



Third Session of the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent

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Theme: Addressing Systemic Racism, Reparatory Justice, and Sustainable Development

Panel # 2: Education: Overcoming Systemic Racism and Harm

April 17, 2024

Statement by the International Decade for People of African Descent and the Ghana Day Organization

The following statement is presented by the International Decade for the People of African Descent Assembly-Guyana (IDPADA-G). IDPADA-G comprises seventy eight non-governmental organizations and is committed to the pursuit of the goals of the Decade; however, the Government of Guyana seeks to decimate it by defunding the organisation without merit.

In Guyana the contribution of the people of African descent to its post emancipation development, in particular, is either not recognized, or is subjected to degrading revisionism.

The Durban Declaration of 2001, and the United Nations' Declaration of 2013, respectively, called for the inclusion of History in the schools' curricula; a victim centered approach to its delivery; practical measures, such as teaching young people the importance of tolerance and respect; and the promotion of greater knowledge and respect for the diverse heritage, culture and contribution of people of African descent.

Unfortunately, the UN's call has not been heeded by Guyana's government. This has resulted in the perpetuation of an identity crisis; non-recognition; injustices; and underdevelopment of the people of African descent writ large. This adds up to systemic discrimination.

In Guyana, even the courtesy of meeting with the Government to advocate for a plan of action for the Decade, and the introduction of the History of the people of African descent into the school curriculum, in particular, has been denied.

This forum is therefore challenged to call upon state parties to redress this injustice. In that regard, IDPADA-G and the Ghana Day Committee recommend:

- that the Forum urge the Government of Guyana to ensure that History of African Descendants is identified as a compulsory subject in schools' curricula, thus providing for the delivery of education as a practical model for understanding the society, the inculcation of traditional values which pre-date the colonial project; as well as the conduct of public affairs. This would entail considering every activity and relationship in the school: formal, non-formal and informal, as teaching moments for the molding of the students into citizens, who abhor and outlaw discrimination and disrespect, while embracing mutual respect and cohesion, in all spheres of life.

This recommendation would benefit the entire society, and people of African descent, in particular, who are objects of intolerance, disrespect and discrimination.

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