice must respond holistically to the historical and contemporary injustice rooted in enslavement, colonialism and systemic racism. This includes restitution, compensation, rehabilitation and guarantees of non-repetition and tailored to each country's context and inclusive African voice. Ethiopia emphasizes that reparation must go beyond financial measures to include the return of looted cultural property, investment in education and social infrastructure. Formal acknowledgment and truth-telling.

Iran condemns all forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, Islamophobia, Afrophobia, and related intolerance. Iran remains committed to combatting these challenges at the national and international levels. Iran echoes the Working Group's conclusion that enslavement, the transatlantic slave trade, and colonialism are crimes against humanity, requiring comprehensive reparatory justice. Iran supports its call for the recognition of the right to reparations as a norm of international law. The plight of the Palestinian people stands today as the most tragic manifestation of racial oppression in our time. Palestinians, including women and children, endure systematic discrimination and apartheid under policies that the ICJ has confirmed violate Article 3 of ICERD and constitute apartheid within the meaning of Article 2 of the Apartheid Convention. This institutionalized regime of racial domination must be confronted with urgency, justice, and accountability. The international community can no longer afford silence or complicity in the face of such grave crimes. Iran therefore calls for the establishment of an international mechanism - a dedicated Committee against Apartheid - to hold the Israeli regime



accountable, to end impunity, and to ensure that those complicit in sustaining this injustice are no longer shielded.

Iraq reaffirms its unwavering commitment to ensuring equality and combating all forms of discrimination on the basis of race or religion. The delegation of Iraq affirms the government's commitment to combating all forms of racism, racial discrimination, and hatred. One cannot talk about true equality as long as people of African descent face multiple forms of discrimination and racism. Building a just world requires recognizing the rights of all peoples, free from any form of discrimination. It is the duty of countries that have practiced discriminatory policies to work to compensate countries that have been harmed by colonial practices, as compensatory justice is a necessary step towards redressing the damage, upholding the values of equality and coexistence free of hatred, and ensuring that everyone enjoys equality, dignity, and non-discrimination. In conclusion, the government of Iraq reiterates its condemnation of the attacks committed by the occupying forces against the Palestinian people, as well as the policies of racist discrimination, the escalation of hate speech, and the incitement to violence against the Palestinian people, which imposes a legal and moral responsibility on the occupying forces to compensate for the losses resulting from the occupation and the coercive measures associated with it.

Jamaica welcomes the Working Group's report and commends its continued commitment to advancing the rights and dignity of people of African descent globally. Jamaica particularly welcomes the outcomes of the thirty-fifth session, held under the theme '*Principles, Provisos, and Pathways to Reparatory Justice for People of African Descent.*' This theme resonates deeply with Jamaica's longstanding advocacy for reparatory justice, both nationally and within the CARICOM framework. Jamaica was honoured to convene the special event on *Durban Memoirs* during the session, which provided a vital platform to reaffirm the enduring relevance of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. Jamaica underscores its importance as a fundamental instrument in the global fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance. In this regard, Jamaica calls on the international community to strengthen the global anti-racism architecture, particularly in the face of efforts to dilute or undermine its core principles. Jamaica commends the Working Group's emphatic support for reparatory justice for Haiti, and its broader recommendation that reparations for enslavement and the transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans be recognized as a norm of international law. Jamaica also welcomes the proposal to position reparatory justice as a central theme in the draft UN declaration on the respect, protection, and fulfilment of the human rights of people of African descent. Reiterating the importance of ensuring that the Second International Decade for People of African Descent Decade is strategic, action-oriented, and adequately resourced, Jamaica strongly supports the Working Group's recommendation that reparatory justice be integrated into the Decade's implementation, with the necessary technical and financial support to ensure meaningful progress. Lastly, Jamaica remains committed to working with the Working Group to advance a transformative agenda that addresses historical injustices and promotes equity, dignity, and development for people of African descent.

Kenya joins in the call for justice for Africans and people of African descent globally and welcomes the Working Group's pivotal contributions to the normative and operational framework on reparations. Kenya commends the experts for their efforts in advancing reparatory justice



anchored firmly within international human rights law, recognizing enslavement, the transatlantic slave trade, and colonialism as crimes against humanity with enduring legacies of systemic racism and exclusion. The Working Group's rigorous work in delineating principles, legal bases, and pathways for reparations lays a critical foundation for meaningful redress, restoration, and reconciliation. Kenya further welcomes the African Union's 2025 theme 'Justice for Africans and People of African Descent Through Reparations,' which resonates deeply with Kenya's vision for collective African leadership in addressing historical injustices. Kenya emphasizes that reparations are not merely a matter of compensation but a transformative process encompassing restitution, rehabilitation, symbolic measures, and guarantees of non-repetition. This framework encourages States and international partners to confront historical accountability courageously and to dismantle structural inequalities persisting from enslavement and colonial exploitation. Kenya calls upon member states to enhance the political will to establish mechanisms capable of delivering comprehensive reparatory justice. Furthermore, it highlights the importance of inclusive dialogue, involving affected communities and civil society, to ensure reparations respond to the lived realities of people of African descent. Lastly, Kenya reiterates its commitment to championing reparatory justice within the Human Rights Council and beyond, fostering a future where dignity, equity, and healing prevail for Africans and the global African diaspora.

Mexico welcomes the Working Group's report on principles, provisos, and pathways to restorative justice for people of African descent. In Mexico, the presence of Afro-Mexican people dates back to the colonial period, when thousands of African people were forcibly transported to present-day Mexico to work as slaves. In later times, people from the African diaspora came to live in Mexico as part of migratory movements. However, their presence and contributions were largely hidden. In Mexico, restorative justice has encompassed explicit recognition of the existence of Afro-descendants in Mexican territory, as well as recognition of the historical context of marginalization and discrimination they have faced. Thus, since 2019, the Mexican Constitution recognizes Afro-Mexican peoples and communities as part of the country's pluricultural makeup; and, since 2024, it considers Afro-Mexican peoples and communities as subjects of public law, with legal personality and their own heritage. Today, they are holders of collective rights.

Mozambique thanks the Working Group for its insightful report and reaffirms its commitment to the fight against racism, racial discrimination and the legacy of colonialism and slavery. Mozambique strongly supports the call for reparatory justice rooted in the principle of restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and the guarantee of no repetition. This serves not only to address historical wrongs, but also to dismantle inequalities that persist today. Mozambique welcomes the recommendation that Member States adopt research and evidence-based approach to assess the harm caused to people of African descent by the legacy of the past, racism and racial discrimination as a prerequisite for reparation. Mozambique further stresses the need to integrate reparatory justice into the implementation of the second international decade for people of African descent through education, institutional reform and inclusive development. In conclusion, Mozambique asks the Working Group to recommend concrete mechanism for member states to prioritize in the short term with a view to operationalizing reparatory justice at the national and regional level.



The **Russian Federation** reaffirms its support to the mandate and work of the Working Group on People of African Descent. Having read the Working Group's report with interest, the Russian Federation agrees that the international community must work to restore historical justice for Africans and people of African descent. Russia has consistently supported African peoples in their struggle for liberation from colonial oppression, providing assistance in establishing statehood, strengthening their sovereignty, and strengthening their defence capabilities. By the mid-1980s, with the participation of Russian specialists, more than 330 major infrastructure and industrial facilities had been built in Africa, among which power plants, irrigation systems, industrial and agricultural enterprises. These facilities are still operating successfully today, continuing to make a significant contribution to the continent's economic development. Tens of thousands of African doctors, technicians, officers, and teachers have been educated in Russia. The Russian Federation has stood in solidarity with Africans in their struggle for self-determination, justice, and the defence of their legitimate rights. Russia has never attempted to impose its own ideas about internal structures, governance methods, development goals, and the means to achieve them. Russia's respect for the sovereignty of African states, their traditions and values, and their desire to determine their own destiny remains unwavering.

Senegal is deeply committed to the role of memory as a compass in building a common future between Africa and its diaspora. This is the meaning that must be given to the 'Pan-African High-Level Meeting on African Memory, Justice, and Reparation,' organized by Senegal on the sidelines of the 80th session of the UN General Assembly and co-sponsored by Ghana, in the presence of the Presidents of Ghana, the Comoros, and the Prime Minister of Barbados. The first International Decade for People of African Descent contributed to the reflection on history by increasing the visibility of issues related to African descent and initiating a process of strengthening legal and institutional frameworks. However, it is clear that despite the progress made, structural inequalities persist in areas as essential as access to education, healthcare, housing, employment, and political representation. Concrete measures remain necessary in terms of racial equality and reparative justice to redress the historical wrongs caused by the transatlantic slave trade and colonialism through recognition, justice, and development for people of African descent. In this spirit, Senegal advocates for renewed commitment to the full implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, the international framework of reference in the fight against racism and racial discrimination. Finally, Senegal welcomes the OHCHR's efforts in the area of empowering people of African descent and calls for intensified efforts to protect the rights of vulnerable groups, particularly women, children, and persons with disabilities, while also taking into account new challenges related to digital and climate justice.

Sierra Leone welcomes the Working Group's report and reaffirms its commitment to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA) and the International Decade for People of African Descent, emphasising the importance of tackling racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. Despite its historical experience, racism and racial discrimination have never been practised in Sierra Leonean society. On the contrary, the local culture and traditions are rooted in hospitality, where strangers are welcomed with a special warmth. Racism and racial discrimination have no place in Sierra Leone; the country's values, heritage and identity reject such traits outright. Sierra Leone is concerned about the systemic racism and structural



inequalities that affect people of African descent. These issues include barriers to justice, socioeconomic exclusion, underrepresentation and disproportionate violence. Emphasizing the importance of reparative justice, remembrance and education in addressing the legacies of slavery and colonialism, Sierra Leone calls on states to adopt national action plans and strengthen accountability in order to eliminate racial discrimination, and to promote inclusion, dignity and equality. In closing, Sierra Leone would appreciate the Working Group's guidance on how to translate the principles and pathways of reparatory justice for people of African descent into concrete, inclusive and sustainable policies at national and international levels.

South Africa thanks the Working Group for its report that focuses on principles, provisos and pathways to justice for people of African descent. South Africa fully supports the view that enslavement, the trade in enslaved persons including the transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans, colonialism and other serious human rights violations inflicted on Africans and people of African descent need reparatory justice. This should include restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and guarantees of nonrecurrence and consider each history and context recognizing that no one fits all. These historic injustices and other serious human rights violations were inflicted on Africans and people of African descent as a group. Therefore, it is only logical that reparatory justice must accrue to the collective, must be comprehensive as the legacies of those historical injustices continue to affect all aspects of the lives of people of African descent. South Africa supports the view that reparatory justice must be pursued and provided with the effective and meaningful participation of Africans and people of African descent integrating gender sensitive approaches.

Togo welcomes the Working Group's report and expresses its full support for its conclusions and recommendations. Togo remains deeply committed to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, the foundation of the universal fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance. Aware of the continuing legacy of slavery, the transatlantic slave trade, and colonialism, as imprescriptible crimes against humanity, Togo has always advocated for effective international recognition of restorative justice, based on truth, dignity, and reconciliation. It is in this spirit that Togo actively contributed, alongside other sister states, to the African Union's historic decision to proclaim 2025 the 'Year of Reparations' under the theme 'Justice for Africa and People of African Descent.' This initiative embodies the continent's collective will and Togo's commitment to making the issue of reparations a central focus of the African and international agenda. Togo therefore calls on the international community to recognize the principle of reparations as a norm of international law and to integrate restorative justice into the Second International Decade for People of African Descent. Finally, Togo reiterates that the case of Haiti, a universal symbol of the fight against slavery, deserves special attention and exemplary reparations.

Uruguay appreciates the presentation of the report and agrees that restorative justice must be conceived comprehensively, including restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction, and guarantees of non-repetition, with a human rights and gender equality approach, to ensure its legitimacy and effectiveness. At the national level, Uruguay has made progress on measures that align with these principles. Law 19.122 on affirmative action constitutes a concrete instrument to reverse historical inequalities through quotas in public employment and access to education. The National Public Policy Strategy for the Afro-Uruguayan and Afro-Descendant



Population and the National Plan for Racial Equity and Afro-Descendants promote the active and meaningful participation of the Afro-descendant population in the design and implementation of public policies, in line with the Working Group's vision that reparations must be built with the voice and protagonism of those affected. Uruguay reaffirms its commitment to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA) and supports the integration of restorative justice into the implementation of the Second International Decade for People of African Descent, convinced that this process represents an opportunity to consolidate more equitable and cohesive societies that recognize the cultural contributions of people of African descent, eliminate structural gaps, and strengthen racial equity and equality as guiding principles of democracy and inclusive development.

Venezuela appreciates the Working Group's report and appreciates its conclusions and recommendations. Restorative justice is based on the recognition that a true ethnocide was committed against the African peoples enslaved, kidnapped, and brought to the Americas. Its effects persist today in the forms of structural racism, systemic discrimination, and social exclusion that continue to affect people of African descent. Venezuela understands reparations as a collective process of dignity, aimed at rebuilding the social, cultural, spiritual, and territorial fabric of people of African descent, to overcome the traumas of slavery and confront the contemporary impacts of colonialism and capitalism. In this regard, the Venezuelan State has promoted public policies that guarantee all the human rights of people of African descent in accordance with the principles of justice, recognition, and reparation established in the national legal system and in the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA). Currently, another challenge facing Afro-descendant populations stems from the negative impact of the application of illegal unilateral coercive measures. In this regard, Venezuela urges the Working Group to incorporate the impact of these measures on Afro-descendants in its forthcoming reports, as well as to call for the cessation and eradication of such actions that violate international law and the principles established in the Charter of the United Nations.

Zambia welcomes the Working Group's and takes note of its recommendations. The country stresses that people of African descent continue to bear the legacies of slavery, colonial exploitation, and systemic racism, whose consequences persist across generations. Reparatory justice is not only about compensation; it is about recognition, restitution, and transformation. It demands that States acknowledge their role in these historical injustices, commit to genuine dialogue with affected communities, and implement policies that address both material deprivation and the denial of dignity. Reparations are not a matter of charity; they are a matter of justice. They are an essential step toward healing, reconciliation, and the building of societies grounded in equality and human rights for all. In conclusion, Zambia reiterates the need to move beyond acknowledgment to implementation, and beyond promises to progress.

UN Entities

UNICEF welcomes the report of the Working Group and supports the call for comprehensive reparatory justice for human rights violations inflicted on Africans and people of African descent. Legacies of enslavement and colonialism continue to impact every aspect of the lives of people of African descent including children who must be meaningfully engaged in reparatory justice processes. Processes must be child sensitive, grounded in equality and non-discrimination and

accessible to children through child friendly language and materials. Children of African descent continue to experience systemic racism, racial profiling, unequal access to justice and social services, excessive use of force by law enforcement and over representation in criminal justice systems that too often fail to protect their rights. These harms stem from the legacies of enslavement and colonialism and continue to persist today. UNICEF emphasizes the importance of safe, inclusive and meaningful child participation in reparatory justice processes to ensure that outcomes are effective, sustainable, age appropriate and rights based. This requires empowering children to access formal and informal child friendly justice systems that place their best interests at the core. UNICEF calls on states to fully implement their international human rights obligation and ensure reparatory justice processes are grounded in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. UNICEF stands ready to support.

National Human Rights Institutions

The **Defensoría del Pueblo of Colombia (Ombudsman's Office)** welcomes the report of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent following its visit to Colombia in 2024. Its message is unequivocal: structural racism persists and manifests itself in the centre-periphery relationship, violence against leaders, institutional exclusion and statistical invisibility, which distorts policies and services. Colombia has the third largest population of African descent in the world; however, structural challenges persist that limit the effective realisation of the rights recognised for this population. The continuum of violence, linked to the colonial and slave-owning past, manifests itself in deep gaps compared to the non-ethnic population in the form of social and economic inequalities and unequal access to opportunities. The Colombian Ombudsman's Office recognises and promotes the Action Plan for the Second International Decade. In line with this objective, the Colombian Ombudsman Office urges the Colombian State to ratify the Inter-American Convention against Racism, Racial Discrimination and Related Forms of Intolerance. The Colombian Ombudsman's Office further urges the approval of the International Declaration on the Rights of People of African Descent. Both instruments are fundamental to combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and all related forms of intolerance. Only through joint and decisive action will it be possible to advance towards the full realisation of the human rights of people of African descent and toward building more just, equitable, and inclusive societies.

The **National Human Rights Commission of Nigeria (NHRC of Nigeria)** expresses appreciation to the Working Group on People of African Descent. Nigeria, as Africa's most populous nation and a key contributor to the African diaspora, shares deep concern over racial discrimination and systemic exclusion faced by people of African descent globally. Within Nigeria, issues of ethno-religious bias, inequality, and identity-based marginalization persist. Internally displaced persons, ethnic minorities, and persons of African descent returning from the diaspora often face discrimination in access to documentation, housing, and employment. The NHRC has initiated public education campaigns and dialogue platforms to promote tolerance, social cohesion, and human dignity. However, the NHRC urges member states to strengthen accountability for racial injustice, including reparations and restitution measures in line with the Durban Declaration. The NHRC of Nigeria encourages collaboration between diaspora communities and NHRIs in Africa to advance solidarity and shared human rights agendas. The NHRC of Nigeria stands ready to support international frameworks aimed at dismantling racial hierarchies and advancing equity.



Non-Governmental Organizations

Geledés – Instituto da Mulher Negra (Black Woman Institute from Brazil) stresses that the conclusions of the Working Group are clear - the colonial legacy require reparatory justice, including restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction, and guarantees of non-repetition, integrated into the Second International Decade for People of African Descent. To move from recognition to delivery, Geledés proposes an Annual Discussion on Racial and Reparatory Justice, modelled on the annual gender discussion, mandating OHCHR and UNHRC mechanisms to produce a system-wide action matrix with follow-up. Delivery must include economic instruments such as racial and gender impact criteria for development and climate finance, and direct-access windows for Afro-descendant-led initiatives, so that finance itself becomes a vehicle of repair. This is also a democratic imperative. Where racism is normalized, institutions erode and rights recede. Last but not least, Geledés calls on states to fully implement the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action as a form of reparation.

The **Global Institute for Water, Environment and Health (GIWEH)** remains deeply concerned about the situation of migrant workers of African descent in the UAE. Despite their essential contributions to the economy, many continue to face systemic discrimination and exploitation under the kafala sponsorship system. This framework leaves workers vulnerable to passport confiscation, wage theft, and severe restrictions on movement and dignity. Reports also document arbitrary detention and mass deportations of African workers, often without due process or access to justice. Such practices not only violate international human rights standards but also deprive families of livelihoods and expose racialized patterns of exclusion. Moreover, workers of African descent are frequently paid less than others, denied the right to unionize, and subjected to degrading treatment that perpetuates cycles of inequality. Beyond the UAE, these policies reinforce a wider regional model that normalizes racial hierarchies in labour systems. GIWEH urges the UAE to abolish the kafala system, ratify core ILO conventions, and adopt independent monitoring to ensure accountability and equal rights for all workers.

Interfaith International welcomes the report of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent and commends its focus on principles, provisos and pathways to reparatory justice. The report reminds us that enslavement, the transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans, colonialism, and their enduring legacies are not just matters of history, but living realities that continue to shape systemic racism and exclusion today. Reparatory justice must therefore be understood not only as restitution and compensation, but also as rehabilitation, acknowledgment, apology, and guarantees of non-repetition. It is about restoring dignity, fostering reconciliation, and ensuring equality for future generations. Interfaith International notes the call for the United Nations to recognize reparations for enslavement as a norm of international law, and for the integration of reparatory justice into the Second International Decade for People of African Descent. These steps are essential to move from recognition to accountability and from words to action. Interfaith International emphasizes that this is not only a legal and political imperative, but a moral one. Faith traditions across the world affirm the principles of justice, healing, and human dignity. Reparatory justice is a pathway toward healing historic wounds and building a future rooted in equality and solidarity. Interfaith International urges member states, international organizations, and civil society to work together with courage



and commitment, to finally address the injustices of the past and dismantle the structures of racism in the present.

The **International Organization for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (EAFORD)** thanks the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent for this critical report, whose findings reaffirm a truth that has long been recognised but often denied - the impact of colonialism, the transatlantic slave trade, and the resulting legacies of these injustices are still evident today in systemic racism, economic marginalisation, environmental injustice, and ongoing Afrophobia. Countries profited and continue to profit from the crimes of slavery, the transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans, and colonialism. Former colonial powers have largely avoided taking responsibility. Expressions of regret without tangible reparations only perpetuate impunity. The time for symbolic gestures has passed: reparatory justice is not optional; true justice demands comprehensive measures essential to truth, dignity, and equality for people of African descent everywhere. Reparations are not acts of charity or mere development aid; they represent a legal and moral obligation for States and institutions that committed and profited from these crimes. Reparatory justice must be comprehensive, including compensation for centuries of exploitation, restitution of stolen lands and cultural heritage, public acknowledgement of responsibility and guarantees of non-repetition. EAFORD and Geneva International Centre for Justice (GICJ) support the Working Group's call for the United Nations to recognise reparations for enslavement and colonialism as a standard of international law. EAFORD and GICJ urge the UN and its member states to adopt a resolution that recognises reparatory justice as a binding principle under international human rights law; establish mechanisms at national, regional, and UN levels to deliver reparations with the meaningful participation of people of African descent; and ensure that reparatory justice processes are transparent, inclusive, and responsive to the voices of grassroots communities, particularly women and youth.

International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) states that human rights violations against Afro-descendants in Brazil remain a critical threat to their survival. The rising tide of racial hate speech from far-right representatives has left Brazil's Black population extremely vulnerable and insecure. As mentioned in the 2023 Expert Mechanism's report, Afro-descendant women and girls are the primary victims of gender-based violence, highlighting the intersection of racism and sexism, as they faced discrimination arising not only from their racial or ethnic origin, but also from gender discrimination and stereotypes. Racial profiling criminalizes Black people, exposing them to violent interventions by public security forces. It drives arbitrary arrests and the killings of thousands - mostly Black youth and children - while the justice system ensures impunity through case dismissals. In addition, numerous policing practices do not prioritize de-escalation and other less harmful methods of controlling situations, contrary to the principles of strict necessity and due caution established in international standards on the use of force. In fact, killings of Afro-descendants by law enforcement in Brazil are carried out in a systematic way suggesting a social cleansing process designed to exterminate sectors of society deemed undesirable, dangerous or criminal. The 'war on drugs' has made Brazil home to the world's third-largest prison population. Young Black men aged 19 to 30 are the majority, enduring inhumane conditions, frequent torture, and denial of due process, with the system consuming the best years of their lives. The militarization of public schools has turned education spaces into sites of



violence. To make matters worse, families, organizations, and individuals seeking justice for these harms caused by the police often face threats, intimidation, retaliation, and stigmatization from the very authorities who should be supporting them. These individuals, mostly Black women, face challenges to their physical and mental well-being and receive little or no support or assistance from the government. In the context of the Second International Decade for People of African Descent, it is urgent that the UN intensify efforts to ensure member states fully implement the DDPA as well as dispense reparatory justice, grounded in the history and local context.

The **International Youth and Student Movement for the United Nations (ISMUN)** warmly welcomes the report by the Working Group. As an NGO that was at the core of the campaign for the holding of the Durban World Conference, ISMUN notes that the Working Group was mandated by the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA). ISMUN appreciates the important role it has played in defending the DDPA and standing up against the disinformation campaigns and undermining the DDPA. The Working Group has actively listened to voices of the civil society and its meeting, which has contributed to its achievements. The DDPA was groundbreaking as it recognized that slavery and the transatlantic slave trade were crimes against humanity, which is the basis for the demand to provide reparations to people of African descent. ISMUN agrees with the Working Group that the matter of reparatory justice be put high on the international agenda with the high level UN meeting to consider the matter in full. As it is now 200 years since France extorted Haiti, demanding compensation for the Haitian people's liberation, ISMUN joins the Working Group in calling for reparatory justice for Haiti to be placed at the forefront of the global pursuit of reparatory justice for people of African descent.

OIDHACO Bureau International des Droits Humains - Action Colombie draws the Council's attention to the situation in Colombia, where Afro-Colombian communities continue to be disproportionately affected by the armed conflict. According to the consultancy CODHES, between 2022 and 2025, more than 226,000 victims of multiple and massive displacement will be recorded; one in four was an Afro-Colombian victim. In the Bajo Atrato region, groups inherited from the paramilitary regime exercise social, political, and economic control over Afro-Colombian communities in an environment marked by state absence and abandonment. OIDHACO asks the UNHRC and member states to urge Colombia to fulfill its differential protection obligations, guarantee immediate humanitarian access in the Pacific, and strengthen international support so that the war does not continue to claim Afro-Colombian lives. As the High Commissioner's report mentions, it is essential that Colombia effectively implement comprehensive anti-racism policies, legislation, and frameworks. In response to reports of violations related to the use of force by law enforcement officers, it is also necessary to implement protocols against racial profiling, including prompt and independent investigations, effective sanctions, and greater representation of Afro-descendants in the judicial system itself. On the ground, it is urgent to accelerate the titling and restitution of lands, and ensure that no economic project moves forward without free, prior, and informed consultation.

The **Shaanxi Patriotic Volunteer Association** advocates the principle of 'Loving one's own country without harming other nations' interests.' On the issue concerning people of African descent, the United Nations report points out that the suffering history of people of African descent represents a 'fracture zone in humanity's collective memory.' Through the Belt and Road



Initiative, China has avoided neo-colonialism by adopting the approach of ‘technology transfer + localized operation,’ which corroborates IPPO's assertion. From the images of foreign merchants in the Dunhuang murals to the fruitful achievements of today’s Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, Chinese civilization has always upheld the concept and wisdom of ‘harmony in diversity.’ The Association is willing to work hand in hand with countries around the world to translate the just demands of people of African descent into an action agenda for global governance. As written in ‘The Inheritance and Promotion of Culture’, ‘The essence of civilization lies in enabling every group to find its own place in the constellation of humanity.’ The Association invites all UNHRC stakeholders to take this dialogue as a starting point and jointly build a new world free from discrimination and shared in prosperity.

Sustainable Development Enablement stresses that Sudan is witnessing a tragic situation due to severe human rights violations, where the Sudanese Armed Forces and allied militias perpetrate multiple forms of discrimination based on origin and ethnicity. These practices have manifested in ethnic cleansing campaigns, denial of humanitarian aid to specific groups, and the direct targeting of civilians based on their tribal or geographic affiliation, constituting a blatant violation of the principles of equality and non-discrimination. These policies have resulted in the forced displacement of hundreds of thousands, severe violations against women, and the denial of food and healthcare to targeted communities, further exacerbating the humanitarian crisis. This highlights the critical importance of establishing a strong legal and institutional framework grounded in equality and tolerance. Sustainable Development Enablement calls upon the UNHRC to take urgent action to hold the Sudanese army and allied militias accountable for these crimes, ensure unhindered access of humanitarian aid to all affected populations, and to expand the mandate of UN monitoring and investigative mechanisms to document these violations. In closing, it further emphasizes the necessity of strengthening international efforts to promote a culture of equality and non-discrimination, ensuring the protection of all peoples from exclusionary policies and ethnic cleansing.

United for Human Rights (UFHR) notes that, despite decades of sustained international efforts, racism and racial discrimination remain a serious challenge that undermines the full enjoyment of human rights, threatens international peace and security, and contributes to the deepening humanitarian tragedy experienced by many peoples in Africa. The systematic discrimination faced by people of African descent in the areas of justice, education, employment, healthcare, and even basic human rights such as living in dignity and equality is deeply troubling. While expressing concern over the persistence of these practices, including marginalization, violence, and hate speech spread across media platforms, UFHR also extends its appreciation for the many countries that have sought to eliminate this discrimination institutionally by strengthening their legislative and institutional systems. Such efforts include the UAE, which has strengthened its legal system and national policies, guaranteeing full equality without discrimination, and ensuring that more than 200 nationalities live in freedom, justice, and equality, enjoying their full rights and freedoms equally and without discrimination.



GENEVA CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
ADVANCEMENT AND GLOBAL DIALOGUE

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