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## **Ronald Claude,**

Thank you, Madame Chair, and congratulations on your appointment; we wish you and other members of the forum a prosperous tenure. My name is Ronald Claude, and I am the Policy Director at The Black Alliance for Just Immigration, known as (BAJI).

BAJI was founded in April 2006 and is a US-based Black national, racial justice, and immigrant rights organization that educates and engages Black immigrant and African American communities to fight for racial, social, and economic justice and Black liberation

We take the floor during this inaugural session of this Forum to bring forward the critical issue of the right to migrate as it pertains to people of African descent. Nearly 1 in 3 forcibly displaced persons are from majority Black countries, a share that is projected to continue increasing over time.

The anti-Black policies that migrants of African descent face throughout the globe have resulted in a universal experience of militarized borders, exclusion, violation of human rights and international law, targeted hyper-surveillance, criminalization, brute force, and death.

Many here have mentioned that having this session in Geneva makes this session inaccessible to most of our people. On top of the costs, one of the main obstacles is anti-Black exclusionary immigration policies that require most of our people to wait for years to get a simple tourist visa. Migration can't just be for the benefit of World Cup teams and migrant labor schemes.

The world understood the plight of Ukrainians fleeing war and their need for safety. However, Black migrants fleeing that same war in Ukraine were denied that same vigorous welcome, let alone refugees of African descent fleeing war and violence in our home countries.

BAJI hopes that the Permanent Forum will take up the issue of the protection of people of African descent fleeing danger, including those fleeing violence and climate crisis.

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## **NANA GYAMFI,**

Thank you, Madame Chair, distinguished guests, and comrades. My name is Nana Gyamfi, and I am the Executive Director of BAJI, the Black Alliance for Just Immigration.

The UN Permanent Forum of People of African Descent provides the critical space necessary to combat the current anti-Black international order that renders Black people's migration in search of freedom and human flourishing as warranting draconian and violent and sometimes responses.



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We want to highlight the need for this Forum to address the dehumanization of migrants of African descent around the globe through local law and immigration enforcement systems and exploitative labor schemes - both rooted in colonialism and chattel enslavement. Abolition of cops, cages, and borders is the only solution to these concerns, and thus Forum should lead the way.

Migrants of African descent continue to be disproportionately targeted by the criminal punishment and immigration detention and deportation systems working together. Around the world, anti-Black racial profiling by law enforcement and immigration enforcement systems results in a police-to-deportation pipeline that criminalizes migrants of African descent and forcibly removes and separates Black migrants from family and communities. In the United States, 76% of Black migrants who are deported are deported because of contact with law enforcement, mainly due to racial profiling and harsher criminal punishment. Rich and famous Black migrants are not immune - WNBA star Brittney Griner's imprisonment in Russia is a high-profile example of the global criminalization and incarceration of Black immigrants happening to less privileged Black migrants every day.

The Declaration of the Human Rights of People of African Descent must include the right to migrate and the right to be free of the violence of policing and incarceration in all of their forms.

To that end, we ask that this Forum prioritize the development of a migration theme for the Forum's Working Group of Experts and that the next session of the Forum in 2023 include a migration & human rights-themed session.

Thank you for your attention.