



Statement to the  
**32<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent  
Economic Empowerment of People of African Descent**  
Geneva, Switzerland, May 1-5, 2023

*Item 6: Thematic Discussion*

*TOPIC 3. Race, Economic Empowerment and AfroDescendants' Human Rights*

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The Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent (WGEPAD) have asked for input concerning “how systemic racism and global economic structures and financial mechanisms affect the economic and financial empowerment of people of African descent, tracing the trajectories and impacts of enslavement, colonisation, segregation, and apartheid over the centuries, and providing an analysis of anticipated future trends to draw conclusions and make recommendations.” As President of the Balanta B'urassa History & Genealogy Society in America and a member of the National Coalition of Black for Reparations in America (N'COBRA) International Affairs Commission and Health Commission, I submit this statement and ask that WGEPAD consider the following:

1. The systemic racism and global economic structures and financial mechanisms affecting people of African descent both at home on the African continent and abroad in the African Diaspora, have their origin in a declaration of war made by Pope Nicholas V on June 18, 1452 in the Apostolic Edict or Papal Bull known as the *Dum Diversas*.<sup>1</sup> The result was that more than 12 million prisoners of war were trafficked across the Atlantic and enslaved while those that remained at home were colonized under a formalized system established at the Berlin conference. This 571 year war has been declared a crime against humanity and should have always been so.
2. Unfortunately, the Afro Descendant people that have never been repatriated to their ancestral homeland have never had their status as prisoners of war under the Geneva Convention determined by the International Court of Justice. As a

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<sup>1</sup> See Endnote 1

result, their ability to seek reparations has been blocked, a further violation of their and their ancestors' human rights.

3. Economic Empowerment and AfroDescendants' Human Rights requires that the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent (PFPAD) request an advisory opinion from the ICJ, with the African Union as a participant in the proceedings, on the question of our status as prisoners of war under the Geneva Convention. All nations that held Asiento contracts with the Holy See would then be required, to provide the resources for both voluntary repatriation to their ancestral homelands as well as the resources for those who remain to exercise the full breadth of self determination. The upcoming 8th Pan African Congress Part 1 to be held in Zimbabwe later this year has for its agenda the establishment of the African Union 6th Region Headquarters, 6th Region Representatives to the AU Permanent Representative Council, and the establishment of the Pan African Diaspora Capital Fund that would enable the prisoner of war descendants and victims of ethnocide to receive reparations payments from all individuals, institution, organizations, companies and nations so that the victims can benefit from their birthright that was stolen from them through strategic investment leading to African Economic Liberation. We implore this Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent to vigorously encourage the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent to take action on the Mandate it received on April 5 from 248 people requesting an advisory opinion from the ICJ..