

ACHA/PFPAD STATEMENT

STATEMENT FROM THE DESK OF THE ACHA PRESIDENT



STATEMENT BY THE AFRICA CARIBBEAN HERITAGE ALLIANCE ON THE OCCASION OF THE FIRST FORUM FOR PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT

Madam Chairperson, Excellencies, greetings.

My name is Okama Ekpe Brook, born and bred of royal Nigerian lineage and participating today from Canada, my second home by marriage. I am the founder & president of the Africa Caribbean Heritage Alliance, an organization for the positive reconnections of People of African Descent. We are present in Sint Maarten, Caribbean, Nigeria, Africa, Canada, and underway in Panama, Americas. Our work impacts thousands of rights holders and that is the reason we work tirelessly in building a global alliance of supportive people and partners. We offer a platform and channels for those in the diaspora who wish to directly engage with the Mother land in Africa to do so through our vetted and reliable member organizations. My recommendations are supported by State of the African Diaspora Parliament, Maroons Indigenous Group & Temple of Inner Peace Jamaica, Quantum Valley Nigeria and African & African Descendant Friendship Club, Canada.

ACHA as an organization has a focus of bringing and building awareness to the Caribbean and vice versa through teachings on histories and cultural unique differences through related lecture series, hosting and participatory workshops, educational exchanges, etc. We also organize events and festivals in dance, cuisine, fashion, folklore, music.

With support from our partners, we have implemented projects in the Caribbean including Sint Maarten, Curacao, Jamaica, St. Croix; in Africa including Nigeria, Cameroon, Ghana and in the Americas including Canada, USA. In 2019 ACHA secured funding to implement the 'Innovation and Reconnection project' (IR project) with some of its focus areas in Nigeria. The thematic area of interest in this project is access to social services, health and education. This will be achieved through edutainment and sports.

It is a new day when we get to convene for the purpose of addressing the development, justice and recognition of People of African Descent. My heart warms. As an organization that is established on these principles, on the knowledge of our

African histories, transformations over centuries and the need for corrective, restorative action, we are cognizant of the 8 years wasted and the need to intensify collective action for the remaining 2 years. We must make haste in the Decade implementation by establishing practical strategies to see some progress.

We call on the Permanent Forum to Establish a program of action to start implementation from January 2023 to address

1. Reparatory Justice/restitution with a coordinated apology and accompanying funding for restoration from each colonial leadership (Denmark, Norway, United Kingdom, France, Portugal, Spain, USA): render to those nations seeking self-determination the opportunity to be included and heard
2. Repatriation to Mother Africa for those that wish to return through a coordinated process and journey of return with a conference in 2023 in an African space with focus on dialogue, truth, reconciliation, development
3. Representation in the Americas, Africa, Asia, Europe, Asia, Polynesia with setting up Permanent Forum Secretariats funded by Governments
4. Ratification of the Decade for People of African Descent at the next UN General Assembly September 2023. Currently, only Canada has done so.
5. Institutional and structured role for Civil Society Organizations engagement at country levels and to be part of the implementation and monitoring framework.
6. Diversity inclusion from an educational and cultural lens that will be mainstreamed into all the plans and policies for women, youth, indigenous peoples, people facing violence and extremism
7. Timely planning, monitoring and evaluation with measurable indicators that can be linked and reported alongside the Sustainable Development Goals.
8. Ease of movement and travel for Africans working within the Civil Society sector to ensure timely, safe and secure approvals
9. Effective durable partnerships and sustainable financing of the PFPAD alongside the SDGs.

Most especially, we request specific support for country specific engagements as below:

Canada: national dialogue 2023 on the role of CSO in supporting Government efforts in the fight against racial discrimination, the inclusion of Black led, Black owned organizations and their recognition

Jamaica: support to indigenous knowledge research and creation of the first Maroon Development Centre and Rastafari Initiative

Nigeria: support to building of the ‘Smart City of Excellence’

Sint Maarten; REFERENDUM, REFERENDUM, REFERENDUM

Haiti: coordinated efforts to peace and security

Panama: Establish & fund the first Emergency Response and Disaster Preparedness Planning Academy/Institute as part of the climate justice, racial justice programming.
