

Systemic racism and global protests and set the scene for the mid-term review of the International Decade for people of African descent and 20th anniversary of the DDPA.

At the end of the session, the Working Group will adopt conclusions and recommendations.

Members of the Working Group, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, bom dia!

Haiti:

January 12 marked a decade since the tragic earthquake which caused over 300,000 deaths and left half a million Haitian people without a home.

In the past ten years, around 10,000 people have died from epidemics such as cholera and over 32,000 people still live in tents in 22 settlements built after the 2010 earthquake.

There have been ongoing protests against the corruption and bureaucracy of President Jovenel Moïse (Jovelel Moasi fala assim) and his administration because poverty and social destabilization are worsening.

Afrosistance recommends that the working group center policies and programs designed by Haitian women, where they can live in an environment with dignity, privacy, and the fulfillment of their human rights are respected and ensured.

Migration

In the Latin American region there is an increased number of Black Migrants, many that get stuck in the border of Panama and Colombia, an area already plagued by violence due to the civil war in Colombia. There are currently over 400 women, many with children, and many pregnant people at the border at this moment. Most of the migrants currently are from Haiti, Brasil, Angola and the Democratif Republic of Congo.

In the current situation with Covid-19, many of these migrants have contracted the virus, which has made migration, especially on state borders such were Migrant camps have been set up without much access to tests, public health services, hospitals and proper care and insolation from everyone else, a even more dangerous journey.

AfroResistance recommends that it examine the situation of Black Migrants in the region. Black migrants are plagued with racism and xenophobia at every point of their migration trajectory and this makes their trajectory even more vulnerable. And that it pressure governments to sign and ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and it follow past recommendations that impact all Migrants from the CERD Committee.

Human Rights Defenders

Attacks against community leaders, human rights defenders, especially Black and indigenous women, have been exacerbating during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the entire Pacific region of Colombia there is a grave crisis of human rights violations. This has to do with political and economic actors that want to gain access to the natural resources, including water, forests, gold and all other resources. I would like to mention here Clemencia Carabalí Rodallega, Black rights defender from Colombia, who survived a recent attack. She and many other Black human rights defenders describe the situation as part of a long history of genocide committed in the region that started more than 500 years ago.

In the field of reproductive justice, women and girls have been facing public attacks led by alliances between political parties, conservative civil society organisations and religious groups. Women advocating for access to reproductive health, to sexual education and for the rights of LGBTIQ persons have been targeted by campaigns on social media, and death threats. They have been called “feminazi terrorists”, and “promoters of gender ideology”. The covid-19 situation has also been used by many governments to advance laws and policies that restrict access to reproductive justice services.

Violence against women and girls

As we are fighting the COVID-19 pandemic and its negative impact on women and girls, especially Black women and girls, a pandemic of femicide and gender-based violence is taking the lives of women and girls everywhere as well as in the Latin America region.

The season also sees the rising of another form of violence against women: the political femicide, term elaborated by Renata Souza, a Black Brazilian politician, after the assassination of Marielle Franco to define the intersecting form of violence suffered by Marielle as well as many Black women human rights defenders that challenge local power dynamics and run for government positions.

AfroResistance join the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, its causes and consequences, and recommends the Working Group and relevant stakeholders to take urgent steps to prevent femicide or gender related killings of women and girls, and gender-based violence against women and girls, through the establishment of multidisciplinary national and community-based prevention bodies or Femicide observatories on violence against women

and girls. These bodies should: 1) train communities on femicide and gender-based violence against women and girls and its impacts to the community as a whole; 2) conduct an analysis and recommend measures for the prevention of such cases, and 3) ensure political femicide and femicide victims are not forgotten by their communities.

I would like to dedicate the rest of my time to the case of Miguel Otavio in Brazil.

Miguel Story

Mirtes, a Black woman from Recife, Brazil, lives in one of the 4 Brazilian states that includes domestic workers becoming essential workers during the covid-19 pandemic. The states determined that domestic workers should work even during the city lockdown. "Its cruelty, because quarantine should not be a privilege, says Luiza Batista, the president of the national domestic workers union.

Mirtes has a brilliant and full of life 5 years-old boy, Miguel Otavio. Since there is a lockdown, schools are closed so Mirtes has no choice but to take Miguel to her work.

They arrive at the rich part of the city, an hour's ride away by bus and Mirtes starts doing her activities, serving the rich white Brazilian elite. The boss asks Mirtes to take the dog for a walk, since she is having a manicure.

Mirtes had just returned from the walk, when she saw her five-year-old on the ground, dying.

What happened between those minutes?

Miguel started asking for his mother and tried to look for her. He goes to the elevator, where the boss hits the 9th floor button and walks away. Miguel fell from the 9th floor and is now dying in front of her mother.

"She killed my dreams," "She ended my life." Mirtes said.

"The death of five-year-old Miguel could have been avoided if there had been empathy with a black child"

She did not see the boy as a person like her own children.

Tomorrow is the 6th month anniversary of the death of Miguel Otavio. His mother Mirtes that could not be here speaking today, are currently preparing for the first audience of the case. So, I want to tell her: Mirtes, we also claim for Justice for Miguel.

This is a story of historical racism, inequality and the impacts of covid-19 on the lives of Black people.

Mirtes, as her mother Marta used to do before her, works for a powerful local politician family. Generations of Black women working for rich white families.

In Brazil, there are more than 6 million domestic workers, 95% of them are women, 64% of them are Black women. Remnants of a never completed abolition process.

It's not a coincidence that the first fatal victim of covid-19 was a domestic worker in Brazil. Her employers had just arrived from Italy, they did the test and they knew they probably covid but they did not inform the worker.

Mirtes and Miguel story is a story of deep dehumanization, historical social and racial inequality.

Today, Brazil has more than 6 million cases and 170 thousand deaths and some data are very disturbing, for example:

If you are treated in a private hospital, you have 50% more chances of recovering than if you are treated in a public hospital.

70% of the Black population depends on our public health system

ANA BARRETO