

United Nations 3rd Session Permanent Forum for People of African Descent
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If we want real change we are going to have to stimulate and inspire the minds of the leaders and change-makers.

So many of our existing institutions are struggling to change and at this point, the capacity to imagine a better future is a necessary step in creating that change.

Madam Chairperson, we who have gathered today at the Permanent Forum for People of African Descent must confront a harsh reality - the rapid pace of societal change often causes those in leadership positions to disengage and disconnect from the people most in need.

We cannot assume that our current leaders and institutional processes are not perpetuating the very problems we aim to solve. This uncomfortable truth demands that we engage in deep self-reflection.

How do we ensure that things are different this time around, when the policies are created by people who do not represent the everyday citizens and the strategies and formulas employed are no longer fit for purpose?

How do we lay the foundation for a new generation of leadership that will catalyse the collective imagination for authentic, lasting transformation?

I make the following recommendations and hope that this message reaches the ears, hearts and minds of fellows, thinkers, colleagues and collaborators.

We have to invest in new methods and new forms of interventions which are needed in leadership, in business practices and resources. We need new spaces for collective imagination and community resilience and these new approaches need to be cultivated.

We need to grow and generate new structures that address the complexities of change effectively and these need to be co-constructed.

We must bring together leaders at the management, policy and board levels with underrepresented groups, cultural organisers, and everyday citizens to explore radical new methods in the coverage of global issues.

We need companies developing pilot intergenerational and intercultural programmes, and experimental co-created interventions to subvert; structural power, current extractive values and harmful narratives through alternative socio-economic systems.

We start by spotlighting existing approaches rarely spoken about due to structural inequality in society.

This happens by amplifying the voices of people on the frontline of social change. Those heralding alternative, emerging and ancient approaches incorporating local knowledge and cultural traditions, through play, creativity, technology, data, business, health, education, climate reparatory and economic justice, sustainable development and the rhythms of everyday life.

I say this as Imwen Eke, a British Nigerian Play Alchemist; the founder of New Party Rules Labs, a female-led game studio and research lab; a director; a university lecturer; a creative technologist; a TEDx speaker; the Advisory Board Chair for MyWorld, representing the Humanity Summit Conference and Black in Extended Realities Network, who sits at the cross section of immersive entertainment, education, government, leadership and technology - in spaces of transition, where the process of culture-led systems change can disrupt power imbalances.

It's imperative that the future is designed and delivered as a community-centred intervention to stimulate the collective imagination for the purpose and benefit of all citizens.

All voices must be central in the efforts to reshape society and this world.

We are deciphering in real-time how to build post-capitalist, post-colonial, and non Eurocentrist possibilities to transform how change is instigated.

We must make our recommendations a reality and move beyond talking together, to taking action

And to imagine this fills me with hope.