

My name is Ekemini Uwan. I'm a public theologian, NAACP Image Award Nominated Author, co-founder & co-host of Truth's Table podcast, and a charter member of the International Civil Society Working Group for the United Nations Permanent Forum on People of African Descent.

*"Mbubid owo ke America edo ndito ete nyin."* (*Mboo-bid eh-woh keh America eh-doh ndee-taw eh-teh yin.*) Translated in English, this simple yet profound Ibibio phrase means, "Black people in America are our cousins." My parents would often repeat this pan-African phrase because in it lies the oral history of the Ibibio connection to the transatlantic slave trade and chattel slavery. As early as I can remember, I have wrestled with this intrusive triad of questions: Who are my people? Where are my people? And to whom do I belong?

When we talk about reparations, what are we repairing? Is it not the theft of over 12 million African people, colonialism, the dislocation and disconnection between Africans and Africans in the diaspora wrought by the wicked transatlantic slave trade, inter alia? Reparations is not merely about a check. It's a check plus land, debt cancellation, repatriation, and reunification of continental Africans with African descendants in the diaspora. The foremost harms of the transatlantic slave trade were *spiritual*, which manifested economically, sociologically, and psychologically. According to Edet Udo, author of *Who are The Ibibio? Spiritual manipulation of African traditional religion was one of the primary ways Ibibio and Igbo people were captured and transported on ships named "Delight" and "Shepherd" where enslaved Africans encountered more spiritual manipulation via counterfeit Christianity that married conversion with bondage over against the liberating and anti-imperialistic gospel of Jesus Christ.*

Therefore, I recommend that PFPAD follows up and require tangible outcomes from Pope Francis and the Vatican based on Madame President Epsy Campbell-Barr's letter to Pope Francis and the catholic church to seek forgiveness and reparation. I recommend the full of adoption and implementation of The Durban Declaration and Program of Action (DDPA) because it is the basis for international organizing as it relates to people of African descent. Lastly, I recommend adequate funding for PFPAD, so that it can live up to its mandate and also develop a global reparations repository where the harms of enslavement's legacy and its attendant reparation can be built into the framework of a comprehensive global reparations plan.

