

Bureau des Avocats Internationaux (BAI)
Thematic Discussion: Global Reparatory Justice

Statement of Mario Joseph of the *Bureau des Avocats Internationaux* (BAI) for the 2nd Session
of the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent - Thematic Discussion: Global
Reparatory Justice

My name is Mario Joseph. I am a human rights lawyer from Haiti. I bring you solidarity from your Haitian cousins. We were kidnapped from Africa, but we never forgot who we are. We never stopped fighting for freedom and justice for all Africans.

In 1804, we beat Napoleon and abolished slavery. Our success scared the powerful countries with slavery, so they tried to make us fail. France forced us to pay compensation for our freedom by threatening to invade and restore slavery.

Haiti [did not stop fighting](#). In 2000, we built a democracy strong enough to elect a President who would [speak out](#) against the unjust international system. We demanded that France pay back the independence debt, as a first step to reparations for all Africans.

Once again, Haiti scared the powerful countries, so they tried to make us fail. They kidnapped our President, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and replaced him with a puppet. Today our country is ruled by another [corrupt, repressive puppet](#). Since 2004, not one government has claimed restitution, but all were supported by the powerful countries.

Haitians [still fight](#) for reparations for all Africans. Right now we need your help. We need you to tell your own governments to stop propping up leaders in Haiti who serve the powerful countries rather than your Haitian cousins.