



Permanent Forum of People of African Descent  
First session 5–8 December 2022  
Statement submitted by Ile Orunmila Ogunda Bede  
Presented by Araba Ifatokun Awolola

December 5, 2022

Olodumare. Olojinabareo.

Creator, you are the owner of the past, present, and future of the universe.

I am Charles Stewart, born and raised in the diaspora in Miami, Florida. My traditional name is Ifatokun Awolola, Araba of Ibogun Kingdom in Ogun State, Nigeria. On behalf of my elders, Alapinni Oyeniye Agobala, and his royal majesty (Kabiesi) Oba IfaKayode Faluade, kindly accept their greetings and salutations. We congratulate you on your appointment and welcome the UN's speedy adoption of this Permanent Forum.

As a spiritual leader of Ifa, I address you on the issue of racial discrimination, inequality, and sustainable development. I have come here to denounce the racial and cultural discrimination towards African traditional religions that have survived in the diaspora.

As you know, worldwide, African religions are reduced to primitive and demonic worship. However, we believe that there's only one supreme being whom we call Oludumare. Our creation story tells us that Oludumare created the world for humans to live in paradise. Olodumare sent deities, including Eshu, Orunmila, Obatala, Sango, Olokun, among others, with the energy to assist humans. There are 401 deities charged with this mission. Ifa is the word of Olodumare. Ifa includes science, theology, spirituality, medicine, philosophy, and mathematics; all these were given to us to live a better life in this world created for us.

The African Diaspora is condemned to ongoing mental slavery. The first thing the invaders implemented was to take away the faith of the indigenous Africans. Our future impact on a sustainable planet and humankind relies on Iwa Pele- good character.

Thank you.