

Greetings Madame Chair I extend congratulations and blessings on your appointment as Chair of the PFPAD. Alaafia to all, from the Maroon Indigenous Peoples Community globally.

Madam Chair, we the Unite Maroon Indigenous Peoples claim our right to self identification as indigenous. Our indigeneity lives in our historical memory and lived experiences of our ancestral indigenous African lifeways. We descend from Indigenous Africans who were stolen from Afrika. Ancestors who were oppressed, raped, afflicted, abused, traumatised, deceived, enslaved and many who died tragically in the Maafa.

We the Maroons today claim if you are serious about leaving no one behind and equality and justice for all, we must act to ensure the rights of Maroons, Indigenous Peoples - right to land cultural identity, spirituality, language, education, autonomy over our natural resources, the rights to truth, equal rights and privileges and justice for all our Maroon peoples. We therefore hope to work with the Permanent Forum towards advancing these rights through studies, country visits to our territories and recognition of our Maroon Indigenous Peoples Rights in the draft of the Permanent Forum Declaration of People of African Descent.