

## A PLEA FOR RESTORATION OF ANCESTRAL MEMORY

As we gather here in this historic first session of the UN Permanent Forum for People of African Descent, I wish to place before us an urgent Plea for Restoration-Reclamation of Ancestral Memory of Africa. For our own sake but especially for the sake of the youth of today and tomorrow, in the diaspora as well as in Africa, we must recall that African Peoples all over the world today are descendants of African Ancestors who were once stampeded into directions they did not intend to follow. That the stampede went on and on for so long that by the time it subsided, it left so many of us in a condition of trauma that has made it difficult, indeed impossible for us to find our way back home. And yet,

There is a Journey we all must make into our Past  
in order to come to terms with our Future.

For Five Hundred Years and more we have  
journeyed into various spaces of the Earth.  
And everywhere we go we must confront  
dimensions of ourselves we did not know were there.

There is something of Our-Story  
something of our Mystery  
carved into every TombStone  
in all the Graveyards of the World..

Some tell us ourSalvation  
lies in a repudiation of ourSelves  
a repudiation of ourHistory

of Endless Fragmentation.

It cannot    mustnot    be  
that the rest of the world came upon us  
picked us up    used us to clean up their mess  
dropped us off into trash    and moved on  
into new eras of Celebrative Arrogance  
hopeful    somehow hopeful that we shall forever  
remain lost among shadows of our own doubts.

No matter how far away we try to hide from OurSelves  
We will have to come back home somehow  
In order to find out Where and How and Why  
We lost the Light in our Eyes  
How and Why we have become  
Eternal Orphans living on Crumbs and LeftOvers.  
We are the Dog Who Caught the Game  
But must now sit Under the Table  
Cracking our Hopes and Bones  
Over Droppings from the Master's Hands

In spite of all that Pain    we can say Without a Doubt  
that as a people    we do hold the World Record  
for Survival against the Most Unreasonable Odds.

Yes    we hold the most Spectacular Survival Record.

But we must hasten to remind ourselves

that just to survive

simply to survive

merely to survive

barely to survive

is not & can

never be enough.

Somehow Somehow we Must Recall

That we are a People who once

Rode the Dawn with Civilization's Light

Still Glowing Through our Mind.

We must recall the fate of those

Who fought to the Death of the Last Warrior

Fought to the Death & Resurrection

Of a Final HOPE.

*There is darkness still in Our Mind*

*But Dawn Cannot be too far Behind*

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*But Dawn Cannot be too far Behind*

#### **A PROPOSAL:**

I URGE THAT WE MUST ALWAYS REMEMBER TO INVOKE THE ANCESTORS AND ASK FOR THEIR GUIDANCE AND BLESSING WHENEVER WE EMBARK ON PROJECTS OF SELF-REDEMPTION SUCH AS THIS FIRST SESSION OF THE UN PERMANENT FORUM OF PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT. THAT IS WHY I FORWARDED TO THE SECRETARIAT A SAMPLE RECORDING [AUDIO & VIDEO] TITLED "ANCESTRAL ROLL CALL" IN THE HOPE THAT IT COULD BE USED AS PART OF THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE FORUM

I FURTHER PROPOSE THAT WE RENAME THE FORUM AS “PERMENT FORUM OF PEOPLE OF AFRICAN **ANCESTRY.**” THIS PROPOSAL WAS FIRST MADE BY A BROTHER WHO PARTICIPATED IN A PRE-FORUM ONLINE DISCUSSION LAST WEEK.

Kofi Anyidoho, Ghana.

[Poet, Research Scholar & PanAfrican Cultural Activist]