



Global Afrikan Congressuk (GACuk)

Input for UN WGEPAD Economic Empowerment of People of African Descent April 2023

GACuk is the UK Chapter of Global Afrikan Congress (GAC), an international network of organisations formed after Afrikans at the UN World Conference Against Racism 2001 successfully encouraged nation states to recognise our enslavement as a crime against humanity. Our key objective is to achieve Reparations for these crimes which still continue today, including neo-colonialism, genocide and racism.

GAC organises from the grassroots offering local, regional and international community solidarity, co-operation and empowerment. It offers organisations and Afrikans across the world the opportunity to work together in a unified fashion to demand Reparations. We aim to mobilise the human, economic, political, spiritual and cultural resources of Afrika and the Afrikan Diaspora in the interest and to the benefit of Afrika and her people.

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The term 'Afrikan' in this document refers to the indigenous people of Afrika and their descendants throughout the Diaspora in all corners of the world. We spell Afrika with a 'k' based on the following insights:

- it is a Pan-Afrikan spelling which relates both to the Afrikan continent and the Diaspora;
- it reflects the spelling of 'Afrika' an Afrikan languages and
- it includes the concept of 'ka', the vital energy which both sustains and creates life, as expressed in ancient Kemetic (Egyptian) teachings

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Reparations

“INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN

The Conference, acknowledging the international nature of the *Maafa*, including the Transatlantic Slave Trade, Slavery and Colonialism, from its inception and throughout its duration, launches an international campaign to demand Reparations from the perpetrators of history’s greatest crime against humanity. While acknowledging that the criminal conspirators encompassed all of Western Europe and its settler colonies in the Americas and the Pacific, this Campaign will begin by focusing on the following five countries:

- France – for the Reparations which France demanded of Haiti and received in the 19th century;
- United Kingdom – for its leading role in the Transatlantic Slave Trade and Slavery and the global expansion of an empire upon which “the sun never sets”;
- Germany – for the genocide against the Herero people of Namibia;
- Belgium – for the massacre of 10,000,000 Congolese during the reign of King Leopold and its role in the assassination of the first Congolese Prime Minister, Patrice Lumumba;
- United States of America – for its leading role in the Transatlantic Slave Trade and Slavery; and
- The Netherlands – for its cruel and oppressive role in slave trade, slavery, colonialism, massacres and genocide in Netherlands Antilles and former Dutch colonies”

Page 47, The Bridgetown Protocol, GAC founding document from GAC 2002.

We appear to be finally moving closer to Reparations of some form in many of these areas:

1. **France** ‘MIR-MARTINIQUE initiated in May 2005 a procedure for reparation against the Transatlantic Slave Trade recognized as crimes against humanity by the French law of May 10, 2001. The request of MIR-MARTINIQUE was dismissed in all French jurisdictions, and deemed admissible by the European Court of Human Rights (CEDH-LF1.1R AMD/TLA/jsa - Application n°43908/19) dated November 12, 2019’. This case is due back in court in 2023;
2. **UK** The All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Afrikan Reparations¹ is to “bring together parliamentarians, campaigners, communities, and other stakeholders to examine issues of African Reparations and the repatriation of art and cultural artefacts, as well as exploring policy proposals on reparations and development, and how best to redress the legacies of African enslavement and colonialism.”;
3. King Charles has expressed support for research into links between the British monarchy and the trafficking of enslaved Afrikans. A former Tory MP saying any Reparations should come from King Charles himself should be taken as an admission that they know someone has to pay²;
4. Church of England ‘has committed £100 million in a reparations-style package to make up for its role in the historical slave trade’³. The Quakers have also ‘committed to making practical reparations for the transatlantic slave trade, colonialism and economic exploitation’⁴
5. The Green Party was ‘the first major national party to commit to seeking reparations for the transatlantic trafficking of enslaved Afrikans’⁵. The Labour Party Manifesto 2019 committed to ‘conduct an audit of the impact of Britain’s colonial legacy’⁶. Some local authorities and Labour Constituency groups have passed motions supporting Reparations, eg Brighton, Bristol, Islington and Lambeth.
6. **Germany** has been negotiating with the Namibian government on Reparations for the Nama and Ovaherero people but there are concerns that those actually affected by the genocide are

¹ <https://www.parallelparliament.co.uk/APPG/afrikan-reparations>

² <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-11949151/Tory-MP-calls-King-Charles-pay-slavery-compensation-himself.html>

³ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-64228673>

⁴ eg, Minute 27 and 33 <https://www.quaker.org.uk/documents/yearly-meeting-minutes-2022-full-final>

⁵ <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2020/10/11/green-party-commits-to-reparatory-justice-for-afrikan-enslavement>

⁶ <https://www.breitbart.com/europe/2021/02/15/labour-report-proposes-uk-pay-reparations-british-empire-virtual-abolition-monarchy>

not central to the discussions⁷. We co-host a Sunday International Solidarity anti-racist Zoom meeting where participants from Namibia express concerns that people are dying before they receive any money and their children and grandchildren are not inheriting any monies⁸.

7. **The Netherlands** while the Prime Minister has apologised for their role in enslaving Afrikan people⁹, they continue to claim Afrikan people in the Dutch Caribbean islands owe back taxes. This means people are losing their homes and land that they have lived in for generations and are seeing these handed over to new white Dutch immigrants.

However, if the uk government Windrush Compensation Scheme is to be seen as a form of Reparations then it is sadly lacking. Of 5,413 claims, 2,192 (40.5%) are still awaiting a decision¹⁰. Campaigners report that:

1. people are still dying before they receive compensation;
2. if their citizenship is not accepted then their children and grandchildren are unable to attend higher education;
3. loss of earnings is being based on figures using the Ethnic Pay Gap rather than the known going rate for a job that white workers would get;
4. the compensation for being made homeless is less than £10 per day and
5. pensions are not being fully reinstated.

A newly formed civil rights group is suing the uk Home Secretary who 'confirmed she would not implement two changes from Williams's review that would have increased independent scrutiny of Home Office policies on migration, and a third promise to run reconciliation events with Windrush families.'¹¹

While some countries and bodies are returning stolen artefacts¹² the uk has not changed the law so that institutions such as The British Museum can do this¹³. Instead they have taken a 'retain and explain' stance. This of course means that the revenue made from tourists coming to see these artefacts will not go into the coffers of the Afrikan countries the artefacts were stolen from.

Socio Economic Issues

We now have ethnic origin data from the Census 2021¹⁴ which statutory, community and private sector organisations can be encouraged to use with the Ethnicity Facts and Figures¹⁵ to measure where Afrikan people are in their workforce and work and how any disparities can be addressed.

We still regularly see reports about how Afrikan people are discriminated against in employment and education¹⁶. A Department for Work and Pensions department, for instance, has recently paid out nearly £400,000 for prolonged race and sex discrimination against an employee of Nigerian origin¹⁷. Equality and Human Rights Commission statistics from 2020 show that Afrikan people with A Levels and degrees still earn 14.3% and 23.1% less than their white counterparts¹⁸ and that children of Afrikan origins are three times more likely to be permanently excluded from school which damages their chances of obtaining qualifications and so obtaining work.

⁷ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/03/30/namibian-communities-deserve-say-german-reparations-deal>

⁸ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/may/28/germany-agrees-to-pay-namibia-11bn-over-historical-herero-nama-genocide>

⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/dec/19/dutch-pm-apologises-for-netherlands-role-in-slave-trade>

¹⁰ <https://metro.co.uk/2023/04/06/windrush-scandal-campaigners-say-forgotten-victims-still-suffering-18564869>

¹¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/apr/06/civil-rights-group-beo-seeks-judicial-review-over-windrush-promises>

¹² <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/europe-returns-looted-benin-bronzes-africa-reckons-legacy-empire-rcna3986>

¹³ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/mar/26/regional-museums-break-ranks-with-uk-government-on-return-of-benin-bronzes>

¹⁴ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/ethnicity/bulletins/ethnicgroupenglandandwales/census2021>

¹⁵ https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/?utm_source=rdareport

¹⁶ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/apr/09/britain-not-close-to-being-a-racially-just-society-finds-two-year-research-project>

¹⁷ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-51620990>

¹⁸ <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/race-report-statistics>

We have Gender Pay Gap reporting¹⁹ but the government will not introduce Ethnic Pay Gap reporting so we only have figures for 2019²⁰. 'Large companies should be required by law to publish data on employee salaries, following the framework already in place for gender, the House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee (WEC) said in a report'²¹. 'The CBI is urging businesses to commit to ethnicity pay gap reporting and clear targets for improving representation at board and senior leadership levels.'²²

It is no better when trying to start a business with 'black African businesses being four times less likely to be approved for loans, and all groups being subject to higher interest rates.'²³

While there are reports of racism in the NHS²⁴ the data is not sufficiently racially disaggregated to be clear on the situation for Afrikan people.²⁵ 'The latest Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) report showed last month that nurses from minority ethnic backgrounds faced higher levels of discrimination compared to their White counterparts. It also pointed to a "striking disadvantage" affected Black nurses who were the least likely to feel their organisation provides equal career opportunities and also reported some of the highest levels of discrimination.'²⁶

The APPG on Black Maternal Health²⁷ as "the Dispatches documentary 'The Black Maternity Scandal', (showed that) Black women are four times more likely to die in pregnancy and childbirth. The APPG aims to raise awareness of the issue of racial disparities within maternal healthcare and offer solutions to end this." In the uk Afrikan children "according to 2016 Office of National Statistics data, have a 121 per cent increased risk for stillbirth and are 50 per cent more likely to suffer neonatal death compared to white babies."²⁸

'Black children are 10 times more likely to be referred to children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) via social services – rather than through their GP – compared with white children.'²⁹ A review ordered by the NHS Race and Health Observatory 'found "strong evidence" of "clear, very large and persisting ethnic inequalities" in psychiatric wards, with higher rates of compulsory admission among minority groups. Black patients were "more likely to be restrained in the prone [face down] position or put into seclusion" in those wards.'³⁰

Unfortunately we are coming towards the end of the Decade for People of African Descent with a government refusing to act³¹; producing an Inclusive Britain document³² with no consultation; providing little, if any, information to Afrikan organisations about the Universal Periodic Review and a rumoured CERD report with no consultation despite being nearly 3 years late.

¹⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/apr/05/women-paid-less-than-men-four-out-of-five-employers-uk-gender-pay-gap>

²⁰ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/articles/ethnicitypaygapsingreatbritain/2019>

²¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/inequality/2022/feb/08/ethnicity-pay-gap-report-uk-mps-committee>

²² <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/sep/01/more-than-120000-workers-quit-jobs-because-of-racism-uk-study-suggests>

²³ <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/jan/13/uk-banks-racial-discrimination-black-victims-fraud>

²⁴ <https://www.unison.org.uk/news/article/2019/10/data-race-for-equality>

²⁵ <https://www.bma.org.uk/news-and-opinion/racism-an-issue-in-nhs-finds-survey>

²⁶ <https://www.nursingtimes.net/news/leadership-news/nhs-england-issues-apology-to-nurse-who-faced-racial-discrimination-06-03-2023>

²⁷ <https://www.parallelparliament.co.uk/APPG/black-maternal-health>

²⁸ <https://archive.voice-online.co.uk/article/experienced-midwife-fights-tackle-health-inequalities>

²⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2022/feb/13/radical-action-needed-to-tackle-racial-health-inequality-in-nhs-says-damning-report>

³⁰ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-60375928>

³¹ <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-06-24/64378>

³² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-britain-action-plan-government-response-to-the-commission-on-race-and-ethnic-disparities>