

Version 1 - Ricardo Lamour; Bout du Monde, Immigrant Workers Center, Exeko, Article 47

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In light of the ongoing discussions and the historical injustices highlighted, we present the following recommendations to the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent (PFPAD) as of April 18th, 2024. These recommendations are crafted to foster accountability, enhance public discourse, and support equitable practices:

Annual review of positions on the DDPA: We recommend that the PFPAD annually inquire about member states' stances on the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA). This initiative would serve to promote transparency and motivate states to sustain their commitment to the principles of combating racial discrimination and advocating for human rights.

Mutualization of media strategies: We advise the PFPAD to establish mechanisms that support the mutualization of media strategies across nations. This would ensure that the desires and perspectives of civil society organizations (CSOs) are represented within public discourse internationally, thus fostering a more inclusive media landscape.

Transparency in financial contributions: We urge the PFPAD to publicly disclose the financial contributions made by member states to this forum. Such transparency is crucial as it not only promotes accountability but also encourages further support for initiatives aimed at addressing racial inequalities.

Incorporating Haitian civil society demands: We call on the forum to integrate Haitian civil society's demands for reparatory justice, acknowledging these as a new moral benchmark, termed the "Haitian Meridian." It is essential that discussions on reparatory justice significantly feature Haitian perspectives, recognizing both the critical role of Haiti and the unique injustices its people have endured.

Recognition of Haitian CSO engagement: It is commendable when Haitian CSOs utilize the signs typically reserved for Permanent Missions—an uncommon practice among CSOs. This act highlights the complex challenges Haiti faces. We advocate for the forum to acknowledge and support Haitian CSO participation, underscoring the value of their contributions.

Addressing surveillance and sabotage: We propose that the forum allocate specific agenda space to address the evolving challenges of surveillance and sabotage, especially in the context of modern technological advancements. As tools such as the internet, deepfakes, and algorithms evolve, they can both support and undermine justice. Recognizing and tackling these issues are vital for ensuring the efficacy of advocacy and justice movements in the digital age.

Right to reparation for Afro-descendants: We urge the forum to adopt a focused stance on reparations, recognizing and addressing the historical injustices against Afro-descendants as a priority within the scope of reparatory justice initiatives.

Combating systemic injustices: We recommend the forum support initiatives for strategic litigation, the building of robust alliances, and enhanced advocacy efforts to directly confront and dismantle systemic injustices against people of African descent.

Addressing the realities of Black migrants: We call for an explicit agenda item that focuses on the dire situations faced by Black migrants, ensuring that tragedies such as those off Brazil's coast are not only acknowledged but actively countered with substantive international cooperation and support.

Enhanced commitment to international declarations: We advocate for a reaffirmation from member states, including Canada, of their commitments to international frameworks like the DDPA, ensuring these declarations translate into real-world policies and practices.

Constitutional recognition of Black Canadians: We propose advocating for amendments in Canada's Constitution to specifically recognize the rights and history of Black Canadians, addressing systemic disparities through formal legal recognition.

Establishment of special tribunals and commissions: We recommend the creation of special tribunals and commissions aimed at addressing the wrongs done to people of African descent, ensuring that both historical and ongoing injustices are subject to legal scrutiny and reparative measures.

These recommendations are designed to amplify the impact of the forum, increase accountability among member states, elevate the visibility of marginalized voices, and navigate the complexities introduced by modern technology in the ongoing battle against racial discrimination and in the promotion of human rights.

Using technology securely to enhance participation and efficiency: We propose that the PFPAD utilizes technology in a secure manner to facilitate additional input and participation in its activities, while also enhancing efficiency. This approach should include robust troubleshooting processes to ensure that technological tools do not inadvertently become barriers to participation. By leveraging secure and reliable digital platforms, the forum can expand its reach, allowing for more inclusive discussions and more effective dissemination of information. This will help ensure that the voices of all stakeholders, especially those from marginalized communities, are heard and integrated into the decision-making process. Additionally, implementing strong cybersecurity measures and privacy protections will be crucial to maintaining the integrity and trustworthiness of the forum's technological initiatives.

Establishment of a Permanent Art Exhibition: We recommend the establishment of a permanent art exhibition within the premises of the PFPAD. This exhibition should focus on specific and rare thematic representations of the African diaspora and the challenges and triumphs of people of African descent. Top-level curation and a series of accompanying activities should be designed not only to educate and inspire participants but also to help finance the ongoing activities of the Permanent Forum. This could include workshops, lectures, and sales of art prints or merchandise, creating a sustainable funding model that enhances cultural appreciation and supports the Forum's goals.

Extension of the Forum Duration: To allow for a more thorough and in-depth collaborative effort on the pressing issues facing people of African descent, we propose an extension of the duration of the Forum's meetings by an additional week. This extension would provide more time for deliberation, deeper engagement with complex topics, and the development of more comprehensive strategies and solutions. The additional time would be instrumental in fostering stronger collaborations and allowing for more substantive outcomes from the sessions.

These enhancements aim to strengthen the impact of the forum, broaden engagement through cultural expression, and ensure that discussions are as thorough and productive as possible, reflecting the seriousness and urgency of the issues at hand.