

Intervention from African Australian Advocacy Centre

Introduction

Thank you for allowing me to contribute to this conversation today. My name is Daniel Gobena, and I am here with the Australian delegates. I would also like to thank the 32nd Session of the Working Group for visiting Australia last December 2022.

One of the panellists said a few days ago, quoting Malcolm X. - "We need to "keep it real". Before we speak truth to power, We need to be honest to oneself and we need to speak the truth among ourselves. Slavery is a horrible institution that diminishes human dignity and human potential and has a traumatic impact for generations.

It is important to understand the relationship between racism and slavery. Race is sometimes used to discriminate, exclude, dominate, control, and enslave. Slavery pre-existed racism.

Have you wondered about the etymology of the word "slave"?

It came from the word Slavs. Slavs are the largest European [ethnolinguistic group](#) (Present-day Slavs include [Belarusians](#), [Russians](#), and [Ukrainians](#). Slavonic peoples or Slavs had been reduced to a servile state by conquest in the 9th century.

Slavery has less to do with race and more to do with power. The powerful dominated the weak regardless of race throughout human history. White has enslaved whites - In this very city, Geneva, Romans conquered and enslaved white people, and the inscription of it is still visible. Blacks have enslaved blacks, Asian enslaved Asian, White has enslaved blacks

Arabs and Blacks have enslaved Whites.

- According to researcher Robert Davis, between 1 million and 1.25 million Europeans were captured and sold as slaves in [North Africa](#) and [Ottoman Empire](#) between the 15th and 19th centuries

Slavery has been part of human history and current reality, and it is a testimony to the depravity of humanity regardless of race. Currently, there are about 18 million slaves in India & more than half a million in Africa. People of the same race enslave each other.

When we talk about the enslavement of 12 million Africans by Europeans, please let us not forget the

- 8 million stolen Africans through the East Africa slave trade and
- 7 million stolen Africans through the Trans-Saharan slave trade

by the Arabs and African collaborators from 7th to 20th Century.

Will reparation address our deeper issues? Or is it our priority?

Oswald J. Smith said, “The heart of the human problem is the problem of the human heart.” Study shows that 70% of lottery winners go bankrupt within a few years. So just like the discovery of natural resources has been a curse to many African descendants.

I believe keeping our house in order should be our first priority.

Therefore, African Australian Advocacy Centre put forward those 4 recommendations based on the findings and recommendations of the Working Group;

1. **Focus on the family- Encourage education to be a family value:** Education is the foundation of economic empowerment. One great indicator of the success of a child in life is a healthy family with a father and mother. In 1950 there were 18% single-mother households. Currently, that is 70%. (WGEPAD recommendation 39)

How do we expect our people to grow & prosper when our families are falling apart everywhere?

2. **Promote entrepreneurship:** (WGEPAD recommendation 46)
3. **Remove barriers to employment:** (WGEPAD recommendation 45 & 82)
4. **Provide financial literacy:** Encouraging budgeting and seeking long-term solutions to remittance by investing in microfinancing family members’ business ideas. Cooperatives

Thank you for listening