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Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance: follow-up to and implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

Report of the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent on its third session*

Summary

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 75/314, the third session of the Permanent Forum on People of African descent was held in Geneva from 16 to 19 April 2024 on the theme of the second International Decade for People of African Descent: addressing systemic racism, reparatory justice and sustainable development. The present report contains a summary of the deliberations of the Permanent Forum during its third session and its conclusions and recommendations. It also contains summary of activities undertaken by the Permanent Forum since its previous session.

* The present report was submitted to the conference services for processing after the deadline for technical reasons beyond the control of the submitting office.



I. Introduction

1. Since its first session, held in 2022, the Permanent Forum has become the largest platform for people of African descent within the United Nations. Its establishment marked a significant step in the commitment of the United Nations to advancing the rights and well-being of people of African descent and ensuring that their voices and concerns were prominently represented in international dialogues. Established by General Assembly resolution 75/314, the Permanent Forum serves as a consultation mechanism for people of African descent and other relevant stakeholders as a platform for improving the safety and quality of life and livelihoods of people of African descent.

2. In December 2013, the General Assembly proclaimed 2015 to 2024 as the International Decade for People of African Descent with the theme of people of African descent: recognition, justice and development. Near the end of that first International Decade, the Permanent Forum held its third session, from 16 to 19 April 2024 in Geneva, on the theme of the second International Decade for People of African Descent: addressing systemic racism, reparatory justice and sustainable development. Discussions delved into what a second International Decade would entail, specifically exploring the issues that would shape it, among them reparations, sustainable development and economic justice, education, culture and recognition. In addition to the thematic discussions, more than 90 side-events were organized by various stakeholders.

3. The present report is submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 75/314, in which the Assembly requested the Permanent Forum to submit an annual report to the Human Rights Council and the Assembly on its activities. The report is focused on the deliberations, conclusions and recommendations of the third session.

II. Update on activities undertaken by the Permanent Forum

4. From June 2023 to June 2024, the Permanent Forum engaged in various activities and attended numerous meetings, commemorations and events organized by the United Nations and other stakeholders, including Member States, non-governmental and civil society organizations, philanthropic organizations and academic institutions. The Permanent Forum's participation in those activities facilitated critical discussions on human rights concerns and issues affecting communities of African descent worldwide as well as collaboration to develop actionable strategies.

5. Pursuant to its mandate to contribute to the drafting process for a United Nations declaration on the promotion and full respect of the human rights of people of African descent,¹ the Permanent Forum participated in the twenty-first session of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, held from 16 to 20 October and 20 to 24 November 2023 and its twenty-second session, held from 20 to 24 May 2024, as well as in its intersessional meeting, held on 8 and 9 February 2024. The Permanent Forum provided expert advice on key human rights issues that it considered should be reflected in the draft declaration, including: the collective rights of people of African descent; the comprehensive recognition and addressing of systemic and structural forms of racial discrimination and inequality; reparatory justice for histories and legacies of colonialism, enslavement, apartheid and genocide; equal access to high-quality education and educational curricula that reflect the realities, histories and agency of people of African descent; access to culturally appropriate and relevant health services; rights to ancestral lands; racial discrimination and bias in artificial intelligence systems; and the need for disaggregated data collection and data-driven policymaking. On 20 May 2024, the Permanent Forum submitted expert commentary on reparations and collective rights to the Intergovernmental Working Group,

¹ During the twentieth session of the Intergovernmental Working Group, a new title was proposed: "draft United Nations declaration on the respect, protection and fulfilment of the human rights of people of African descent." See [A/HRC/52/78](#), annex I.

emphasizing their importance for people of African descent and urging their inclusion in the declaration.

6. From 14 to 17 November 2023, the Permanent Forum participated in the Accra Reparations Conference, organized by the African Union and the Government of Ghana on the theme of building a united front to advance the cause of justice and the payment of reparations to Africans. On 15 and 16 January 2024, it participated in a meeting for the Asia-Pacific region organized by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to raise awareness of the International Decade and to promote a greater knowledge of and respect for the historical and contemporary contributions of people of African descent in region.

7. On 6 March 2024, members of the Permanent Forum participated in a hybrid event entitled “The United Nations Permanent Forum on People of African Descent: a spotlight,” organized by the Human Rights Program at Harvard Law School. On 7 and 8 March 2024, the Permanent Forum participated in a two-day expert consultant, organized jointly with Harvard Law School, on the draft United Nations declaration, engaging with a wide variety of academics.

8. On 19 March 2024, the Permanent Forum, jointly with United Nations Development Coordination Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the OHCHR Regional Office for South America, held a preparatory event for the third session of the Permanent Forum entitled “Pursuing racial justice for sustainability: a way forward for people of African descent in Latin America and the Caribbean”. The discussion, with the active participation of United Nations resident coordinators, served as a platform to examine the socioeconomic conditions of people of African descent in the region, focusing on disparities in employment, education, health and political representation.

9. The Permanent Forum participated in several commemorations organized by the United Nations and regional bodies. On 5 December 2023, it participated in a joint European Commission and European Parliament event in observance of the European Day Commemorating the Abolition of the Slave Trade. On 21 March 2024, the Chairperson of the Permanent Forum participated in the commemorative plenary meeting of the General Assembly to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, held on the theme of a decade of recognition, justice and development: implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent. The Chairperson also participated in a panel discussion on the same theme, held on the margins of the fifty-fifth session of the Human Rights Council.

10. On 28 August 2023, to promote the extraordinary contributions of the African diaspora and the elimination of all forms of discrimination against people of African descent, the Chairperson issued a letter inviting Member States, United Nations entities and other international and regional organizations and representatives of the private sector, academia and civil society to observe International Day for People of African Descent. On 20 March 2024, the Permanent Forum joined together with five other United Nations anti-racism mechanisms to urge States to push forward in the fight against racial discrimination and to proclaim a second International Decade for People of African Descent to ensure greater recognition, justice and development for people of African descent, including by engaging meaningfully in reparatory justice processes for past injustices.²

11. On 25 March 2024, in observance of the International Day of Remembrance for the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, the Permanent Forum issued a statement, together with four United Nations human rights mechanisms, calling for a strengthened collective commitment to acknowledge and redress the enduring disparities and inequalities resulting from the transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans and people of African

² See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2024/03/all-states-must-push-forward-fight-against-racial-discrimination-un-experts>.

descent.³ The same day, members of the Permanent Forum participated in a symposium entitled “Global Anti-Blackness and the Legacy of the Transatlantic Slave Trade”⁴ at the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

12. On 2 April 2024, the Permanent Forum organized an online pre-session meeting with civil society organizations to present its new Bureau and to kick-start discussions on the topics to be addressed at its third session. More than 200 civil society representatives from around the world attended the meeting.

13. During its third session, the Permanent Forum organized two special events: on 16 April 2024, jointly with the International Telecommunication Union, it held an event entitled “Decoding AI Bias: Addressing algorithmic racial discrimination faced by people of African descent”⁵ and on 17 April 2024, in partnership with Ciné ONU, the International Geneva Welcome Centre and the Permanent Mission of the United States of America to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, it organized a screening of the film *The Woman King*, followed by a discussion on the contributions of women of African descent to society.⁶

14. On 8 June 2024, the Permanent Forum participated in an event entitled “Canada’s Journey” on advancing the goals of the International Decade for people of African Descent,” organized in Toronto, Canada, by the Federal Anti-Racism Secretariat of the Government of Canada, the Foundation for Black Communities and the Global Coalition against Systemic Racism and for Reparations.

15. From 28 to 30 July 2024, the Chairperson presented the ongoing work of the Permanent Forum at the forty-seventh regular meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), held in Grenada.

16. Members of the Permanent Forum also participated in several events, meetings and commemorations organized by Member States and civil society organizations during the reporting period.

III. Summary of deliberations

17. The third annual session of the Permanent Forum was held from 16 to 19 April 2024 in Geneva. The session was widely welcomed, with the attendance of more than 1,000 participants from across the world, including representatives of Member States, United Nations mechanisms, agencies, funds and programmes, regional organizations, national human rights institutions and other relevant national bodies, non-governmental organizations, academics, experts on issues relating to people of African descent and community-based organizations.

18. The session began with a cultural performance, which was followed by a high-level segment that included statements from the President of the General Assembly (via video message); the Secretary-General (via video message); the President of the Human Rights Council; the United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights; the Minister of Racial Equality of Brazil, Anielle Franco; the Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce of Guyana, Oneidge Walrond; the Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Persons with Disabilities of Canada, Kamal Khera (via video message); the Special Representative for Racial Equity and Justice of the United States of America, Desirée Cormier Smith; the Director-General of the International Labour Organization; the Executive Director of

³ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/03/un-experts-urge-states-recognise-and-address-legacy-slave-trade#:~:text=%E2%80%9CThe%20International%20Day%20of%20Remembrance,the%20Americas%2C%20in%20dehumanising%20and.>

⁴ See <https://www.hks.harvard.edu/centers/carr/publications/global-anti-blackness-and-legacy-transatlantic-slave-trade.>

⁵ See [https://aiforgood.itu.int/event/decoding-ai-bias-addressing-algorithmic-racial-discrimination-faced-by-people-of-african-descent/.](https://aiforgood.itu.int/event/decoding-ai-bias-addressing-algorithmic-racial-discrimination-faced-by-people-of-african-descent/)

⁶ See <https://www.ungeneva.org/en/meetings-events/events/cine-onu/2024/04/cine-onu-woman-king.>

UNFPA; the Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO) (via video message); and the Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences of the United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (UNESCO) (via video message).

19. Following the high-level segment, the members of the Permanent Forum unanimously appointed June Soomer as the Chairperson, Mona Omar as the Vice-Chairperson and Michael McEachrane as the Rapporteur.

20. After the appointment of the Bureau and the adoption of the session's programme of work, the general debate commenced, during which participants outlined the key issues for discussion. Participants stressed the need to address the root causes of racism and racial discrimination by dismantling the legacies of enslavement and colonialism, including the systemic barriers to social, political, economic and environmental equality. They stated that stronger efforts were required to combat racism, xenophobia, and related intolerance and to protect victims, particularly women, children, LGBTIQ+ persons and persons with disabilities. The participants affirmed support for the draft United Nations declaration on the human rights of people of African descent, the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, highlighting the outreach potential of the Permanent Forum as the largest platform within the United Nations for discussing and proposing solutions to issues affecting people of African descent worldwide. The upcoming Summit of the Future was noted as a pivotal moment to deliberate on a just future, considering the impact of the climate crisis and financial debt burdens on people of African descent. The participants also noted the urgency of addressing police violence, particularly its impact on LGBTIQ+ persons of African descent, and called for the collection of more disaggregated data.

21. The first thematic discussion was focused on the issue of reparations, sustainable development and economic justice. It was moderated by Permanent Forum member Justin Hansford and featured the following panellists: Permanent Forum members Epsy Campbell Barr and Mr. McEachrane; a member of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, Barbara Reynolds; and the Ambassador of Barbados to CARICOM, David Commissiong.

22. Ms. Campbell Barr underscored the devastating consequences of the crimes against humanity of enslavement and the transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans, emphasizing that redressing those historical injustices was fundamental to building a future of dignity and justice. She stated that global anti-Black racism, stemming from historical injustices, stood as an undeniable reality that subjected Africans and people of African descent to institutions that perpetuated colonial structures. Reparations were, therefore, not only needed but essential; they represented the sole path to transforming the future, while also embodying an acknowledgement of past atrocities and their present-day ramifications, including enduring economic, social and cultural impacts and intergenerational trauma. She emphasized that eradicating anti-Black racism required collective efforts to dismantle racial discrimination and its intersections with patriarchy, homophobia and transphobia and all forms of human stratification that perpetuated inequalities and hierarchies.

23. Mr. McEachrane highlighted two key premises of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: the need to end unsustainable resource consumption and greenhouse gas emissions; and the imperative to foster global equality and inclusivity. In addition to that, the stated targets towards realizing the latter premise were modest and vague, made only passing references to race and did not mention people of African descent; no real progress had been made on reducing inequalities within and, especially, among countries. What was not sufficiently recognized, if at all, by the sustainability agenda was that the global economy was characterized by structural inequality between the global North and the global South, and that that inequality existed by design and was rooted in histories of imperialism, enslavement, de jure institutional racial segregation, discrimination and white supremacy. In the spirit of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, he stressed that, to achieve sustainable development, the racially unequal and colonial character of the international economic order needed to be recognized, addressed and corrected by means of global reparatory justice.

24. Ms. Reynolds recalled that the overriding imperative for the enslavement of and trafficking in Africans was the greed of the perpetrators of those criminal acts, which were enabled by a dehumanizing disdain for Africans and people of African descent. Reparatory justice for the lasting consequences of that history required the recognition of historical and contemporary wrongs and the acknowledgment of loss and harm, the repair and rehabilitation of social and cultural fabrics, the provision of material restitution, the return of stolen artifacts and assets and the reform of laws, policies, structures, systems and practices. Ms. Reynolds emphasized, however, that central to reparatory justice was the need for economic independence to prevent people of African descent from being disadvantaged in their own lands. Such independence necessitated reforms across education, national debt structures, land laws, banking and insurance policies, hiring practices, intellectual property law and international law, international transportation, visa procedures and international development regulations.

25. Mr. Commissiong recalled that CARICOM had met in 2013 to fashion a reparations campaign for the crimes of native genocide and African enslavement and called for the twenty-first century to be the century of reparatory justice. Focused not merely on financial compensation, the campaign was a revolutionary programme to eradicate the structures, practices and consequences of anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism and create just societies and a just international order. Mr. Commissiong proposed three initiatives for the global reparations movement: establishing a special international tribunal, as recommended by the Permanent Forum; preserving and fundamentally reforming the United Nations system; and supporting the Bridgetown Initiative for the Reform of the Global Financial Architecture, as that system was inherently unjust and unequal. He also noted that he stood in solidarity with Haiti, emphasizing the importance of international support to address historical injustices and achieve political stability and economic development through fair elections, enhanced personal safety and humanitarian assistance.

26. During the discussion, participants affirmed that Africans and people of African descent continued to face systemic racism, economic injustice and a lack of access to social and economic rights. Mere apologies were, therefore, insufficient and a pragmatic road map for reparations incorporating specific objectives and methodical implementation plans was essential. Several speakers stressed that achieving the Sustainable Development Goals required addressing the enduring consequences of colonialism and enslavement. While noting that reparations were essential to achieving economic transformation and equity, including increased job market participation, land ownership and restitution, as was affirmative action in recruitment and education, participants emphasized that it was crucial to distinguish development aid or even financial compensation from reparatory justice, as the latter necessitated broad systemic and structural reforms. Several speakers noted that reparations must be central to international development agendas and that they must drive structural reforms for the economic empowerment of Africans and people of African descent. Reparations were also central to addressing the contemporary impacts of historical injustices, such as entrenched systemic disparities, national debt and the unequal contributions to and effects of climate change. Participants noted that reparations should engage private institutions and capital markets and ensure monetary sovereignty, with reforms to international law to prioritize individual rights over corporate interests, while taking into account gender perspectives and intersectionality. Several speakers expressed concerns regarding the ongoing situation in Haiti, noting that the country's current crisis highlighted the urgency for new economic models centred around human welfare.

27. During the discussion, participants highlighted good practices and efforts of Member States and civil society organizations to ensure reparations for colonialism and enslavement, including the CARICOM Ten Point Plan for Reparatory Justice, the Accra Proclamation on Reparations, the incorporation of reparations into national public policies, the establishment of reparations task forces, commissions and committees and the creation of advocacy networks for reparations.

28. The second thematic discussion was focused on education, with an emphasis on the need to overcome systemic racism and historic harms. Permanent Forum member Hongjiang Huang moderated the discussion, which featured, as panellists, Mr. Hansford; the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, Ashwini K.P.; Founder and Director of

Geledés – Instituto da Mulher Negra, Sueli Carneiro; and an academic and human rights activist, Palmira Rios.

29. Mr. Hansford noted that the urgency of addressing systemic educational inequalities for people of African descent was underscored by the ongoing legislative efforts in the United States to restrict the teaching of Black history and critical race theory. He recalled that article 5 of the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination required States to prohibit racial discrimination in all its forms and to guarantee the right of everyone to, among other rights, education and training. He stressed the urgent need for inclusive curricula across all levels of education that reflected the histories, contributions and perspectives of people of African descent and he suggested that the Permanent Forum and UNESCO develop a global African diaspora curriculum for that purpose. Moreover, he suggested greater investment in teacher training in anti-racist pedagogy and the establishment of a Black university network, which would include the Historically Black Colleges and Universities in the United States and universities in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe with divisions focused on African studies and African diaspora studies. He also recommended the establishment of an archive of the diverse cultural heritage of the African diaspora to preserve, spread knowledge of and celebrate that heritage and to help to connect people of African descent across the world.

30. The Special Rapporteur stated that, although education was a crucial tool for combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, as highlighted in the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, in many cases education perpetuated systemic bias and discrimination against people of African descent. She noted that communities of people of African descent experienced significant marginalization in access to social, economic and cultural rights and the collective right to non-discrimination and recognition. Such marginalization made it essential to apply a critical race theory lens to educational equity for people of African descent. She pointed out that achieving equity also entailed the examination by educators of the impacts of systemic anti-Black racism on Black students. The Special Rapporteur called for pedagogies that were anti-racist and affirmative of people of African descent and a global shift towards educational justice that included correcting the lasting consequences of historical injustices and was aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 4, to ensure inclusive, equitable and reparatory education.

31. Ms. Carneiro stated that, while unequal access to education remained, those leading social movements, especially feminist and anti-racist advocates, had made a significant impact on the educational system in Brazil in recent decades. Their activism had been crucial to removing racist and sexist literature from educational materials, expanding the curriculum, which now included the topics of ethnicity, racism, African culture, human and women's rights and gender and sexual diversity, and implementing university quotas, which had democratized access to higher education, breaking the previous hegemony of white students. She stressed that, despite such developments, recent educational policies posed significant challenges that hindered democratic values. They included the expansion of civic military schools intended to instil military values and order, homeschooling to avoid education on race, gender and diversity and calls for "education without politics", aimed at preventing the teaching of issues of race and what was pejoratively referred to as "gender ideology".

32. Ms. Rios highlighted the critical awareness-raising role given to education in the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and the impact that this had had in Latin America. She also noted, however, the neglect of educational accreditation in the fight against systemic racism, given its role in the planning, implementing, evaluating and financing of educational systems and ensuring that students received high-quality education. Ms. Rios indicated that integrating accreditation processes into racial equity agendas could support diversity and inclusion efforts and called upon the Permanent Forum to forge alliances with educational and accreditation institutions to inform and accompany accreditation processes. She concluded by indicating that it was also important for accreditation organizations to incorporate the objectives of diversity, equity and inclusion in their educational quality goals and standards, including regarding people of African descent and anti-racist education.

33. During the discussion, participants emphasized that educational disparities perpetuated inequality rooted in historical injustices. Central to the discussions was the role

of education as a transformative tool and essential for combating racism through inclusive curricula and anti-racist pedagogy. Participants called for inclusive curricula that recognized and integrated the histories, cultures and contributions of people of African descent and promoted anti-racist teaching from the primary to the tertiary levels. Challenges in education were underscored, including the high dropout rates among students of African descent, the need for targeted policies and resources to support students' educational journeys, the lack of diversity among faculty, the lack of anti-racist training for educators and administrative personnel, the excessive surveillance of students of African descent and the imposition of disproportionate sanctions and disciplinary measures on them. In the light of those challenges, participants called for the advancement of racial justice through education reform and collective action, underscoring the imperative for systemic transformation and inclusive global educational frameworks.

34. Participants acknowledged the government and grass-roots initiatives to advocate for anti-racist education and policy reforms across continents. Such initiatives included the enactment of equal treatment and non-discrimination laws, the implementation of affirmative action measures to ensure access to education for students of African descent, the creation of observatories to promote South-South cooperation and educational opportunities, the formulation of community educational programmes focused on preserving ancestral practices and languages, the development of educational programmes that promoted the participation of women and girls of African descent in science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics and the designation of educational institutions as guardians of ancestral knowledge.

35. The third panel discussion, focused on culture and recognition, was moderated by Permanent Forum member Martin Kimani. The panellists were Permanent Forum member Alice Angèle Nkom; cultural anthropologist and Executive Director of Global African Diaspora, Sheila Walker; and an adviser in the Postgraduate Programme in Comparative History at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Ivanir dos Santos.

36. Ms. Nkom emphasized that respect for human rights principles and laws could be embraced by respecting the African traditions of recognizing human dignity, equality and non-discrimination, the right to life and security, including physical and mental health, the right to culture and history, the right to participation and self-determination, the right to equality in the distribution of economic goods and progress and the right to justice. She noted that the core principle of the rule of law was too often applied selectively, including at the international level. She emphasized that discussions on culture should return to the centre of human rights and recognition, fostering an Africa and an African diaspora where people's sexual orientation and other diversity could be respected and recognized. She called upon everyone to hold their Government accountable to address the root causes of human rights injustices.

37. Ms. Walker highlighted the global spread of the African diaspora, which had occurred mostly through processes of enslavement and cultural imposition and the need to recognize the achievements and contributions of people of African descent to local and global civilization. She also said that greater energy was needed to achieve such recognition in the second International Decade for People of African Descent. Ms. Walker signalled that compulsory "miseducation" was problematic for the full recognition of cultural diversity and contributions to society by people of African descent. She stated that formal education was designed to convey narratives that misrepresented the histories of people of African descent and that challenges to such narratives were actively resisted in education. She emphasized that, to counteract such misrepresentation, it was necessary to transform education and learn the history of the global African diaspora and to recognize and celebrate its origins, diversity and achievements.

38. Mr. dos Santos noted that, despite the rich diversity of Brazil, individuals of African descent endured prejudice and systemic inequalities that had persisted since the abolition of enslavement. Recognizing the imperative to reclaim narratives through the lens of freedom, Mr. dos Santos had conceived the video series *Resistência negra (Black Resistance)* to celebrate Afro-Brazilian resistance, challenge entrenched privileges in society and reframe history. He emphasized that it was the agency and voices of people of African descent that would move Brazilian society towards equity, which was one of the pillars of democracy.

39. During the discussion, participants emphasized the cultural resilience and riches of Africans and people of African descent and the importance of their recognition and celebration. They called for the return of stolen artifacts, the establishment of museums and the integration of African history into education as crucial steps towards preserving that cultural heritage. Moreover, they stressed the need for international cooperation to protect cultural sites, monitor media representation and ensure that emerging technologies upheld accurate historical narratives. The participants also emphasized the resilience and contributions of African women in the preservation of ancestral knowledge, the potential role of the media in shaping positive cultural narratives and the importance of linguistic justice in combating discrimination.

40. Participants highlighted other challenges, such as religious intolerance, which had led to the suppression and marginalization of and pervasive hostility and violence against African-derived spiritualities. Some participants stressed the urgent need for States to adopt intellectual property laws that would prevent the misappropriation of African diasporic cultural resources. The participants reported positive examples of efforts to promote and preserve cultural heritage, including grass-roots initiatives aimed at empowering rural communities, official recognition days, laws promoting the teaching of African cultures in schools, national strategies to protect culture, the preservation of memorial sites and the construction of memorials and governmental support for cultural events. The participants called for increased support and visibility for African diasporic artists of all kinds on the global stage. They also called for reparatory justice measures to acknowledge, protect and celebrate the rich cultural heritage and contributions of Africans and people of African descent.

41. The fourth panel, titled “Second International Decade for People of African Descent: expectations and challenges,” was moderated by Permanent Forum member Gaynel Curry. The panellists were Permanent Forum member Pastor Elías Murillo Martínez; the then Chair of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Verene Shepherd; and a lecturer in Black and African Diaspora Studies at the University of Dalhousie, Canada, Chevy Eugene.

42. Mr. Murillo highlighted the added value of the International Decade for acknowledging injustices and historical legacies, while advancing recognition, justice and development for people of African descent. People of African descent had now gained broad recognition as a collective subject of international law, with their inclusion in national censuses in several South American countries. He noted that, in the area of justice, some countries had implemented affirmative action measures for education, employment and political participation and had taken important steps towards restorative justice. He pointed out that, in the area of development, many countries had adopted national action plans and other policies to combat racial discrimination. Mr. Murillo stressed that States should prioritize finalizing the draft United Nations declaration on the promotion and full respect of the human rights of people of African descent, achieving reparatory justice and sustainable development, combating systemic racism and preventing and addressing digital-era inequalities.

43. Ms. Shepherd emphasized the continued need for States to carry out the programme of activities for the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent, including recognizing historical heroes and heroines with tangible memorials. She added that a priority of the second International Decade must be the achievement of development and the creation of wealth for people of African descent through reparatory justice and by integrating the capitalocene⁷ into climate reparations, while reaffirming the right to development in the light of the persistent impact of colonialism. All States should teach the historical roots of anti-Black and racist ideologies and practices. She concluded by saying that the success of the second International Decade would depend upon the commitment and strong political will to create societies in which racial discrimination, racial profiling and anti-Black racism were eradicated.

⁷ Donna Haraway, “Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chthulucene: making kin”, *Environmental Humanities*, vol. 6, No. 1 (1 May 2015), pp. 159–165.

44. Mr. Eugene emphasized the need for decolonial reparatory justice frameworks, in particular to advance Black liberation by confronting racial capitalism. He noted the ongoing impact of colonialism on forced displacement, especially in the Mediterranean region and the Middle East and North Africa, and called for a multipronged approach to transforming education on the history of colonialism and its enduring consequences to address the root causes of migration. He also called for the demilitarization of borders. He stressed that a key objective for the second International Decade should be to support the political and economic sovereignty of Haiti. The second International Decade should be shaped by a decolonial approach that counters neo-colonialism and racial capitalism and its dehumanization of Black life.

45. During the discussion, participants noted the progress made during the first International Decade but expressed concern about the inadequate implementation by Member States. Several States and civil society organizations supported a second International Decade, emphasizing the importance of reparations, including for Haiti, and of addressing systemic racism as integral components. The proposed theme for the second International Decade – reparations, justice and development – was widely supported, with some participants suggesting the inclusion of climate and technological justice. Participants underscored the pivotal role of young people in fulfilling the commitments of a second International Decade, emphasizing the need for their active participation and the establishment of a dedicated fund to enhance capacity-building among young people of African descent. Member States were urged to actively engage in a second International Decade, ensure sufficient funding for it and fully implement its commitments.

46. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights acknowledged the Permanent Forum as a platform for activists of African descent and States to foster profound change. He expressed support for the call to proclaim a second International Decade to build upon past achievements and address ongoing challenges. His remarks were followed by those of the Vice-President of Colombia, Francia Márquez (via video message), who expressed her concern about the situation of the Haitian people and acknowledged their historical struggle for freedom. Her remarks were followed by those of the Secretary-General of CARICOM, Carla N. Barnett (via video message). Preliminary conclusions and recommendations were presented by Mr. McEachrane, followed by general statements by participants. The session concluded with a cultural performance.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

47. **The Permanent Forum expresses its appreciation to all those who contributed to the session, including Member States, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, experts of the United Nations anti-racism mechanisms and representatives of civil society. The Permanent Forum also extends its thanks to the high-level dignitaries who participated in the session.**

A. Reparations, sustainable development and economic justice

Conclusions

48. **The Permanent Forum affirms that realizing equality within and among countries is a central tenet of the 2030 Agenda. Critically, realizing equality should include recognizing and addressing systemic and structural racial inequalities that hinder the enjoyment of the human dignity, rights and freedoms of people of African descent. In that regard, the Permanent Forum acknowledges the conversations held at the Sustainable Development Goals Summit on the possible incorporation of a Goal 18 on racial equality and affirms the need for a greater emphasis in the global sustainable development agenda on increasing racial equality within and among countries.**

49. **The Permanent Forum recognizes the need to decolonize the international political, economic and ecological order and notes that both transnational and domestic activities, systems and structures, including value and supply chains, have a great impact on the environment and on the enjoyment of human rights. Hence, the**

monitoring and addressing of the sustainability of environmental, social and economic activities within countries need to be complemented with more comprehensive considerations of environmental, social and economic activities among countries.

50. The Permanent Forum reaffirms that the entrenched structural inequalities in the global economy between countries in the global South and the global North are racial inequalities rooted in histories and legacies of colonialism, enslavement, apartheid and genocide. This is apparent, for example, in the unequal labour conditions and use of natural resources in global value and supply chains and in the unequal access to participation in international financial institutions. In that regard, the Permanent Forum welcomes the insights, objectives and programmes of action of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and the New International Economic Order.⁸

51. With respect to the persistent racial inequalities within and among countries, the Permanent Forum stresses the interconnections between Africans living on the African continent and people of African descent living in the diaspora. In that regard, the Permanent Forum welcomes the pioneering steps taken towards recognizing enslavement and the trade and trafficking of enslaved Africans and people of African descent as crimes against humanity through the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. The Permanent Forum also welcomes the CARICOM Ten Point Plan for Reparatory Justice and its reparations framework,⁹ the proposal of the African Union that its theme for 2025 be “Justice for Africans and people of African descent through reparations”¹⁰ and the Bridgetown Initiative, which is aimed at reforming a systemically and structurally unjust global economic and financial architecture while advancing climate action.¹¹

52. In line with the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, the Permanent Forum views global reparatory and economic justice as critical to comprehensively recognizing and addressing the structural inequalities of the global economy and achieving sustainable development and global racial equality for people of African descent. The type of justice that the world most needs is reparatory justice in all its dimensions, inter alia, civil, political, social, economic, climate, environmental, cultural, spiritual and psychological and also in relation to gender and sexual orientation, in particular for women of African descent.

53. It must be noted that the adverse and destructive effects of climate change are attributable primarily to the historical emissions, economic activities and consumption patterns of the global North, which disproportionately affect countries and people in the global South, in particular Africans and people of African descent. In that regard, the Permanent Forum welcomes the establishment of the loss and damage fund¹² and acknowledges that countries of the global North are the largest historical emitters of greenhouse gases and should provide the fund with adequate resources. It also notes that there will be no sustained climate and environmental justice nor any inclusive and just transition to sustainable development without global reparatory and economic justice.

54. The Permanent Forum acknowledges the existential gravity of the current climate and ecological crises and the threat of further escalation, the multiplying effects of overlapping crises, which transgress planetary boundaries, and irreversible tipping points.¹³ In that context, global reparatory and economic justice is an urgent existential matter. Robust action is needed by the United Nations and all other multinational and regional institutions to enhance the legal and institutional recognition and realization

⁸ See <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/218450?ln=en&v=pdf>.

⁹ See <https://caricom.org/caricom-ten-point-plan-for-reparatory-justice>.

¹⁰ See [https://portal.africa-union.org/DVD/Documents/DOC-AU-DEC/Assembly%20AU%20DEC%20884%20\(XXXVII\)%20_E.pdf](https://portal.africa-union.org/DVD/Documents/DOC-AU-DEC/Assembly%20AU%20DEC%20884%20(XXXVII)%20_E.pdf).

¹¹ <https://pmo.gov.bb/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/The-2022-Bridgetown-Initiative.pdf>.

¹² See https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2023_16a01_adv_.pdf.

¹³ See, for example, <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15>, chap. 3; https://report.ipcc.ch/ar6/wg1/IPCC_AR6_WGI_FullReport.pdf, chap. 1; and <https://interconnectedrisks.org/download>.

of global reparatory and economic justice. To that end, the Permanent Forum will work with stakeholders towards the establishment of a legal advisory group to advise the Permanent Forum on the way forward on those matters.

Recommendations

55. In view of the above conclusions and in addition to the recommendations made in its first report,¹⁴ the Permanent Forum recommends that:

(a) The Pact for the Future¹⁵ include reparatory justice in all its dimensions for Africans and people of African descent as integral to achieving global sustainable development and racial equality;

(b) Member States and international bodies support global economic justice and sustainable development and recognize the integral role of reparatory justice to the accomplishment of sustainable development for Africans and people of African descent, including by developing a comprehensive, coordinated agenda for global reparatory justice, global economic justice and sustainable development;

(c) Member States and international bodies recognize the right of people of African descent to reparatory justice for colonialism, enslavement, apartheid and genocide and that such reparatory justice be included as a right in the draft United Nations declaration on the promotion and full respect of the human rights of people of African descent and in the requested second International Decade for People of African Descent;

(d) Member States take further steps to bridge the gaps between countries in the global South and the global North, promote equitable participation in international governance and strengthen the voices and representation of Africans and people of African descent within the United Nations system, including the Security Council and the Bretton Woods institutions, and that Member States also address the underrepresentation of people of African descent, including in leadership positions and especially of women of African descent, across the United Nations system and its agencies, funds and programmes;

(e) The Secretary-General consider expanding the mandate of the United Nations High-level Advisory Board on Economic and Social Affairs¹⁶ to include economic and reparatory justice, environmental and climate justice and global racial equality and justice and that it develop recommendations in those areas for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and propose guidelines for a post-2030 agenda;

(f) The United Nations and its Member States take steps to develop new legal instruments and mechanisms that more fully and comprehensively recognize and address the systemic and structural inequities and injustices within and among countries that have accumulated due to legacies of colonialism, enslavement, apartheid and genocide, and that those instruments and mechanisms take into consideration the intersections of gender and socioeconomic realities that perpetuate systemic and structural forms of discrimination against marginalized and vulnerable people of African descent, including women, girls, children, migrants, displaced persons, persons with disabilities and LGBTQI+ persons;

(g) Relevant United Nations agencies, including the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the International Labour Organization, incorporate into their reporting more comprehensive data regarding unequal labour conditions, natural resource use, material flows and ecological footprints in transnational value and supply chains;

(h) Relevant United Nations anti-racism mechanisms coordinate efforts to develop technical guidance on reparatory justice in all its dimensions, including a road

¹⁴ [A/HRC/54/68](https://www.un.org/en/summit-of-the-future).

¹⁵ See <https://www.un.org/en/summit-of-the-future>.

¹⁶ See <https://www.un.org/en/desa/about-us/advisory-board>.

map on reparatory justice for Member States, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, the Bretton Woods institutions, civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders;

(i) United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, working with public banks and other economic institutions, make the economic development of people of African descent a priority as part of their reparatory justice framework.

56. The Permanent Forum calls upon Member States to encourage the establishment of independent national, regional and local reparations committees and task forces to study and promote reparatory justice for people of African descent in their countries and regions as well as, where relevant, in countries and regions where they had historically enslaved or colonized Africans and people of African descent. Such committees and task forces are also encouraged to work collaboratively with the Permanent Forum and other relevant United Nations mechanisms.

57. Member States are further encouraged to take comprehensive measures, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, to resolutely address cycles of poverty, disenfranchisement and entrenched socioeconomic inequities faced by people of African descent. Those measures should include, but not be limited to: promoting the ownership of land and livestock for food security; access to sustainable clean water; financial assistance for affordable housing options and home ownership; entrepreneurial training and financial and business counselling programmes; workforce development by means of professional, financial and personal development training to increase employment opportunities; professional and educational mentorship and role model programmes; economic empowerment via access to business and agricultural grants and loans, including through microfinance institutions and by actively encouraging economic models that empower people of African descent and enhance democratic principles and sustainability, such as social and solidarity economics and cooperatives.

B. Education: overcoming systemic racism and historic harm

Conclusions

58. The Permanent Forum affirms that education is a fundamental human right, the cornerstone of just, non-discriminatory and inclusive societies and an essential tool for the effective exercise of human rights.

59. The Permanent Forum notes that people of African descent are often among the most marginalized people in education. It acknowledges the urgent need to combat systemic racism and racial discrimination against people of African descent in education so that they can realize their human right to education.

60. The Permanent Forum asserts the vital role of education, in particular anti-racist and civic education, in overcoming systemic and structural racism, promoting equitable opportunities and freedom of choice and building just and inclusive societies in which everyone, including people of African descent, can fully exercise their human rights. Moreover, as enshrined in the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, education at all levels and ages is key to changing attitudes and behaviours based on racism and racial discrimination as well as to promoting tolerance and respect for diversity in societies.

61. The Permanent Forum affirms that colonialism, enslavement, apartheid and genocide have had a global impact, deeply shaping the history of Africans and people of African descent, and that education on that history across the world is imperative.

62. The Permanent Forum maintains that the societal and individual purposes of primary and secondary education should include the scholastic, psychological, physiological and social development of children, and that those aspects are interconnected and have a great impact on the opportunities, health and well-being of children of African descent.

63. The Permanent Forum reaffirms that education should be inclusive of and empowering to people of African descent, with educational curricula accurately reflecting the histories, cultures, contributions and agency of people of African descent. The role of education in acknowledging and confronting historical traumas and fostering healing must be underscored, including the importance of teaching the histories of people of African descent for the positive self-esteem and identity formation of young people of African descent.

64. Education has the potential to help children and communities of African descent address historically and socially derived traumas and poor health, serving as a means of healing, fostering resilience and promoting healthy development. Education must include reproductive health and sexual education to address the maternal health of women and girls of African descent and bridge the maternal health gap they face.

Recommendations

65. To guarantee the right to high-quality education for people of African descent and combat systemic and structural racism against them, Member States are urged:

(a) To guarantee equal access to high-quality education for people of African descent by ensuring access to high-quality schools, including in segregated, rural, remote or otherwise marginalized areas and communities, taking special measures for socioeconomically challenged communities of African descent to ensure their equal enjoyment of the right to education, adequately investing in education in communities of African descent, including in technology and targeted curricula for children and young people of African descent, adopting curricula that include the use of an intersectional lens, training, recruiting and retaining teachers of African descent, providing high-quality training for teachers in inclusive educational practices, conducting anti-racism training for public education officials and including commitments to anti-racism and diversity, equity and inclusion for people of African descent in accreditation standards;

(b) To adopt a whole-person approach to education for children of African descent, especially in socioeconomically challenged communities, with the goal of promoting their healthy psychosocial, physical and scholastic development, including by measuring and monitoring their physical, neurological, psychological and emotional development and well-being to address possible health concerns, providing them with adequate nutrition, addressing psychological and emotional well-being in curricula, such as through social and emotional learning, mindfulness techniques and culturally appropriate psychosocial training, and also providing them with adequate access to teachers of African descent, mentors, counselling and support for diverse learning needs;

(c) To set up effective systems for the evaluation and monitoring of school performance that include a racial justice perspective and attention to the well-being of students of African descent to identify areas for improvement in racial equality and take corrective measures to address disparities in performance and well-being;

(d) To monitor and address any disparities in dropout rates and in the detention, suspension and expulsion of students of African descent and introduce alternative methods to policing in educational settings to ensure that police are not involved in disciplinary actions;

(e) To decolonize educational curricula to comprehensively teach the global impacts of colonialism, enslavement, apartheid and genocide and to reflect the diverse perspectives, histories, cultures, contributions and agency of people of African descent, including incorporating accurate African and African diasporan content across all disciplines and empowering students to critically engage with and interrogate dominant structures of social, economic and political power and privilege;

(f) To develop and implement policies and laws to ensure diversity, equity and inclusion in education and create other progressive initiatives to promote equality and address the unique needs and challenges faced by people of African descent.

Academic institutions are also urged to affirm their commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion by implementing measures to recruit, retain and support students, faculty and staff of African descent.

66. The Permanent Forum recommends that UNESCO consider:

(a) Developing methods and online assessment tools for measuring and monitoring the psychosocial, emotional and physiological development, health and well-being of students, including tools for collecting data on students of African descent disaggregated by race and other intersecting grounds;

(b) Developing a data-driven bank of best educational practices for the psychosocial, emotional and physiological development, health and well-being of students, especially students of African descent, and actively encouraging a data-driven and experimental approach to developing and assessing such best practices;

(c) Developing an online curriculum and educational materials on the history of people of African descent in the diaspora based on its General History of Africa project;¹⁷

(d) Supporting community-based and grass-roots supplementary education through training programmes and online educational material for community educators.

67. The Permanent Forum proposes the establishment of a United Nations global Black studies network supported by such United Nations entities as UNESCO and OHCHR. The network would bring together universities, researchers, professors, teachers and activists dedicated to the ethical production, dissemination, promotion and teaching of knowledge on people of African descent. The network could serve as a consultation resource for the United Nations and its Member States and for the expert mechanisms and special procedures of the Human Rights Council.

68. UNFPA, UNESCO, WHO and other relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, Member States and civil society organizations are encouraged to strengthen awareness and education on the maternal and reproductive health of women of African descent.

C. Culture and recognition

Conclusions

69. The Permanent Forum acknowledges the extensive, diverse and rich cultural heritage of communities of African descent across the diaspora, from its origins in Africa through its subsequent global evolution. It firmly believes that recognition is a way to affirm the histories of people of African descent and their lasting achievements, agency and resilience, celebrate the cultural wealth of Africans and communities and individuals of African descent, foster the protection of the cultural heritages and free expression of people of African descent and validate the substantial contributions of people of African descent to societies.

70. The Permanent Forum highlights the significance, resilience and rich contributions of African diasporic cultural, artistic, intellectual, political and activist movements and African-derived spiritualities in the diaspora. It emphasizes the need for more accurate and positive recognition by States of the rich cultural contributions of Africans and people of African descent and that such recognition is crucial to the preservation of global cultural heritage.

71. Building upon the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, the work of the United Nations anti-racism mechanisms and UNESCO, the Permanent Forum stresses the dire need for societies within the African diaspora to more truthfully and extensively acknowledge, teach and raise public awareness of the histories and legacies

¹⁷ See <https://www.unesco.org/en/general-history-africa>.

of colonialism, enslavement, apartheid and genocide and of the ways in which societies caused and have contributed to such human harms and how such harms have shaped the racial, ethnic and national identities of societies and their social, political, cultural and economic standing worldwide, the ways in which those histories have shaped the social, political, economic and cultural realities of people of African descent and the ways in which people of African descent have contributed significantly to movements of abolition, anti-colonialism, decolonization, anti-racism, human and civil rights, gender equality and LGBTQI+ rights.

72. The Permanent Forum also points out the specific human rights concerns of young people, women, children, LGBTQI+ persons and persons with disabilities of African descent, who are also subjected to systemic and structural racism and racial discrimination at alarming rates and are often unfairly treated and penalized at school, in the workplace or in sporting activities for embracing their cultural heritage. In that regard, the Permanent Forum condemns racist attacks against African and African descent athletes and urges sports federations to take resolute actions against racist attacks to prevent their recurrence.

73. The Permanent Forum notes an important gap in addressing the historical continuities of culture as practices, commodities and fields of contestation between Africa and the communities of African descent in the diaspora. As such, the Permanent Forum will undertake consultations with relevant stakeholders, taking into account the Cultural Charter for Africa,¹⁸ the Charter for African Cultural Renaissance¹⁹ and Agenda 2063 of the African Union.²⁰

Recommendations

74. The Permanent Forum urges Member States:

(a) To protect and preserve African diasporic spiritual and traditional practices, such as midwifery, Ifá, Candomblé, Santería, Umbanda, Quimbanda and Vodún as a form of racial justice;

(b) To promote and safeguard the knowledge, skills and practices of midwifery, which have been recognized as an intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO;²¹

(c) To strengthen their efforts to continue to raise awareness about the importance of promoting cultural diversity and inclusivity and to continue to work towards the removal and resignification of monuments and names of streets, squares, buildings and institutions that honour symbols of colonialism, enslavement, apartheid and genocide and replace them with cultural expressions, symbols of resistance, survival and freedom acknowledged by people of African descent;

(d) To ensure truthful and comprehensive public awareness-raising on the impacts of colonialism, enslavement, apartheid and genocide on societies and people of African descent across the world as well as education on the many contributions of people of African descent to the development of more humane and inclusive societies based on regard for human dignity, equality, non-discrimination and self-determination;

(e) To ensure the real and effective protection of the ancestral territories and monuments of Africans and people of African descent, including their lands, biodiversity, water, seeds and underwater heritage by creating and implementing public policies with an ethnic territorial approach tailored to the needs and rights of communities of African descent.

¹⁸ See <https://au.int/en/treaties/cultural-charter-africa>.

¹⁹ See https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/37305-treaty-Charter_for_African_Renaissance_ENGLISH_digital_0.pdf.

²⁰ See <https://www.nepad.org/agenda2063#:~:text=The%20January%202013%20African%20Union>.

²¹ See <https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/18.COM/8.B.26>.

75. Furthermore, the Permanent Forum recommends that the draft United Nations declaration on the promotion and full respect of the human rights of people of African descent include the recognition of, respect for and protection of African derived spiritualities.

76. Member States and United Nations agencies, funds and programmes should adopt a more robust approach to preserving and documenting the heritage and culture of people of African descent, for example by providing the relevant United Nations entities with adequate resources to create a digital archive for the global African experience to document, preserve and celebrate knowledge on the state of the African diaspora and the diverse social and cultural heritage of people of African descent.

77. The Permanent Forum encourages the relevant United Nations agencies to recognize the histories, manifestations and specific challenges of African-derived spiritualities, to organize an international conference on African-derived spiritualities and to commission a study on the history and current practices of African-derived spiritualities in the diaspora, with a special focus on the historical and continuing discrimination against them and with the purpose of facilitating dialogue, knowledge exchange and insight into the challenges and opportunities facing those traditions and guiding future efforts for their protection and preservation.

78. The Permanent Forum calls for further consultations and collaborations among the African Union, CARICOM, Member States, civil society organizations and experts in Africa and in the African diaspora to ensure that African and African-derived and influenced cultural heritages are protected, promoted and included, as necessary, on a local, national, regional and global basis.

D. Second International Decade for People of African Descent: expectations and challenges

Conclusions

79. The Permanent Forum calls for and firmly supports the proposal by the General Assembly for a second International Decade for People of African Descent, starting in 2025. It recognizes and values the expressions of support for a second International Decade of multiple Member States, United Nations anti-racism mechanisms, civil society actors, philanthropic organizations and other interested parties.

80. The Permanent Forum reiterates that the establishment of the Permanent Forum and the ongoing elaboration of the draft United Nations declaration are the main achievements at the international level of the International Decade for People of African Descent.

81. The Permanent Forum welcomes the increasing awareness and recognition within the United Nations of systemic and structural racism, racial and religious discrimination and hate speech against people of African descent and their negative effect on peace and security. It reaffirms that much is yet to be done at the United Nations and among Member States towards the full legal and institutional recognition and the addressing of systemic and structural racism.

82. The Permanent Forum views the draft United Nations declaration as the first step towards a future international convention that more comprehensively recognizes and addresses systemic and structural racism within and among countries, the legacies of past injustices and crimes against humanity, reparatory, climate, environmental and digital justice and equal sustainable environmental, social and economic development within and among countries for Africans and people of African descent.

83. The Permanent Forum stresses that the global human rights situation of Africans and people of African descent concern existential matters for the future of humanity and the health and integrity of the natural world. They include systemic and structural inequalities within and among countries and the obligation of States, in line with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to respect the human rights of people of

African descent and to create social and international orders in which human rights and freedoms can be fully realized, including through: reparatory justice for the histories and legacies of enslavement, apartheid, genocide and colonialism; climate and environmental justice; global economic justice; an equitable and democratic international order; and universal sustainable development.

84. The Permanent Forum also reiterates its concern about the growing impact of artificial intelligence and its dangers in exacerbating the inequalities of people of African descent, while noting its promise regarding the further enabling of disaggregated data collection and data-driven policymaking.

85. The Permanent Forum highlights the need for the second International Decade to be aimed at addressing the particular situations of historically marginalized and especially vulnerable people of African Descent, in particular women, young people, LGBTQI+ persons and persons with disabilities and other health challenges. In that regard, the Permanent Forum acknowledges the 2023 United Nations inter-agency study on the maternal health of women and girls of African descent in the Americas²² and recognizes the urgent need to build global solidarity and action to bridge the maternal health gap for women and girls of African descent.

Recommendations

86. The Permanent Forum calls for a second International Decade with a decolonial approach, addressing systemic and structural racism within and among countries and focused on reparatory, climate, environmental and digital justice.

87. The Permanent Forum calls for the draft United Nations declaration to be the first step towards a future international convention.

88. The Permanent Forum affirms that the second International Decade should include measures for the equitable representation of people of African descent at all levels of development and for the regulation of artificial intelligence.

89. The Permanent Forum encourages Member States to include in the development of the second International Decade an intersectional lens through which to consider the particular situations of women and girls of African descent and other historically marginalized and especially vulnerable people of African descent, including LGBTQI+ persons. In that regard, the Permanent Forum encourages:

(a) The creation of a United Nations inter-agency support group on intersectionality to address the situations of especially vulnerable people of African descent;

(b) The development of comprehensive healing initiatives to address multigenerational and socially derived harms. Member States and United Nations bodies, agencies, funds and programmes are encouraged to integrate healing into all initiatives aimed at advancing racial and gender justice for women of African descent to address and transform the impacts of oppression on their bodies;

(c) UNFPA to lead the establishment of a global mechanism focused on the maternal health of women and girls of African descent, considering the challenges and setbacks to achieving progress for that population group;

(d) The establishment of a youth observer programme, appointing youth observers from African diasporic Member States to the Permanent Forum to ensure the adequate representation of young people. Resources should be allocated to enable the youth observers to attend the sessions of the Permanent Forum and to produce reports on activities relating to the International Decade.

²² See <https://www.unfpa.org/publications/maternal-health-analysis-women-and-girls-african-descent-americas>.

E. Haiti

Conclusions

90. The Permanent Forum acknowledges the unique role of Haiti in the history of anti-colonialism, anti-racism, the abolition of enslavement and the Pan-African and other movements for the human dignity, rights and self-determination of Africans and people of African descent across the world.

91. It expresses its deep concern about the ongoing social and humanitarian emergency in Haiti. It recognizes the strong support and call for restitution and reparations for Haiti and the cessation of foreign domination and unwanted interference in domestic affairs that were presented at its third session. It acknowledges that the current crisis in Haiti is deeply intertwined with the profound impact and legacy of colonization, foreign domination, the institution of enslavement, unjust foreign debt and wealth extraction.

92. The Permanent Forum acknowledges the urgent need to address those legacies, their impacts on socioeconomic strife and disparities in Haiti and between Haiti and other Member States. It also notes the call for a renewed social contract in Haiti, encompassing State institutions, laws and a democracy that empower and serve the Haitian people.²³

Recommendations

93. In addition to its previous recommendation to the Human Rights Council to consider organizing a panel discussion on addressing the grave human rights situation in Haiti as a step towards the establishment of an independent international commission of inquiry on reparatory justice for Haiti,²⁴ the Permanent Forum also calls upon Member States and United Nations bodies, agencies, funds and programmes to take steps towards the recognition of and redress for the long history of injustices that the Haitian people have suffered and to carefully consider such measures as:

(a) Providing immediate relief for severe forms of poverty in Haiti, including inadequate access to housing, food, water, sanitation, hygiene, health care, transportation and education;

(b) Developing comprehensive, internationally coordinated and transparent short-, medium- and long-term development aid programmes for Haiti, run and managed by Haitians, including Haitians in the diaspora, that serve to stimulate the Haitian economy and its sovereignty and sustainability;

(c) Supporting the Haitian people, in particular women and children, by providing victims of trauma and sexual and other violence with adequate resources towards health and healing and establishing a complaint mechanism, including the collection of disaggregated data, on sexual violence;

(d) Immediately halting the trafficking and supply of arms and organizing regional conferences involving Haiti and other countries in the Americas to develop an institutional, logistical and operational cooperation framework to monitor, bring to justice and suppress arms and drug trafficking networks;

(e) Providing short- to medium-term support for modernizing the Haitian judicial infrastructure;

(f) Supporting robust civic processes and discussions on democratic, inclusive and transparent institution building and the rule of law and justice in Haiti;

(g) Supporting the Haitian government, in collaboration with Haitian civil society, to establish an independent, democratic and transparent truth and reconciliation commission to facilitate international and domestic accountability and

²³ See <https://akomontana.ht/en/agreement>.

²⁴ See [A/HRC/54/68](#).

transitional and reparatory justice. The Permanent Forum acknowledges and welcomes the stated commitment of the Transitional Presidential Council in that direction and calls upon Member States to ensure adequate resources for such a commission;

(h) In collaboration with the Government of Haiti, Haitian civil society, CARICOM and Member States, developing a United Nations reparations and sustainable development programme for Haiti, including the establishment of a transparent and democratically governed reparations and sustainable development fund for Haiti.

F. Civil society and young people

Conclusions

94. The Permanent Forum recognizes the active participation of young people and civil society organizations in its third session and heeds their calls for greater engagement.

95. The Permanent Forum emphasizes the importance of addressing the economic and social barriers and challenges affecting vulnerable persons, including women, girls, children, migrants, displaced persons, persons with disabilities and LGBTQI+ persons.

Recommendation

96. The Permanent Forum requests the extension of its annual session by an additional day to facilitate discussions and the development of recommendations with Member States, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and civil society representatives, with a special focus on enhancing youth consultations and addressing intersecting forms of discrimination.

G. Resources

Recommendation

97. The Permanent Forum requests the allocation of resources for the organization of an intersessional meeting annually to discuss the session preparations and the implementation of its mandate and recommendations.
