



## Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights Oral Statements – Permanent Forum of People of African Descent 2022

### Maat's Oral Statement Under “The Case for Climate Justice” (Not Delivered):

Thank you, Mme. Moderator,

Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights is fully convinced that climate change is also a racial justice issue. Climate change interacts with and exacerbates existing inequalities in society that are often molded by racism.

Due to historical injustices that have exposed them to environmental disasters, People of African Descent are disproportionately impacted worldwide. Covid-19 exposed this injustice even more in the US when Black people died at a far higher rate from Covid-19 than the general public, partly because of their likeliness to experience levels of pollution so extreme that their immune systems were weaker than most.

Mme. Moderator,

Studies have shown that climate change will cause the most economic harm in the US's poorest counties which are home to mostly people of color including People of African Descent. They have also shown that black communities in the US are exposed to far more air pollution than they produce.

In the spirit of leaving no one behind, the best way to overcome the climate crisis is by empowering and listening to the most vulnerable communities and by taking an intersectional approach that bears the most impacted communities in mind. Local government resources must be distributed equally and more funding should be awarded to initiatives that focus on historically neglected communities. Empowering People of African Descent and increasing their representation in political and economic systems will ease the path to climate resilience and provide them with the capacity to better prepare and respond to extreme events that arise due to climate change.

I thank you.



**Organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council since 2016**

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## **Maat's Oral Statement Under "The Case for Reparatory Justice" (Not Delivered):**

Thank you, Mme. Moderator,

The historic injustice that People of African Descent endured for centuries definitely warrants reparatory justice that should not be confused with the rights manifested in the Sustainable Development Agenda. Current disparities in wealth and services can be seen and felt in different regions of the world by People of African Descent which makes the call for reparatory justice even more urgent.

The transatlantic slave trade was mentioned more than once so far in this forum but very little to no mention was heard of the trans-Saharan slave trade. Maat understands that the trans-Saharan slave trade was smaller in terms of numbers but their descendants deserve the same reparatory justice and should be talked about more often.

Mme. Moderator,

Reparatory justice should not only be in the form of financial reparations, bridging the existing development and digital gaps is equally important. Securing People of African Descent's full right to development and ensuring that they have access to the same quantity and quality of land and resources is unquestionably crucial. Proposals to establish a development fund or a reparations fund need to be properly endorsed so that People of African Descent do not have to wait for decades to receive reparations.

Political willingness to initiate projects of reparatory justice is absent and this is what needs to be worked on. The presence of People of African Descent in political systems and the availability of more platforms that they can represent themselves through is needed.

I thank you.



## **Maat's Oral Statement under "A United Nations Declaration on the Rights of People of African Descent" (Not Delivered):**

Thank you, Mr. Moderator,

Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights believes that the UN Declaration on the Rights of People of African Descent should reflect the three goals that align with the international decade's theme which are recognition, justice and development. Women and men of African descent have made major contributions to societies throughout the world in countless fields, they have done and will continue to do their part in the development of this planet but their rights and freedoms must be secured at all levels.

Mr. Moderator,

Raising awareness on the drafting process through the UN and other mechanisms is important. The localization and universalization of the process is equally important so the forum is able to get insight from People of African Descent from different regions of the world. We stress on the importance of including individuals or groups who face intersectional discrimination such as women and girls. Including youth in this process is equally important as they can help shed light on modern forms of racism and more innovative ways to eradicate it.

Moreover, the role of civil society must not be taken lightly, we recommend holding roundtables throughout the year where organizations can update the forum on the various forms of discrimination that the humble individual faces. We also suggest allowing civil society organizations to lead a version of the UN Declaration on their own that parts of could be later used in the final draft. Let us help you think of all the possible solutions.

I thank you.