

All for Reparations and Emancipation
Speaker: Mr. Silis Muhammad

Statement to the 12th Session of the Working Group on Minorities

Greetings Mr. Chairman, Members of the Working Group on Minorities.

My name is Silis Muhammad. For well over nine years we have traveled to Geneva. For nine years we have spoken to you about the Afrodescendant people. We know that we are a nation of people: history, all the wise scientists, and you, in your hearts, will bear witness that we, Afrodescendants, are an ancient people who descended from Abraham. We were scattered through slavery, stripped of our original language, culture and religion, living today, suffering the lingering effects of slavery.

The first time we spoke at the UN, to the Working Group on Minorities, concerning our human rights, you began seeking to find a way for us to fit into the definition of the ICCPR, for we mimic the mother tongue, culture and religion of our slave-masters' children, having been robbed of our own. The Working Group on Minorities received a wisely worded mandate from the Sub-Commission, to consider the "lingering effects of slavery." Over the years the Working Group did consider the lingering effects of slavery and you have the results today. Leaders of Afrodescendants, about 250 million of us, met in La Ceiba, Honduras in 2001, and again in Chincha, Peru in 2005, under the protection of the UN, in the sight of Nations, and affirmed our commitment to one another. This was done in the presence of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

We want formal UN recognition of our self-chosen name, Afrodescendants. We want restoration to the human families of the earth. For the sake of simple justice, and to correct a grave error, O United Nations hear our prayer! In error, the UN

granted recognition, restoration and reparations 60 years ago to a scattered people who claimed to be the seed of Abraham, the victims of 400 years of slavery. The result of that grave UN error is ongoing war and terror for the entire world today.

We, Afrodescendants, are the scattered orphan children, descended from 400 years of plantation slavery. Our recognition by the UN would not bring war and terror. It would, instead, correct a grave wrong and bring the truth to a suffering world. It has been our prayer that the Sub-Commission and the Working Group on Minorities would be our symbolic "dry land," allowing us, the slave descendants, to cross our symbolic "red sea."

The good works of the Working Group on Minorities and the Sub-Commission cannot go unnoticed unless the Human Rights Department fails 250 million souls altogether. We call upon the United Nations to do the right thing, for the sake of peace, and for the sake of all Nations of the earth. The pathway of the slave-descendants' collective human rights recognition and restoration must be protected and assured.