

3rd UN Permanent Forum on Persons of African Descent

Session on Reparations and Economic Development

Hello, I am Tasseli McKay, a social scientist and reparative policy scholar at Duke University. On behalf of the Aging People in Prison Human Rights Campaign, and in service of urgent demands for reparations to people of African descent, I am here to share an economic perspective on the impacts of ongoing mass captivity in the US, particularly on Black women and children.

The estimates I am about to give you come from meticulous research on four decades of US mass incarceration, chattel slavery's well recognized successor. Their magnitude is staggering, and each of these numbers is backed by extensive, rigorous research.

- The criminalization of Black children and youth in the US and their pipelining out of educational institutions has sapped \$4.31 trillion
- The perpetual punishment of formerly incarcerated Black adults has drained \$1.07 trillion
- The burdens and harms shunted onto women partners and mothers of incarcerated Black adults total \$434 billion
- The lifelong repercussions for Black children of the incarcerated, particularly in lost educational opportunity, total \$452 billion
- And the community- and population-scale damages, particularly impacts on Black infant mortality and life expectancy, total \$890 billion

Adding these figures together, we find that the reparations bill for US mass incarceration comes to at least \$7.16 trillion. That's more than half the value of the entire Black-white wealth gap in the US, and it far exceeds the annual gross domestic product of any country in the world except the US and China.

I believe these numbers, based on just one system of extraction over one short historical period, make it clear how incredibly reasonable the current reparations demands of people of African descent are, within and beyond the US. They also underscore the importance of the recommendation to create a special rapporteur on the rights of Black women of African descent and a permanent forum for Black

women of African descent.

And to my fellow human beings of European descent: we know there is no time and no space left on this Earth for a way of life built on captivity, theft, and extraction. We must abolish incarceration and make reparations for four centuries of mass captivity. This is our opportunity to close the books forever on a way of life that has no future, and begin something new together.