



FORUM PERMANENT DES PERSONNES D'ASCENDANCE
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ENGLISH

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EQUALITY- Contribution MIR-CRCH

The establishment of equality requires: a paradigm shift a rectification of seriously falsified history, and full recognition of the crimes of the past, leading to reparations

Hello,

I intervene on behalf of a group of associations including the International Movement for Reparations (MIR). We welcome that the first session of this forum takes place in 2022, the year that marks the **800th anniversary of the Manden Charter, a West African expression of the Ubuntu**. December 1222 was the moment when anti-slavery fighters enacted in founding base of the State of Mali, the Manden Charter. A statement that begins with:

All (human) life is a life.
It is true that a life appears to exist before another life,
But a life is not "older", nor more respectable than another life,
Similarly no life is upper than another life.
As each life is a life
Any damage inflicted to a life requires reparation.

A statement which, in the 13th century, aims to double preservation of collective rights & individual rights. Therefore, UNESCO has placed it as the intangible heritage of humanity. **UBUNTU, MANDEN CHARTER, these are our endogenous references that we expressly want to see appear in the world Declaration on the human rights of people of African descent.**

On this question of **PARADIGM**, as Audre Lorde had pointed out, we do not aspire to become foreman on the plantation. We are here to get out of rhetoric; to break with a paradigm that split humanity into hierarchical categories. A paradigm inherited from the French black code which in 1685 resettled slavery in the kingdom of France & reserves it specifically and only to a category of humanity, Blacks. What we want is a break with this paradigm of segregation and apartheid, which is still topical in full decade 2015-2024.

A perennial paradigm in the USA. We remember that when in 1978, the United States ambassador to the United Nations Andrew Young, passing through Paris, denounced the thousands of political imprisonments, he was dismissed. Further we see that 40 years later, while the doors of the gulags have opened in the East, the doors of the American prisons have remained closed; and that human rights defenders of the civil rights movement, detained since 1960's and 1970's, died one after the other in the indifference of successive American regimes. It even has a name: 'Death by incarceration' (DBI). However, everyone can also see that, after the fall of apartheid, the black power in South Africa has advocated UBUNTU; and that considering that a page was turned, the South African leaders allowed the former Apartheid supporters to continue living in peace in Africa. However, on the contrary, in the USA,

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power persists in keeping equality and human rights supporters in prison. This is an intolerable situation, which this forum must help to end.

If all lives do not have the same value, it is certainly linked to the current military and economic balance of power, but it is also because the dominant powers deliver a narrative of history that shapes a collective imagination unfavorable to people of African descent. This is why we propose that this forum opens the door to the deconstruction of the **FALSIFICATION OF HISTORY**. (1) Lies in the narratives, (2) retouching of images and in particular of portraits, (3) false translations (4) concealment or destruction of documents. And we wish this work to begin by questioning the terminology used in French by the United Nations to translate 'Human Rights'.

We are radically opposed to the maintenance of the expression "Droits de l'homme", borrowed from the French declaration of 1789, which concerned only men who are white and owners. We are in favor of the expression "droit de l'humain" (*which in the contemporary terminology is in counterpoint of "animal rights"*) or "droits humains".

And **concerning the parallel event on the REPARATION that we organize this Wednesday evening**, you should know that in 2005, based on the law adopted by France which qualifies the slave trade & slavery as crimes against humanity, MIR has started a reparation procedure. And that 15 years later, in 2020 the file was deemed admissible by the European Court of Human Rights. It goes without saying that these procedures do not only concern Blacks in French space; traffickers of human beings traded with each other, and there was a time when Louisiana (*named after Louis, King of France*) covered half of the current United States. We therefore invite you on Wednesday December 7th. at 7 p.m. at the Maison des Associations, Room Sankara, to dialogue with the lawyers who led this legal battle, and to meet other stakeholders with whom to deepen on the confrontation of paradigm which is for us the ultimate stake.

Matondo, thank you