

**Statement delivered by Mr. Deon Dick (Ras Khafra),
Commissioner on the Ethnic Relations Commission of Guyana
during the
2nd Session of the Permanent Forum on People of African
Descent**

Thematic panel: Global Reparatory justice

30th May, 2023

2 mins

Honourable Chairperson and distinguished delegates,

As a commissioner on the Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) representing the African Guyanese community, I have framed my presentation within the context of the mandate of the ERC and its contribution towards people of African descent in Guyana, realizing the goals of the international decade and global reparations.

The ERC is an independent constitutional commission established by the National Assembly of Guyana, with a mandate to promote ethnic harmony and equality among the six ethnic groups and to provide domestic redress for complaints by any citizen of Guyana.

In accordance with its constitutional mandate, the ERC envisions doing the following to promote, protect and respect the human rights of people of African descent:

1. Initiating a study to identify and analyze the gaps to the full participation of African Guyanese in the social, economic, commercial, and financial sectors of Guyana;
2. Working with representatives of the community on drafting an African Guyanese Development Plan, aligned with Sustainable Development Goals 2030;
3. Working in collaboration with key stakeholders to implement the Development Plan.

Chair,

I have outlined some of our national efforts. But I hasten to add, that the time for reparatory justice for the atrocities of slavery has come. Guyana fully supports, and is part of, the CARICOM Reparation Commission and its 10-point plan. While the movement for reparatory justice continues to gain momentum, the pace must be quickened to match the depth of suffering that the victims of chattel slavery endured. We call on those concerned to remove the veil of legalities and accelerate reparatory justice to give the victims of slavery and their descendants the dignified recognition they deserve.’

Thank you.

