



PAPERS PRESENTED AT
THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON REPARATIONS
TO AFRICA AND AFRICANS IN THE DIASPORA

HELD IN LAGOS, NIGERIA ON DECEMBER 13 - 14, 1990

	Pages
INTRODUCTION	1
THE REPORT	3
DEFINITION OF THE TERM REPARATION	5
HISTORICAL AND MORAL GROUNDS FOR REPARATIONS	6
The Slave Trade	7
Colonialism	7
Neo-colonialism	8
The Holocaust and Africa	8
RECOMMENDATIONS	9
RESOLUTION	10
WELCOME ADDRESS BY CHIEF M. K. O. ABIOLA	11
ADDRESS DELIVERED BY THE PRESIDENT, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA, GENERAL IBRAHIM BADAMASI BABANGIDA	14
THE AFRICAN DEBT CRISIS AND THE ISSUE OF REPARATIONS	20
INTRODUCTION	20
THE AFRICAN ECONOMY	21
AFRICAN DEBT CRISIS AND REPARATION	23
CONCLUSION	24
TABLE I African Socio-Economic Indicators Vs. Industrialized Nations	26
TABLE II Africa's Foreign Debt (Billion U. S. Dollars Estimated at the End of 1987	27
TABLE III Debt Ratios in The Sub-Saharan Africa, 1980 - 88 (per cent)	28
REFERENCES	29
NOTES BY RICHARD FRANKLIN	30
REPARATIONS TO THE BLACK WORLD - AND HOW NOT TO GET THEM	34
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	34
PRECEDENTS FOR REPARATIONS	35
PARTICULARS OF CLAIMS	35
ESTIMATE OF REPARATIONS	36
WHAT TO DO WITH THE REPARATIONS	37
HOW NOT TO GET REPARATIONS	37
THE PROSPECT TODAY	39

THE SLAVE TRADE, COLONIALISM AND NEOCOLONIALISM IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE	41
INTRODUCTION	41
THE SLAVE TRADE	41
COLONIALISM	42
NEOCOLONIALISM	42
BREAKING THE VICIOUS CIRCLE	43
THE HOLOCAUST AND AFRICA	43
NOTES BY H. E. DUDLEY THOMPSON	44

INTRODUCTION

On September 27, 1990, Bashorun M. K. O. Abiola addressed an African-American workshop under the auspices of the Black Caucus of the United States Congress. He did so in his capacity as Patron of the Caucus. The theme of his address was "Reparations to Africans in the Motherland and in the Diaspora". It was not the first time that the subject was broached. It had been mentioned and even dwelt upon in the course of many Pan-Africanist crusades. But Bashorun Abiola's presentation on that occasion was different.

At the end of his address, there were such unprecedented emotional scenes as to make the spontaneous ovation that greeted it the longest in the history of any gathering of the United States Congressional Black Caucus. There and then instant volunteers emerged pledging to assist in the global distribution of copies of the speech to as far and wide as was possible. In Nigeria, the speech was so well received that many newspapers gave generous space to it.

The time of these publications coincided with the period of activities marking the 10th Anniversary of the founding of the Concord Press of Nigeria Limited, publishers of the Concord Group of Newspapers and Magazines. To round up activities marking the anniversary, a world Conference with the same theme, that is "Reparations to Africa and Africans in the Diaspora" was arranged. It was held at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs in Lagos on 13th and 14th December 1990, but not without its problems. Apart from the time constraint which limited consultation, the occupation of Kuwait by Iraqi forces adversely affected the conference. The occupation robbed the gathering of the contribution of eminent law makers from Britain and the United States who had accepted invitations to participate but who had to serve, at that point in time, on important legislative committees on the Kuwaiti-Iraqi crisis.

Nevertheless, the overall turnout was very good. The conference drew resource persons from the national and international academia, black groups from the British House of Commons and the United States Congress, the High Commissions of the West Indies in Nigeria, some black activist groups as well as labour. The opening was impressive, the sessions well attended, and deliberations at all levels serious and well articulated. The keynote address by President Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida which was delivered on his behalf by Vice-president Augustus Aikhomu has since become an important reference on the issue of reparations to Africans. The serious deliberations led to the important communique which has formed the basis for the continuation of further work on the matter.

Specifically, the conference mandated a select committee headed by Bashorun M. K. O. Abiola to map out strategies for realizing the dreams of reparations. In this connection, Bashorun Abiola has undertaken visits with an entourage to Britain, the United States and Brazil talking to groups with the objective of effecting reparations and exploring ways of establishing similar bodies where non existed. At the same time, some governments both in and outside Africa have been penetrated for support on the realization of the goal of reparations. At the last March conference of the African Bar Association, Bashorun Abiola was offered a forum to speak on the subject. Other activities continue.

THE REPORT

For two days in Lagos, the issue of reparations was examined and discussed by scholars, government officials and social critics from Africa, America, Britain and the Caribbean. The participants focused on the following issues:

1. Historical, legal and moral grounds for demanding reparations;
2. The nature and extent of the damage and destruction caused by the trilogy of slave trade, colonialism and neo-colonialism;
3. The consequences of the trilogy;
4. The need, and justification and precedence for reparations;
5. The obstacles to be surmounted; and
6. The modalities for effecting reparations.

Participants noted that for more than five hundred years, Africa was a victim of slave trade, followed by colonialism and its more subtle but equally destructive form, neo-colonialism. This trilogy of slave trade, colonialism and neo-colonialism has caused irreparable damage to the continent and its people, be they in Africa or in the diaspora. The trade in slaves involved the transportation of the "fittest and the best of Africa's sons and daughters" to Europe, the Caribbean and the Americas. This trade in human beings had several devastating consequences for Africa and Africans. For those who were transported, the trade in slaves resulted in the loss of their language, their culture and a severance of family ties. In addition, they were deprived of their human rights and, perhaps most importantly, the opportunity to develop themselves. The consequences were the lot of those who survived the arduous journey. Many paid the supreme price. For the continent itself, the consequences were no less devastating. Slavery led to a depletion of the virile manpower required for the development of the continent, it led to slave wars and the destruction of the solidarity among its people. This probably facilitated the colonial penetration and conquest of the continent.

The trade in slave, it must be emphasized, was not only immoral, it was also criminal, hence illegal. This criminality continued in the form of colonialism. African lands were expropriated, the treasures of Africa were looted, the agricultural and mineral resources of the continent were expropriated to support the industrial revolution in Europe, and the African human resources were used in wars that did not concern them. These atrocities did not end with colonialism, they are being perpetrated and refined in the modern form of slavery known as neo-colonialism. The criminal factor that links slave trade, colonialism and neo-colonialism provides the justification for the demand for reparations.

Reparations simply means compensations made for damage done to a state or people by another state. There is no doubt that tremendous damage has been done to Africa and its people in and outside the continent by the trilogy. Justice demands that the monstrous damage be:

1. Acknowledged;
2. Atoned for, and
3. Redressed.

Furthermore, there is an urgent need for the present generation of Africans and people of African descent to be compensated. History is replete with precedence of reparations. Notable among these are:

1. After WW I, defeated Germany was asked to pay 132 billions marks as reparations;
2. Following the Second WW, Germany continues to pay the state of Israel reparations for the holocaust perpetrated on the Jews by Hitler, while Japanese-Americans received reparations for the persecution and internment they suffered at the beginning of the war;
3. The United States, Canada and Australia have all paid token reparations to the indigenous inhabitants of their territories who were murdered and expropriated during and after colonization;
4. More recently, the United Nations passed a resolution that Iraq must pay reparations for the invasion and destruction of Kuwait. Reparations, which include acknowledgement, atonement and recompense is vital to enable Africa and people of African descent to break out of the vicious circle of economic under development and the psychological complex of inferiority.

The demand for reparations is not based on sentiment or on the morality of our case. Nor should it be construed as a request for aid from Europe and America. The demand is based on the legal right to compensate a people for what the international community must accept as crime committed.

To make the perpetrators of this crime accept responsibility for the damage done will not be an easy task. Questions are bound to be raised about two or three main issues;

First, the legal status of the act at the time the crime was committed; second, the retroactive nature of our demand, and thirdly the competence of the present generation of

Africans to demand reparations as well as the culpability of the present generation of Europeans and Americans in the crime. If for no other reason, the demand for reparations is valid and just because the present generation of Africans is still suffering from the impact and the damage done by the trilogy of slave trade, colonialism and neo-colonialism. They have been saddled with the responsibility of bearing burdens of these crimes. This is best epitomized in the Debt Crisis. A linkage exists between the debt crisis and the trilogy.

To realize the demand for reparation, Africans within and outside the continent, must enunciate a clear strategy. This strategy must be multi-dimensional. One dimension will be directed at sensitizing Africans the world over on the need and justification for reparations. The main thrust of this will be to create consensus and solidarity. A second dimension will be directed at sensitizing the international community, particularly, the peoples and government of Europe and America. Here we will need to emphasize that this demand is not predicated on morality but is based on legality.

Several alternative fora were suggested as platform for conducting the campaign for reparation. One platform was the OAU, another was the creation of a Pan African body. These efforts could be supported by a Think Tank comprising carefully trained specialists from among our people to act and serve as a resource base for our leaders.

The option of utilizing existing international legal machinery such as the World Court and International Arbitration was mentioned, but with the caution that the case for reparations would require very careful preparations. Generally, the point was made that appealing to the conscience of the international community would not suffice.

DEFINITION OF THE TERM REPARATIONS

"Reparation" or "Restitution" simply defined, means compensation made for damage done to a state or people by another state. It also means the following:

- a. Redress;
- b. Remuneration;
- c. Retribution, and

The concept involves three dimensions:

1. Acknowledgement of damage done;
2. Atonement for such damage, and
3. Redress to halt the continuing implication of such damage.

Slavery and colonialism have inflicted tremendous damage on Africa and on Africans in the Diaspora. Millions of Africans have died in the process of implementation of these policies, the African economy, culture and societies were completely devastated. For over four hundred and fifty years Africans were caught, manacled and shipped across the Atlantic to create wealth in other parts of the world. Those who did not die during the raids or in transit were condemned to lives of servitude. The millions captured were the young and virile Africans, the very class needed for the development of the continent. Slavery was accompanied and later replaced by colonialism. Many millions more died resisting to colonialism. The curtailment of freedom and the disruption of the normal way of life of the Africans created psychological, social, economic and political problems the scars of which are still with us. It is for these damages and injustices that reparation is sought.

HISTORICAL AND MORAL GROUNDS FOR REPARATIONS

Reparation is not new because it is at the heart of social justice. Whenever and wherever individuals, groups of people and nations are wronged or are victims of terrible crimes, case for reparations can justly be made. History is replete with such instances.

Africans, more than any race of people, have been the victims of the longest crimes and cruelties which began from the times of slavery and still continue till today. With blood, sweat and tears over a period of about six centuries, Africans have put together a solid, unsailable case for reparations. A compelling moral and historical case which the rest of the world is still to give a fair hearing.

Africa's case for reparations is not based on sentiments or on a single event in history. The case is unique because it spans six centuries. It is based on the unequalled savagery and bestiality of the slave trade, the subjugation and exploitation of colonialism and the degradation and puppet-existence of neo-colonialism. The current crisis in Africa are the consequences of colonialism and neo-colonialism.

Scholars and Pan-Africanists at different times and at different fora have eloquently articulated and documented the historical case for reparations. Works by Africans at home and in the diaspora are painful reminders of the horrors of slavery and the injury and death of resisting colonial subjugation. These works provide ample historical background for the demand for reparations.

The consequences of the slave trade, colonialism and neo-colonialism in Africa today can be summed up in one word: Underdevelopment. Many studies already exist detailing what this implies. We can explore the implication of the massive loss of population which has been

has been likened to prolonged hemorrhage in a person, leading to severe anaemia and the need for blood transfusion. We can examine the consequence of uneven exchange, economic exploitation and technological retardation; the undermining of the very fabric of society and destruction of any sense of regional solidarity.

The Slave Trade

The world was slow to recognize the fact that the slave trade was a crime against humanity. Many acts which individually were recognized as crimes in international law were regular features of the slave trade, for example, piracy and kidnapping. Similarly, while attempts continued in Europe to bring war under some international regulations, slave wars were not included.

The notorious Middle Passage illustrated the extent of the denial of human dignity. Even criminals being transported to Australia were not subjected to such degradation. In the New World, this denial of the humanity of black slaves was institutionalized. Eventually, Britain took the lead in seeking international acceptance that it is a crime to divest human being of their humanity and treat them as chattel property to be bought and sold. By that time, the Atlantic slave trade had lasted four centuries. The loss to Africa, taking into account those who died in the wars and in transit in Africa and on the Atlantic crossing, was over 20 million people.

Colonialism

The Berlin Conference drew up plans for the partition of Africa without a single African power being represented. Partition was regulated under international law in so far as it concerned the relationship between different European States; the relationship between them and African peoples was outside the law. The wars of conquest, for the most part, were crimes against humanity in their ruthlessness, and genocide. Atrocities in the Congo Free State are well documented, so also is the case against the Germans in Namibia, Tanganyika and the Cameroon by the allied victors at World War I.

Neo-colonialism

The League of Nations began the process of bringing colonialism under international regulation and to show it up as a crime against humanity. The territories taken from the Germans were placed under a mandate system which involves some degree of international supervision. The international community began to question the theory of colonialism on the bases of its denial of freedom, lack of opportunities, neglect of economic development and impoverishment through ruthless exploitation.

European powers conceded political independence but retained control over the economies of Africa which they integrated into the world system, placing them in a position of dependence. The world has so far failed to accept that neo-colonialism, like the slave trade and colonialism before it, is a crime against humanity; that the social, economic, and technological divide between Africa and Europe has widened immeasurably. The international community has so far rejected calls for a new international economic order which would have permitted a more just system of resource distribution.

The call for reparations is an attempt to break through this vicious cycle. It is a search for a more just international order, a redistribution of surplus funds now invested on armaments and the arms race. Africa needs reparations to repair the damage done to basic infrastructure, education, and the entire social system.

The Holocaust and Africa

The demand for reparations involves comparison between the fate of Africa and the holocaust. Can anything in history be compared in scale and criminality to the crime of the holocaust? Those directly affected by the holocaust will insist that nothing can be so compared, but this is because the world has forgotten the factor of criminality contained in the trilogy of the slave trade, colonialism and neo-colonialism.

RECOMMENDATIONS

After exhaustive discussion and deliberation on the issues relating to reparations, the following recommendations were made:

1. The critical issue of reparation to Africa and Africans in the diaspora should be taken to the top of the agenda of international dialogue. The issue of reparations should be presented before the Organization of African Unity for endorsement and then carried to the United Nations.
2. The creation of a Think Tank comprising carefully trained specialists to provide the data base necessary for presenting the case of reparation. To achieve this, an international centre and regional centres should be created for the study of reparations.
3. The campaign for reparations should be made a mass movement using the following methods:
 - a. The incorporation of the concept of reparations to Africans into the history syllabus of schools at the secondary and tertiary levels.
 - b. The preparation and dissemination of literature on reparations.
 - c. Scholarly research and discussion on reparations to Africans.
 - d. Workshops, conferences, and symposia organized on the subject.
 - e. Using a multi-media approach to create awareness of the concept and to facilitate the processes of reparations to Africans.
 - f. Use of non-governmental organization, social clubs, etc, to raise awareness so that the struggle for reparations will become a mass movement.

RESOLUTION

The assembly, called the World Conference on Reparation to Africa and Africans in Diaspora sponsored by Bashorun M. K. O. Abiola, resolves to :

1. Set up an organization of Africans and descendants of Africans to work towards reparations for damage done to the motherland and her descendants by slave trade, colonialism and imperialism, and
2. Produce a clear statement of aim which will be circulated worldwide within a period of six months from the end of this conference and or be used as a basis of the address to be presented to the OAU summit in Abuja in June 1991. An eleven-man Steering Committee was named to implement the resolutions.

WELCOME ADDRESS BY CHIEF M. K. O. ABIOLA, CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE CONCORD PRESS OF NIGERIA Ltd. AT THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON REPARATIONS TO AFRICA AND AFRICANS IN THE DIASPORA HELD ON THURSDAY AND FRIDAY 13th AND 14th DECEMBER, 1990 AT THE NIGERIAN INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, VICTORIA ISLAND, LAGOS.

Your Excellency, the Vice-President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria,
Mr Chairman,
Members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council,
Honourable Ministers,
Members of the Council of States,
Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
My Lords, Spiritual and Temporal,
Your Royal Highnesses,
Distinguished Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are gathered here today, as much by personal choice as by the burden of historic responsibility, for a unique occasion. We are called here to do that which has not been attempted before, to break the deafening conspiracy of silence to which the issue of reparation has for too long been condemned.

I hope we all appreciate the fact that this is not just another conference, where we meet to discuss a fleeting issue of little or no relevance to our daily life, or to the future of our people. This cannot be allowed to degenerate into a well attended jamboree where a few over used discussants scored intellectual points before the clicking cameras of the world press. If that is what you have come for, you will soon discover that you have come to the wrong place.

Our task over the next two days is simply to take the critical issue of reparation to Africa and to Africans in the diaspora up to the top of the agenda of international dialogue and subsequent global action. We must make a credible and convincing case for reparations, and then work out a practical, step-by-step blueprint of action. After this Conference, what then? Do we then involve all African governments and African-American leaders? When does the Organization of African Unity become involved? What about the United Nations? Or shall

we proceed to the International Court of Justice? How can reparations be effected, and what shall we consider the acceptable minimum?

Mr Vice-President, Mr Chairman, the questions are many, the answers are few, and the obstacles are numerous. The demands for reparations may, at this early stage, appear to be merely the dream of an out-of-step idealist, of some one who is not conversant with the increasingly harsh realities of the complex international economic and political environment. Some other people who may indeed mean well, will say that this is some form of heresy, that we seek to do that which has wisely not been done before. And a few others are likely to feel that we are determined merely to disrupt the normal course and conduct of international relations, to put blacks at war with white, to re-open wounds which are better left to heal on their own.

We hear all this, and we take consolation in the fact that those who do not dream do not do anything at all, that the first man to suggest that the world is round was also accused of heresy, and that all those who have dared to demand justice, including Moses, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr. and Nelson Mandela, were also at one time considered to be trouble makers seeking to cause social disharmony. Samuel Johnson, the notable English essayist, aptly captured the mood of this Conference when he said that "Nothing will ever be attempted if all possible objections must first be overcome." Our intentions are noble, our cause is just, and our methods are equitable. As always, history will offer the final verdict.

But even while we await the final verdict of history, we must not fail to vigorously put forward our case to the contemporary society. Slavery and colonialism are historical facts not the figments of fertile imaginations; millions of our brothers and sisters were killed and our economies, our cultures and our societies were completely devastated - this is the truth, not the fruit of a creative fiction writer's pen. For over five hundred years, we have been the world's favourite victims, exploited by an astonishing number of nations - no one disputes these facts, which have been carefully chronicled by historians.

All that we ask is that these wrongs be officially acknowledged as contributing substantially to the horrendous plight of Africans all over the world, that some gesture of atonement and restitution be made to survivors of a holocaust which has gone on since the fifteenth century, and that a process of systematically re-integrating Africans into the world productive economy be embarked upon by the international community.

Those who say that we are committing heresy are obviously uninformed about the history of reparations. As the world has come to accept the principle of restitution, Germany continues

to pay the state of Israel millions of dollars every year, a state which, when the crimes were committed, did not even exist. The United States, Canada and Australia have all paid token reparations to the indigenous inhabitants of their territories who were murdered and expropriated during and after colonization. The United Nations has already passed a resolution that Iraq must pay reparations for invading and destroying Kuwait. And the United States has begun to pay compensation to its citizens of Japanese origin who were illegally and unjustly detained in concentration camps during the Second World War. Why, may I ask, is our case different, difficult or any more sensitive?

We do not expect the world to immediately come around to our position. We do not think that victory will be ours tomorrow, or even the day after. It is said that the journey of a thousand years begins with but one step. We will today take what I believe is the important and first step. Our journey is long and our task is difficult, but we are confident that the outcome of this conference will determine what the next step must be. We must keep the momentum going. We cannot allow a complacent, self-satisfied and self-indulgent world to so easily forget who bore the burden of its own development.

Let me end this brief welcome address by quoting one of the most illustrious African-Americans who ever lived. It was James Baldwin who said: "I know that what I am asking is impossible. But in our time, as in every time, the impossible is the least that one can demand - and one is after all emboldened by the spectacle of human history in general, and American-Negro history in particular, for it testifies to nothing less than the perpetual achievement of the impossible." Mr. Vice-President, Mr Chairman, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank you all for honouring our invitation. And I wish all of you very fruitful deliberation.

ADDRESS DELIVERED BY THE PRESIDENT, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA, GENERAL IBRAHIM BADAMASI BABANGIDA, CFR, FSS, mni, ON THE OCCASION OF THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON REPARATIONS TO AFRICA AND AFRICANS IN THE DIASPORA HOLDING AT THE NIGERIAN INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, LAGOS, ON THURSDAY 13th DECEMBER, 1990.

Mr. Chairman,
Members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council,
Members of the Federal and State Executive Councils,
Your Excellencies, Ambassadors, and Heads of Diplomatic Corps,
Conference Participants,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am greatly delighted to be amidst this distinguished audience of Statesmen, scholars and concerned individuals from Africa and from Africans in the diaspora who have gathered here to discuss the very critical issue of reparations. First and foremost, I welcome you all to Nigeria and to this very important Conference.

2. Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, the convening of this Conference is indeed epoch making. While individuals and groups have talked over the years about the need for reparations to the black race for the historical wrongs done to the race, no one has attempted in a concrete way to translate this desire into reality which I believe is the basic objective of this Conference.

3. Let me therefore congratulate the Concord Press of Nigeria and especially its Publisher, Bashorun M. K. O. Abiola for this bold initiative. One major issue that will confront this Conference is the articulating, in a very clear way, the need for reparations and how much reparations. I believe this is crucial for the simple reason that human loss, human suffering, human degradation, and disorientation cannot really be quantified in terms of money.

4. For about four hundred and fifty years, Africans were caught, manacled and shipped across the Atlantic to create wealth for their captors in the sugar cane, tobacco, and cotton plantations in the Americas. Great were the privation to which they were subjected. Those who did not die during the raid or during the middle passage and were finally landed in the Americas were sentenced to lives of servitude without any chance of manumission. The

people so forcibly transported have been estimated to number anything from 10 million to 30 million. Those who were captured were the young and virile Africans, the very class on whom the development of the continent would have devolved.

5. The chaos accompanying the slave trade retarded the African march towards development, progress and the advancement in science and technology. In fact, the period of the slave trade was the period of retrogression. While Africa and Europe were almost at par in terms of development up to the fifteenth century when great empires such as those of Ghana, Mali, Songhai, Kanem-Borno, Benin, Ife, Oyo and Great Zimbabwe flourished, the slave trade destroyed all that was left of the African achievement and civilization of which ancient Egypt, Meroe and Axum were historic manifestations. The chaos attendant on European onslaught on Africa softened African resistance to imperialism and the eventual European partition and the colonial administration finally concluded the African experience of subjugation. This colonial imposition did not go unchallenged.

6. African resistance leaders such as Samori Toure of the Mandinkas, Sultan Attahiru I of the Sokoto Caliphate, Jaja of Opobo, Chaka the Zulu, Lobengula of the Ndebeles and the great Menelik of Ethiopia fought gallant battles against superior arms with the exception of Menelik's Ethiopia, most of the African states succumbed to imperialism. But this was after the loss of millions of African lives.

7. Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, do I need to remind you of the millions of Africans who lost their lives resisting the seizure of their countries? To the colonial powers, African lives were expendable. In fact the doctrine prevailing then was massive infliction of injury and casualties on their helpless victims because it was erroneously conjectured that Africans did not value their lives. This strange doctrine led almost to the disappearance of the Hereros in the former German South-West Africa (now Namibia), while Angola was reduced to wilderness by the Portuguese as a result of four centuries of slave raiding and colonial exploitation.

8. The struggle for independence in many parts of Africa, particularly in such places as the Cameroons, Algeria, Ethiopia and the entire Southern-African region was characterized by extreme violence with consequent loss of lives of millions of Africans. The recent violence visited on Africans in the Front Line States in Southern Africa is too recent to need reiteration here. But for the avoidance of doubt, a recent Commonwealth report on Apartheid Terrorism puts the war-related death toll in Southern Africa at 1.5 million and the cost of South Africa's distabilization of the Front Line States since 1980 at a staggering \$45 billion.

9. The upshot of all this is that never in the course of human history has a people suffered so much for such a long time in the hands of fellow human beings for no other cause than avarice and material aggrandizement.

10. President Léopold Sédar Senghor, that great African Statesman and poet once said Africans, Jews, and Arabs constitute a trilogy of suffering peoples. But the fact is that of all these three groups, the suffering of Africans has never really been seriously addressed.

11. Even the granting of independence to African States is nothing more than a tactical political concession, while the economic exploitation and externally triggered civil wars continue. Since 1945, the world has witnessed attempts to redress the grievances of at least the Jews if not those of Arabs. But in spite of our support for the Allies during the Second World War and despite the Atlantic Charter of Freedom, we Africans, both at home and in diaspora, had again to fight against great odds to secure the rights which had been solemnly promised to everybody. That was not all. When the Marshall Plan for the Economic regeneration of Europe was put in place, we who had been victims of European colonialism expected in vain a plan that would lead to the joint development of Africa as was the case of Europe. The point is that from the fifteenth century up till now we have remained marginalized by the western world to which we have unfortunately been shackled by the accident of history and by our geographical proximity. Try as we can, Africa and Africans are not given the same opportunities as other regions and races to actualize themselves.

12. Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, our kith and kin in the black diaspora have not fared better. The African-Americans in both South and North America have largely been kept at the periphery of social and economic happening in the New World. Economic and therefore political power have by and large eluded our people. Those of us in the home continent have had our energy sapped by the struggle against racism and the battle for decolonization.

This struggle for political freedom is almost over except in South Africa itself where there is institutionalized racism, with a system that is as unjust as it is inhuman. We need, in spite of the glimmer at the end of apartheid tunnel to redouble our effort at ending apartheid and to insist that the international community must not do away with the limited arms embargo and economic sanctions until the process of change becomes irreversible and permanent.

13. Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, our political burden has been replaced by the economic yoke of a crippling debt which continues to increase by compound interest no matter our effort at amortization. We have come to a situation where development has

generally grounded to a halt and a situation where most African countries exist and live for debt repayment. In spite of our grinding poverty, our continent has witnessed massive capital transfer to the rich nations of the north in the past decade while our people are being reduced to economic serfs in their own countries.

14. For how long will our people stand for this without bringing down this evil edifice of an unjust economic system imposed on the whole world to benefit a fraction of mankind?

15. We Africans, whether at home or in diaspora have suffered too much largely because we were divided through the force and brutality of former slave drivers and owners. A yawning chasm separated Africans at home from our kit and kin abroad in the past. Out of ignorance and misinformation, our brothers in diaspora looked at those at home as uncouth and uncivilized natives whose ancestors were responsible for their plight in the new world. The Africans at home in reaction felt they were the authentic inheritors of all that was glorious and edifying in the Africans past. Our common enemies exploited this division.

16. The political struggle has largely been fought and won, what we need now is freedom. We demand that Africa should be granted economic freedom through debt forgiving and total debt write-offs. We demand African Marshall Plan to compensate for the century of abuse and neglect. We demand full equality with all men for African at home and in diaspora. We call on all the countries in Europe and the Americas to compensate Africa for the untold hardship and exploitation that the continent had ben subjected to in the past.

17. We make these demands because services of our forefathers in the American plantations were unrewarded and unpaid for. We make these demands because the exploitation of Africa during the period of colonial rule further impoverished us and enhanced the development of the West. We make these demands because this is in the interest of mankind. Remember when that humanity suffers a little, somewhere, all humanity suffers a little. The world cannot continue like this with the vast majority under pain while a few luxuriate in affluence.

18. The time to make a fresh start is now and Europe and the Americas must redress the imbalance in their relation with Africa and Africans. It is time for descendants of the oppressors and the oppressed to open a new chapter based on mutually rewarding and beneficial relationship.

19. Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, we must not give up the struggle for total emancipation of the black race from poverty, want, social degradation, economic

saying that unity is strength. We Africans, both at home and in diaspora must pull our resources together in order to advance the cause of our race. Numerically, the African races is fewer than the other races on this global village, and it is a duty for us all to share the bounties of this planet without endangering the survival of each and every one of us. The only way to move forward is to support ourselves in whatever we do. For example, we must organized ourselves in the Americas so that we can constitute a pressure group that will ensure that policies emanating from the new world are favourable to the advancement of our people. We can borrow a leaf from the Jewish lobby in America which ensures that the State of Israel gets budgetary support running into billions of dollars every year from the United States.

20. I am aware of the activities of Trans Africa and the Congressional Black Caucus, but we need to do more than these two bodies are doing to bring the plight and need of Africa into great focus.

21. There is also a need for investment to come into Africa through mobilization of black funds and enterprise particularly in the United States and the Caribbean. It should not be too difficult for Africans and their brethren in diaspora to form joint ventures to stimulate and develop the economy of our common homeland. We Africans at home should also follow a policy of complementarity whereby we invest in black enterprises in the United States and Brazil and the Caribbean, for example. There is no reason on earth why Black banks in the United States and Black entrepreneurs should not attract business from our thriving oil sector.

22. It should also be possible for Africans in the new world to enjoy dual citizenship of whatever African country they decide to adopt as their home country.

23. One of the greatest huddles that Africa must overcome is the lack of technological know-how. There is a pool of this kind of people in the Black diaspora waiting to be tapped. It only requires the approximate mechanism and information to be put in place so as to explore and exploit this possibilities.

24. We need to fully integrate the African economy. The present division of the continent into puny states cannot but act as a drag to the wheel of progress. We must overcome the fissiparous tendencies that seem to undermine Africa's inexorable march towards greater unity.

We must unite or perish for Africa and Africans are both an endangered continent and specie. That is the truth. The world is not for the weak but the strong. If we want to survive as a

people we must unite and be strong.

25. It is true that the international environment for centuries has not been favourable to the blackman. Having diagnosed our problems we must adopt the appropriate solution and take the bull by the horn. It will not be easy but we must begin. And now.

26. While demanding reparation, it must be clear to us that we are not building a world of racial exclusivity. This will be negative and unhealthy. We Africans are not seeking to dominate anybody. Nor are we going to allow anybody or group dominate us. What we seek is partnership with other people. But this partnership must be built on mutual respect.

27. The rest of the world cannot only help but must help so that together we can jointly build a world where no one is oppressed and a world of one human race built on harmony of black, brown, yellow and white races moving in unison to develop together a natural endowment and bounties of nature while preserving our environment. This is the only way if the world is to develop peacefully.

28. The present situation where an important segment of the human family feels marginalized and victim of a conjuncture of man made evil forces is not a good augury for the peace of the world.

29. In the true spirit of interdependence, all nations, big or small, rich or poor, black or white at varying levels of development, have important and specific roles to play if the objective of a prosperous and vibrant global village is to be placed within reach. All it takes is the political will to attain this objective and I believe that there is sufficient political realism to reinforce the momentum and justness of our cause. We should summon and take that political decision to realize the desired goal of full equality of human family. We can do it now and now is the time.

30. Once again I wish to express our profound gratitude to Concord Press of Nigeria and especially to its publisher, Bashorun M. K. O. Abiola for turning the dream of this conference into reality.

31. I wish you all sincere and fruitful deliberation. It is my great pleasure to declare the conference open.

32. Thank you and God bless you.

THE AFRICAN DEBT CRISIS AND THE ISSUE OF REPARATIONS BY S. E. N. OKOH, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS & STATISTICS, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY, NIGERIA

I. INTRODUCTION

The economies of the developing countries have been the most hard hit by the ongoing debt crisis. The economic growth of these developing world, especially, that of the developing countries of Africa has been uneven. Those countries are struggling to get their economies on the growth path but the economic policies which have been prescribed to bring about the quick cure appear not to be working fast enough. Africa being the largest continent with the least developed categories of nations appears to be the most threatened.

Experts have, at various international academic fora, been advocating for structural adjustment policies and debt relief policies involving debt rescheduling, interest rate capitalization and reduction, debt forgiveness, debt default and outright debt repudiation. Some of the structural adjustment policies have been implemented in some of the African countries with all the attendant sacrifices that go with it without any visible measure of success. However, it could be said without contradiction that one of the reasons the measures taken failed to provide the quick relief expected was the failure of the developed countries to provide the capital inflow associated with the envisaged economic policies.

The failure of the industrialized countries to help provide effective debt relief to the African countries has galvanized African-American intellectuals and their African brothers to demand for what is called reparation to the African countries.

Reparation may be defined as a proposed repayment or compensation to the African countries for the past injustice meted to them by the colonial masters. The payment compensates for the expropriation of human, material and natural resources of the African countries. The black slave provided slave labour to develop European and American economies. These slaves were forcefully removed from their African families to Europe and America with severe tortures and deprivations. While, many of them died on their way, others survived to tell the ugly story of slavery. It is also on record that the mercantilist economic philosophy advocated and practiced naked economic exploitation of the African colonies for the benefit of the "mother country". Now there is the advocacy that this

economic rape of African economies be assessed and payment made by the perpetrators of this crime.

This paper examines the African debt crisis and the possibility of using reparations as a strategy of foreign exchange inflow from the former colonial masters. The paper is divided into four sections:

Section I is the introduction.

Section II examines the nature of the African economy, while

Section III takes an in depth analysis of the African debt crisis and problems of reparation. Finally,

Section IV concludes the paper.

II THE AFRICAN ECONOMY

The economies of African countries have been described as the "most vulnerable and least developed" in the world. The reason is that the continent accounts for two-thirds of the United Nations designated "least developed countries" (LDCs).

The major problem of the African economy is the nature of its structure. Ake (1981, Adedeji (1981), and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, ECA (1989) have all identified the basic structural problems of the African economy. They see the basic problems to be concerned with the pattern of production, consumption, and exchange. These constitute the most fundamental causes of African underdevelopment and retrogression. ECA summarized the bottlenecks as:

- i. The predominance of subsistence and commercial activities;
- ii. The narrow, disarticulate production base with ill-adapted technology;
- iii. The neglected informal sectors;
- iv. The degraded environment;
- v. Lopsided development due to urban bias of public policies generally and development policies in particular;
- vi. The fragmentation of the African economy;
- vii. The openness and excessive dependence of the economies including dependence on external factor inputs; and
- viii. Weak institutional capabilities.

Given the space and time constraint, it is not possible to dwell on each of the above but suffice it to say that these are the factors that have made Africa underdeveloped. As a producer of primary commodities, the African lives at the mercy and subject to the

manipulation of the developed world. The prices of cocoa, coffee, cotton, etc, continue to fluctuate in the international market and they have fallen victims of manipulation. Even the price of crude oil is manipulated by the West despite the existence of OPEC. The most decisive among these factors according to Adedeji, is the economic dependence of African countries and their excessive external orientation. The African economies continues to depend on the former colonial masters both in terms of economic policies, and consumption, export and import orientation. This dependence has made the African economy susceptible to frequent external shocks.

These countries cannot generate enough foreign exchange to pursue meaningful development programmes. In fact, in some of the African countries, economic development has become unattainable because people who are unable to afford the basic needs, cannot be talking of capital investment that will bring about economic growth and development. The most immediate pre-occupation is how to get their three square meals a day. Some have turned to beggar nations, begging for food, aid and the lack of such aid has reduced the inhabitants of these countries to mere shadow of their former selves.

There exists extreme poverty which causes excessive malnutrition in most of the African countries and some of them are yet to be touched by modernization. Africa is seriously plagued by hunger, draught, rising population, etc. The food production is not keeping pace with population growth. In fact, there is no dismal description that could give a vivid picture or reflection of what exists in some of the African countries.

African socio-economic indicators (Table I) is nothing to write home. For example Guillaumont (1990) shows that the manufacturing sector contributes a meager 12 per cent to the GDP; The GDP per capita is about \$544.00 in 1987, while average per capita GDP growth rate between 1980-1988 was -1.9%. The average life expectancy is 52 years and debt as a percentage of GDP in 1988 was 94.1 per cent. Comparing the statistics with that of industrialized countries, one could not but sympathize with the African countries, but the Age of mere sympathy must be over. There must be a practical positive approach to solving African problems. The African governments on their part with short-fall in foreign exchange revenue, have resorted to massive borrowing as the solution to the African predicament.

III AFRICAN DEBT CRISIS AND REPARATION

The African debt crisis became more visible in the 1980s. The Sub-Saharan African debt which was \$57.5 billion in 1980 according to IMF 1989 Report rose to \$137.8 billion in 1987 an increase of 140 per cent between 1980 and 1987, while an estimated African debt as at 1987 stood at 220 billion. This is shown in Table II. The debt burden whether measured

Given the extent of African debt and its burden, various solutions have been suggested for debt relief or reduction policies. Most of these policies hinge on structural adjustment policies, debt rescheduling policies, interest rate capitalization etc, and in many countries policies have been geared toward the achievement of these goals. However, in spite of corrective economic policy measures that have been put in place, the African economies are yet to visible improvement. Okoh (1990) concluded that any economic policy of debt relief short of debt write-off or debt forgiveness is not very helpful.

However some African/American scholars have recently re-opened the issue of reparation. Reparation as earlier defined is payment of compensation to African countries or the black race that suffered slavery in the hands of Western European countries and the United States of America. The advocates believe strongly that these countries used slave labour to develop their economies and today are pursuing economic policy measures that continue to make Africa overly dependent and underdeveloped. They believe that the deprivations suffered by these African countries was responsible for their state of underdevelopment. To ensure justice and fair play the developed world needs to pay African countries a lump sum of money for not only "taking their resources" but also for the inhuman treatment of the slaves; and to show remorse.

While this paper sees this advocacy as a noble cause, the chance of its succeeding is remote. In fact, it may even be seen as one of those trivial calls of a radical few and therefore treated with contempt. Many do not see it as a serious demand.

The first problem with this demand is how the compensation should be determined? Payment of reparation is an admission of guilt which may lead to many more unknown demands and legal action. How does one determine what is due to each African country or the black race? How are we sure that the payment would be not polarize African or the black race even more? To this author there is no amount that would be sufficient as compensation except the entire assets of the European and American countries.

This paper will like to suggest that instead of the black race advocating for reparations, an impossible task, African countries should be using reparations as a strategy for debt write-off and increased capita; inflows through grant-in-aid. There is need for African countries to ask for improved aid flows, debt relief, and greater access to the developed country's markets for their few limited exports, if Africa is to accelerate the rate of economic growth and development. Pearson (1970) in an outlined strategy to encourage economic development of the developing countries observed that trade policies of advanced countries raised many obstacles to the growth of export earnings of less developed economies. He therefore

of economic growth and development. Pearson (1970) in an outlined strategy to encourage economic development of the developing countries observed that trade policies of advanced countries raised many obstacles to the growth of export earnings of less developed economies. He therefore recommended a framework that would allow for a free and equitable international trade. In fact, the future looks bleak with 41 African countries classified as least developed countries in 1990. This is an increase of 16 countries since 1980. A country is so classified if its GDP, adult literacy rate, the contribution of manufacturing value added to the GDP etc, are below what is expected as normal contribution. The ratio of debt to GDP of these countries has risen in the 1980s according to *African Recovery* from 53 per cent in 1984 to 78.2 per cent in 1987.

The industrialized countries appear to have been showing sympathy, which of course is not enough to ameliorate the debt burden of the African countries. For example, these industrialized countries are implementing some debt relief policy measures for African LDCs which include debt cancellation, especially for the poorest countries, and the total of the amount so far cancelled was \$3 billion in 1988. However, in June 1989, France, Japan, and the U.S. decided to cancel the official debt of the poorest African countries. So far, about \$5 billion African debt have been cancelled by the U. S., the Federal Republic of Germany and Belgium.

This type of selective debt policy while commendable clearly falls short of an effective solution. A policy of debt write-off and increased inflows of aids is the only answer to solving African economic problems.

IV. CONCLUSION

This paper has argued that what Africa needs is debt write-off and increased inflows of capital from the industrialized world. It takes the position that reparations pose a problem of admission of guilt which may have legal implications. How does one estimate the amount of compensation to be paid to the African countries for looting its resources or for the psychological damage done to the black race through slavery? Again assuming the Western countries agree to pay for expropriating black man's resources and the slave labour, what would be the magic formula for sharing of the amount paid among the African countries, or the black race in general?

In view of the above obvious problems, the author believes that the present rhetoric on reparations should be a mere strategy to forcing the industrialized world to action because they contributed to the underdevelopment of African countries. They should therefore

contribute towards its effective development. The paper therefore calls for debt write-off and increased inflows of aid.

Lele and Nabi (1960) observed that one of the fundamental problems of the developing countries is that most of the public loans were invested in wasteful non-income producing industries. Okoh (1990) observed that public grants and loans have in most cases been squandered on meaningless projects. African countries must uphold the virtues of discipline and probity. African economic policy measures must be inward looking, instead of encouraging more dependency. Africa must be aware that it is fast becoming less and less relevant to the growth of the western world. The continent has to think very seriously how to avoid being completely marginalized. This is an uphill task in view of Europe 1992 and the events in the Eastern Europe.

Country	Debt to GDP (%)	Debt to GDP (%)
Cameroon	12.1	1.1
Ivory Coast	10.1	0.5
Kenya	10.1	0.5
Nigeria	10.1	0.5
Zaire	10.1	0.5
Zambia	10.1	0.5
Others	10.1	0.5
TOTAL	10.1	0.5

TABLE I**African Socio-Economic Indicators Vs. Industrialized Nations**

	GDP per Capita \$ 1987	Manufacturing Value Added: Share of GDP % 1987	Adult Literacy Rate (%) 1985	Population (million) 1987	Per Capita GDP Growth Rate 1980-88; Annual Average (%)	Average life expectancy	Debt as % of GDP
African Countries	\$544	12	48	557.19	-1.9	52	94.1
Industrialized countries	\$10,760	21	N.A.	1202.28	2.3	74	N.A.

Source: Adapted from African Recovery, Aug. 1990

TABLE II

Africa's Foreign Debt (Billion U. S. Dollars)
Estimated at the End of 1987

	Total Debt	Debt to Banks
North Africa		
Algeria	23.9	7.1
Egypt	34.4	6.3
Morocco	16.8	3.6
Tunisia	8.0	1.7
Sub-Saharan Africa		
Cameroun	4.2	1.1
Ivory Coast	8.4	2.9
Kenya	5.0	0.5
Nigeria	30.1	8.0
Zaire	8.7	1.1
Zambia	6.0	0.4
Others	53.4	13.8
South Africa	21.1	13.8
TOTAL	220.0	57.6

SOURCE: Institute of International Finance, quoted by U. B. A. Economic Digest Aug. 1988.

NOTES BY RICHARD FRANKLIN

AMERICA

Honourable,

Ladies and Gentlemen

Thank you for the invitation to join you in considering this question of the current policy implications of historical economic relations among nations.

I have long believed that policy analysts have overlooked an important issue, and the debate on development has, therefore, been incomplete and distorted. Now there are indications that this oversight is being corrected. What are the practical consequences of past economic injustice? How can they be accounted for? This conference can contribute to important clarifications, and that can benefit all parties in the long run.

I am interested in looking at the problem of what we are calling "reparations" or "restitution" as a technical issue. It is a problem in national income accounts, and in international balance of payments accounting.

All the parties have until now made policy based on an incomplete understanding of the full costs and benefits of historic trade, investment, labor and other relations. But now there can be sufficient technical grasp of the problem to permit economist to estimate the benefits to those who benefit today from past coerced, unequal exchange transactions.

We have better statistics, as well as better theory. And, we have computers. Before we enjoyed these fairly recent technical advances, it was not possible to get very far in measuring such factors as the costs and benefits, even though there have been analysts who intuitively argued that there had been systematic unjust enrichments resulting from past wrongful economic arrangements between Africa and major trade and investment partners.

Now analysis can replace intuition. And accounts can be developed and refined. They can be produced for long historical periods. And they can also be produced annually from now on.

It is one thing to feel exploited. But it is important to develop a quantified estimate of the magnitude of the exploitation. Measurements matter. The discussion of remedies will not be constructive until serious measurements are produced. So a research program needs to be established. That will allow other to refute, dispute, and argue over every technical detail. And that is healthy. Let that technical debate run its course. In the end out of that process will come a sounder basis for discussion.

Discussion of reparations, therefore, ought to be as unemotional as possible. It is obviously an emotion laden subject. But if it is to have practical positive and constructive consequences, then a rigorous research base is essential.

Let me say, again, that I am interested in justice here, not merely the perceived self interest of any party. I believe that the world has many examples of relations that might be remedied by restitution. Indeed, most chronic conflicts within and among nations, seem based, at least, in part, on grievances that boil down to the feeling that there have been massive unjust enrichments at the expense of one party's ancestors. And that current distributions of income and wealth are therefore illegitimate and indefensible.

I see that in East, West, North and South. Someday, I expect that the U. N., or World Bank/IMF, or some such body will take on the job of monitoring worldwide economic transactions from this perspective. They will look for deviations from some agreed to standards of just dealings. And then they will quantify the deviation. And that information will help correct the problems. It will shed light. And the very act of illuminating these matters will help bring an end to exploitation, and unequal relations. And it will also help the parties bargain over remedies for past injustices.

When people come to know with some precision, who is benefiting from unjust enrichments, how they are benefiting, and how much they benefit, it will energize them to put a stop to it. So it's crucial to know not just that there is exploitation, but how much there is.

I think a stable, just, well informed world will be a better place for all. It will be more efficient and it will be more equitable. There will be retributive remedies for past injustices. And the current holders of unjust enrichments will consider that undesirable. But even then, if they look again, will see that in a larger sense, they will be better off in a stable world with fewer inarticulated grievances leading to seemingly irrational political behaviour.

I hope you will decide to set up a technical analytical center. It should undertake the kind of ongoing, rigorous, impartially reviewed analysis that I have described. It should cooperate with scholars and policy analysts worldwide.

That kind of initiative coming out of this conference, could prepare the way for the kind of serious discussions about income and wealth imbalances, and how they got that way. And it can, then, offer a basis for remedies on a scale that can truly accelerate development. Jumping ahead a bit, let me briefly comment on the form that eventual reparations might take. And then, finally, I would at some risk comment on the matter of internal discipline and sound management.

Reparations, and I hope a less emotionally charged, neutral name can be found, should be applied in investment forms. Payments that are eventually negotiated, should be put into:

- Education and training,
- Health and
- Capital formation and enterprise development.

Massive payments to individuals, from any kind of pool, is a less desirable mode. The original exploitation didn't deprive of subsistence. They managed to subsist. What it did was divert the capital that they would have used to strengthen themselves and their communities. Therefore, what reparations should do is restore that capital in a way that accelerate sustainable development and built strength. It should be used to accelerate the development of crucial institution, and to develop a broad class of skilled, knowledgeable, disciplined workers, technicians, managers, scientists and professionals. And it should be used to develop the small and middle size businesses that can be the backbone of broad economic growth and diversification.

Finally a word on development. Here let me refer to the situation in African America, in the United States. A case can be made for reparations there. And a fact based, analytically grounded proposal can be offered for policy remedies. Intuitively, it seems obvious that money is owed. Perhaps, several trillion dollars.

But we African Americans, it seems to me, also have to use our existing tools to solve the problems of dysfunctional behaviour that have retarded our development. We need to:

- Obey the law;
- Study and stay in school;
- Refrain from early parenthood;
- Save and invest;
- Improve our discipline generally, individually and as a group;
- Take common sense health precautions, and stay fit;
- Participate fully as citizens.

I think those prescriptions make sense universally, north, south, east and west. I hope as a guest, I am not being presumptuous, or out of line, to simply underline the importance of broad improvements in behaviour for any people seeking to accelerate their development.

If leaders anywhere, can find the means to inspire everyone to improve their basic life styles, then that group is likely to find greater success, whatever it's objectives.

These internal improvements, together with enhanced resources from all sources, including from reparations can produce economic success. But without the basic commitment to order, democracy, justice, equity, efficiency, humanity at all levels of any society, additional capital is likely to be used sub-optimally.

To summarize, a group of senior economists and policy analysts should be established in existing or new research centers to examine these issues.

REPARATIONS TO THE BLACK WORLD - AND HOW NOT TO GET THEM

by Chinweizu

Paper for presentation to the World Conference on Reparations to Africa and Africans in the Diaspora, at the NIIA, Lagos, December 13 & 14, 1990.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In the 16th century, Arabs and Europeans began the current phase of their assault on the Black World. In Africa before that time, the no man's land between the Black World and its Euro-Asiatic invaders had stabilized north of the Tropic of Cancer, north of a line running through Tegheza in the West and Aswan in the East. But in that calamitous century, Europeans and Arabs renewed the age-old Euro-Asiatic offensive through which, in the preceding 2000 years, they had seized Africans lands north of the Tropic of Cancer.

The 16th century was the century when the Portuguese vanguard of the European invaders distabilized the Bukongo Kingdom, and obliged it to supply them with slaves. That was when the Portuguese subjugated Kilwa, Sofala, Pate, Mombasa and other coastal towns in East Africa, and seized control of their Indian Ocean trade. That was when the Portuguese sent an expedition inland against Mwanamupata to seize its gold.

That was when Moroccan Arabs seized Tegheza and its salt mines, and sent across the Sahara an expedition which conquered and destroyed Songhay. That was when the Arabs of Egypt when on their expansionist offensive against Nubia and Ethiopia, and conquered the Kingdom of Alwa. That was when Bedoin Arabs infiltrated the region around Lake Chad and settled there.

These expeditions are a watershed in the modern history of the Black World. They inaugurated some three and a half centuries of a slaving holocaust which destroyed Black African societies and condemned hundreds of millions of Blacks to death and enslavement at the hand of Europeans and Arabs. And that slaving holocaust, by far the greatest holocaust in human history, was followed by the European conquest, colonization and neo-colonization of the Black World.

That general offensive against the Black World, which began five centuries ago, has not stopped. It is still going on in South Africa, in the Sudan, in Mauritania and other places.

What we are to assess are the damage we have sustained, and the losses we have incurred in the course of five centuries of an unprovoked invasion of the Black homeland, with its resulting dispersal of Black Africans; as well as what reparations we should exact, and how.

PRECEDENTS FOR REPARATIONS

Reparations for grievous and gratuitous harm done to nations and peoples are not new. In this century alone, there have been some important precedents.

If Germany is paying reparations (amount undisclosed, but allegedly huge) to Israel for the Jewish victims of Hitler's 12 years long holocaust, why should the European World not pay reparations to the Black World for some 350 years of slaving holocaust?

If Germany paid indemnities to the Entente Powers for its responsibility in causing WW1, why should the European World not pay reparations to the Black World for five centuries of unprovoked wars, conquest and looting?

If Saddam Hussein is expected to pay reparations to Kuwait for gratuitously invading and destroying it, why should the Arab world not pay reparations to the Black World for gratuitous acts of invasion, destruction and enslavement (both physical and cultural;) in the Black World?

If the Japanese have apologized to the Koreans for their atrocious behaviour during their conquest and occupation of Korea; and if the North Koreans are demanding \$5 bn from Japan in reparations for 35 years of occupation, why should the Black World not exact apologies and reparations from both the Europeans and Arab Worlds for five centuries of Atrocities?

PARTICULARS OF CLAIMS

The following are some of the main items for which reparations may be sought. Our historians and economists have to calculate the specific amount to be paid after determining the quantities involved, and their market prices at the time each item was expropriated or destroyed.

A) Rent on lands expropriated by European and Arab settlers during the last 500 years (e.g. some 500 years in the Sudan and Chad; some 400 years in South Africa, Mauritania and Mali; some 100 years in Kenya, Zimbabwe and Namibia.)

- B) Compensation for material and social destruction during the Slaving Holocaust: houses, villages, cities, mines, farms, markets, etc., which vanished in the course of procuring slaves for Arabs and Europeans.
- C) Indemnities for all wars and all campaigns of pacification waged by Europeans and Arabs on Black peoples and nations.
- D) Compensation for resources expropriated (animal, vegetable and mineral): i. e. cattle, sheep, goats, etc.; cotton, rubber, palm produce, etc.; gold, tin, copper, iron, petroleum, etc.
- E) Back pay for work done, both unpaid and underpaid, both as slave labour in the Diaspora and forced labour in Africa.
- F) Compensation for lives lost ... the hundreds of millions of blacks who died through slaving, conquest, colonization, pacification and the wars of decolonization. For instance, the hundreds of thousands of Herero of Namibia who the German Imperial army exterminated in what proved to be a dressed rehearsal for the Nazi extermination of six million Jews; the 10 million Congolese who were killed by the agents of Belgium's King Leopold II, while being forced to collect rubber; all the blacks killed in the wars of independence fought by the Mau-Mau, the PAIGC, FRELIMO, etc.
- G) Compensation for destabilization and eradication of Black Cultures through forced Europeanization and Arabization.
- H) Punitive damages for the slander and defamation of the Black race, slander which led to our being despised, and which contributed to our loss of self-confidence. The central theme of this slander has been the claim that the Black Race -- the very one which initiated civilization in the world -- is primitive and has contributed nothing to the world.
- I) Opportunity cost for what we would have made of the people and resources of which we were forcibly deprived.
- J) Interest on the total compensation for the above items.

ESTIMATE OF REPARATIONS

North Korea's demand for \$5 bn for a current population of some 20m, for 35 years of occupation and exploitation should give us an idea of the Black World could demand for 500 years for some 500m people. The comparable amount could be approximately \$2000 bn. But that would be just the principal -- what we should have been paid in the cause of the 500 years, but were not.

On average, that principal has been old for 250 years. At 5 per cent compound interest, each \$1m of that principal would now be worth \$198.3 bn, or approximately \$200 bn. Which is roughly what sub-Saharan Africa allegedly owes to aid givers and international banks. At 5 per cent compound interest, the principal of \$2000 bn would by now be worth \$1/2 bnbn! Compared to that total, the world current debt is insignificant -- a mere 0.00004 per cent, or 40 micro per cent, or 40 millionths of one per cent of the reparations which are due us.

These calculations of compensation have been based on the North Korean claims. Considering the far greater scope and intensity of the damage inflicted on the Black World, the principal of the debt to the Black World would be considerably greater. By the time our scholars quantify the items of our claims, we might find that even \$100,000 bn is a conservative estimate of the principal. If so, principal and interest would total \$25 bnbn or more. In any case, the reparations which are due to the Black World are in the \$bnbn order of magnitude.

WHAT TO DO WITH THE REPARATIONS

When we secure the reparations, what might we use the funds for? I would suggest that we pay off any genuine debt owed by the Black World to international banks and aid agencies; and use the rest to create a Black World Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

HOW NOT TO GET REPARATIONS

Late last year, I wrote a "Letter to Europe" in the maiden issue of Liber, a European Review of Books which appears in five European languages. In that piece, "Imperialism and its inheritance", I drew attention to a debt "which is owed Africa by Europe for five centuries of slave and forced labour, for vast lands with forest and mineral wealth, all of which were commandeered for the development of Europe." I then recommended a project "to secure from Europe reparations for this, reparations which will be used to finance the reconstruction and development of Africa." I was surprised and saddened when a friend of mine, an African, equated this demand for reparations with begging for foreign aid.

Lest some others in the Black World should misconstrue this conference's demand for reparations as begging for aid, let me emphasize that reparation is not aid: it is compensation exacted for past injuries. Aid is for pitied beggars; reparation is for those strong enough to exact it. Nobody pays reparations to a crippled beggar; when you tire of his importuning, you kick him out of your way. Only to those they respect or need do people pay reparations.

If we want reparations, we are obliged to create the conditions under which reparations can be exacted. Until we are respected and feared; until European and Arab Worlds need our goodwill; until we bring enough moral and practical pressures to bear on them, we can expect no reparations. Such is the lesson of the Jewish and the Korean experiences.

Now, what are the prospects that our demand today for reparations will be listened to, let alone met? Who pays reparations to victims who are eager for the goodwill of their victimizers? Who pays reparations to whiners and crybabies who shun responsibility for their future? Who pays reparations to flatterers, fawners, grovelers and self-abasers? Who pays reparations to self-confused

people who are ruled by local agents of their victimizers? Demands by such people are not taken seriously.

Can we expect or exact reparations when Black World elites are dominated by Fifth Column elements, who spread slanders put out by our enemies, and who see to our chronic disorganization - elements whose faces belong among us, but whose words and deeds aid and abet our foes?

Can we expect or exact reparations when all too many of our elites ignore, or even oppose our historic mission to end our five centuries of humiliation?

Can we expect or exact reparations when all too many of our elites would give the perpetrators of apartheid equal right on African soil with the Blacks they have long despoiled and still despoil; when our neo-colonial regimes have refused to send their bloated armies of internal plunder to sack and dismantle the Boer Reich, and have even helped to maneuver the South African Freedom Fighters into the political ambush set for them by De Klerk and his gang?

Can we expect or extract reparations when all too many of our elites claim they are Black Arabs, even fake Arab genealogies for themselves, and make war on other Blacks to Arabize them?

Can we expect or extract reparations when our leaders maintain an unholy silence, and do nothing, as our Arab enemies, from capitals like Nouakchott, Tripoli and Khartoum, prosecute wars of conquest, expulsion and extermination against Black populations?

Can we expect or exact reparation when our neocolonial regimes do not see it as their historic mission to drive Arab expansionists as far back, at least, as the Tropic of Cancer?

Can we expect or exact reparations when all too many of our leaders deny that Pan-Africanism is a movement for the rehabilitation and advancement of the Black Race; deny that the Black Diaspora are Africans; but assert that European and Arab despoilers who occupy our lands have become authentic Africans?

Can we expect or exact reparations when we have erected no monuments to the victims of the Slaving Holocaust, when we do not hold yearly rites to remind us of our losses, when we do not gather at shrines each week to hear admonitions to never again permit such despoliation and humiliation?

Can we expect or exact reparations when so many of our luminaries pander after acclaim, and in order to get it,, mislead us, dishonour our forebears, despise our ancestral religions, pour racism

scorn on our black heads, preach non-violence against our chronically violent despoilers, and help loot our economies for their masters?

Can we expect or exact reparations when we hold as our heroes the captain of our enemy invaders -- spies like Mungo Park and David Livingstone; conquerors like Frederic Lugard; mass murderers like King Leopold II; grand plunderers like Cecil Rhodes?

Can we expect or exact reparations when we fail to acclaim the true heroes of the Black World: from Menes, Imhotep and Taharka down to Dubois, Garvey and Cheikh Anta Diop?

Can we expect or exact reparations when disorganizers among us oppose independent organizations of the Black World (like a Black World League of Nations, and an Organization of Black African States), while they cling, with desperate loyalty, to Europhile and Arabophile outfits like the OAU (the Organization of African Eunuchs, according to Fela), the Arab League, the British Commonwealth and the French Community?

So long as such terrible internal conditions persist, where shall we find the strength to press for reparations? And who would respect us enough to pay us?

As can be seen from this partial catalogue of our internal obstacles, our job is cut out for us, if we seriously want reparations. Let it be emphasized: to confuse reparations with aid; to persist in our colonial mentality and disoriented behaviour; and to leave our leadership to the Fifth Column, would be how not to get reparations.

THE PROSPECT TODAY

The task before us may seem like removing a mountain using a pick axe, shovel and basket. However, as in all things, the important thing is to begin. Even a journey of a million miles begins with a single step. And today, by the holding of this conference, that crucial step has been taken. Now that our journey of rehabilitation has begun, even if it should take ten generations, our prospects are already much improved.

People of the Black World, I say to you: take heart; our day shall come when we shall clean up our internal mess; when we shall decolonize our minds; when we shall relegate to the margins of our affairs the Trojan Horses and Fifth Column among us; when Black patriotism shall finally rule the lives of the Black Race; when the Black World shall again be respected and compensated. Let me leave it written that our day is on its way.

CHINWEIZU is the author of several books. Among them are The West and the Rest of Us; Decolonizing the African Mind; Invocations and Admonitions, and Anatomy of Female Power. His newspaper column "The Chinweizu Observatory" appears in the Sunday Vanguard of Lagos.

**THE SLAVE TRADE, COLONIALISM AND NEOCOLONIALISM
IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE
by PROF. J. F. ADE AJAYI**

INTRODUCTION

The consequences of the Slave Trade, Colonialism and Neocolonialism in Africa Today can be summed up in one word: Under-development. Many studies already exist detailing out what this implies. The best known of such works is probably Walter Rodney's How Europe Under-developed Africa. We can explore the implication of the massive loss of population which has been likened to prolonged hemorrhage in a person, leading to severe anaemia and the need for blood transfusion. We can examine the consequent uneven exchange, economic exploitation and technological retardation; the undermining of the very fabric of society and destruction of any sense of regional solidarity.

Rather than attempt to explore these in detail, I wish instead to examine aspects of the Slave Trade, Colonialism and Neocolonialism which justify their being linked together in considering the question of Reparation. Reparation, as we know, is linked up with the concept of crime in International Law. I therefore wish to examine the criminal factor in the Slave Trade, Colonialism and Neocolonialism.

THE SLAVE TRADE

The world was slow to recognize the fact that the Slave Trade was a crime against humanity. Many acts which individually were recognized as crimes in international law were regular features of the slave trade but connived at. For example, piracy and kidnapping were recognized as crime in international law but connived at in the slave trade, especially in the recruitment of slaves. Similarly, while attempts continued in Europe to bring war under some international regulation, slave wars continued to defy regulation. Slave wars were often undeclared wars, wars of aggression, total war, violating the right of ransom etc.

The notorious Middle Passage illustrated the extent of the denial of human dignity. Even criminals being transported to Australia were not subjected to such degradation. In the New world, this denial of the humanity of black slaves was legalized and institutionalized.

Eventually, Britain took the lead in seeking international acceptance that it is a crime to divest human beings of their humanity and treat them as chattel property to be bought and sold. By that time, the Atlantic Slave Trade had lasted four centuries. The loss to Africa taking into account those

time, the Atlantic Slave Trade had lasted four centuries. The loss to Africa taking into account those who died in the wars and in transit in Africa and on the Atlantic crossing, not to mention the Arab Slave Trade, was over 20 million.

COLONIALISM

Britain turned against the slave trade, but not against other forms of slavery and crimes against humanity. Europeans eventually gave up the slave trade because the prospect of exploiting the labour, land and other resources of Africa became increasingly more attractive than the slave trade. In the transition from the slave trade to colonialism, the Europeans used African involvement in the slave trade as argument that they were not part of the civilized world, and as such were not covered in international law. Thus the Congress of Berlin drew up plans for the partition of Africa without a single African power being represented. Partition was regulated under international law in so far as it concerned the relationship between different European States; the relationship between them and African peoples was outside the law.

The wars of conquest, for the most part were crimes against humanity in their ruthlessness, and genocide. Atrocities in the Congo Free State are well documented; so also the case against the Germans in Namibia, Tanganyika and the Cameroon by the allied victors at the end of World War I. This does not mean that the record of the victors in the expropriation of land in British South Africa, Rhodesia, Kenya, or by the Portuguese in Angola and Mozambique, and the forced labour and forced conscription for service in the trenches of Europe in winter, and the carrier corps in East Africa, were any better than that of the Germans.

NEOCOLONIALISM

The League of Nations began the process of seeking to bring colonialism under international regulation and show up its aberrations as crimes against humanity. The territories taken from the Germans were placed under Mandates involving some degree of international supervision. Thus, for example, Namibia passed from the German frying pan into South African fire. The hypocrisy notwithstanding, the international community began to call colonialism into question because of its denial of freedom, lack of opportunities, neglect of economic development and impoverishment through ruthless economic exploitation. Colonialism was exposed as a crime against humanity.

European powers conceded political independence but have retained control over the economies of Africa integrated into the World System in a position of dependence. The world has so far refused to recognize that neocolonialism, like the slave trade and colonialism before it, is a crime against humanity; that the social, economic and tech. gap separating Africa from Europe has widened immeasurably; that Africa is no longer able to feed itself or cope with any drought; some countries collapsed or are on the verge of collapse. The international community has so far rejected

calls for a new international Economic order allowing for a more just system of international trade and more justice in the pricing of primary products relative to manufactured goods.

BREAKING THE VICIOUS CIRCLE

Perhaps eventually the world will recognize neocolonialism as a crime against humanity and seek other forms of exploitation to keep Africa dependent and underdeveloped, making it a perpetual source of cheap labour, producer of whatever raw material Europe has need of, and surviving on Food Aid and Development Aid.

The call for Reparations is an attempt to break through the vicious circle. It is a search for a more just international order, a redistribution of surplus funds now invested on armaments, pollution of the environment and unnecessary wars and threats of wars. If the international community can perceive that what Africa needs is not Structural Adjustment Programme that over devalues our currency but fails to produce the expended level of investment, but Reparations to be invested specifically on infrastructure particularly in education, the development of Africa will prove more beneficial to the world than underdevelopment and dependence.

THE HOLOCAUST AND AFRICA

The demand for Reparations involves comparison between the fate of Africa and the Holocaust. Can anything in history be compared in scale and criminality to the crime of the Holocaust? Those directly hit by the Holocaust will insist that nothing can be so compared, but this is because we are allowing the world to forget the factor of crime against humanity and the international order involved in the Slave Trade, colonialism and Neocolonialism.

Let me conclude by pointing out that the comparison is well founded. The Germans themselves tried to involve Africa in the so-called Final Solution. Before deciding on the gas Chambers, the original idea was to transport the Jews into works camps in Madagascar, then under the control of the puppet regime of France. When the tide of war turned and the Allies began to emerge victorious, before deciding to create Israel in Palestine, an earlier plan was to create it in Cyrenaica in Eastern Libya. It is in the nature of colonialism that neither the Germans nor the victorious Allies considered it necessary to consult Africans before including them in the search for the final solution.

NOTES BY H. E. DUDLEY THOMPSON,
JAMAICAN HIGH COMMISSIONER TO NIGERIA

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have all be summoned here by History, and our sense of Justice. The moral and other claims by Pan-Africanists and others to the readjustment by Reparations has been hammered out slowly but clearly on the anvils of justice through the years.

I must confess that I appear before this distinguished and erudite audience with reasonable grounds for my trepidation. Whereas I feel greatly honoured for this opportunity to speak, I put far less weight on your judgement in selecting me to discuss this topic of Reparations for Slavery. I can think of no qualification except perhaps one which can serve me as credential in my support of this selection. You are at least, however, entitled to know something about why I have consented to share with you, thoughts on the subjects. You will note that this is purely a personal contribution and neither my government nor my country can be held to have endorsed my views on the matter. My government has not express a policy on Reparation. I should commence by pointing out that I intend to speak of is a Relationship between an International movement, Pan-Africanism itself very elusive of definition on the one hand; and a just Claim for readjustment arising out of one of the most nefarious episode of modern history i.e. Slavery, on the other hand. The single credential that I introduce as descriptive of my qualification, is, that I have lived long enough to have observed all the phases of colonialism in a passage through to neo-colonialism which many mistakenly describe as Independent. Perhaps I have been removed far enough from the actual period of slavery the better to judge its pernicious pervasive and continuous results. I have had the opportunity over these many years of working together with some of our great Pan-Africanists like - George Padmore, Dr Azikiwe, Kwame Nkrumah, Jomo Kenyatta, the late H. O. A. Davies, T. R. McKonnen and others. This to a great extent made me mentally aware of the full injustices of slavery and enable me to see through the spectrum of history the relationship between our claim today and the cruelties of yesterday out of which this claim arises.

History shows that this Rape of Africa, for that was what it was, records the transportation of the "finest and the best of Africa's sons" that they could lay their hand on some millions of us across the Middle Passage to the Caribbean and the Americas. History shows that these Sons of Africa deprived of their language, culture and normal family ties, not to mention what is popularly known today as Human Rights were deprived of the opportunity to develop themselves. One can easily conjure up a picture of the million of dead human beings over a three hundred years period,

the mountains of corpses who never the chance under slavery to learn even to read or write. It is difficult to forgive and impossible to forget how much talent, how much genius, must have gone to waste. But God is Great and Merciful. We have survived. Climbing up from the bottom of the sea of lost opportunity, we are here today. We claim in the name of Justice that descendants of those who have been deprived, should be given the full opportunities of Human Rights and Justice.

Not only did Africa suffer from the loss of her Sons and Daughters but the Caribbean/America and much of the Third World saw these Sons and Daughters struggle against the odds. Up until this day, the economy as well as the psychology and lack of technology have left their marks on our people. We seek now a process of readjustment to remove this disfigurement. Justice demands that the present generation of the Third World inhabitants of the south, in the north-south dichotomy be given relief and their just entitlement.

On the emancipation of slavery several millions of pounds sterling was paid as a settlement, and to whom was it paid! To the slave masters as compensation. They, were being readjusted for loss of property. The slaves whose sinews had helped to build the cities and universities of Britain, France, Spain and other European countries from the sugar, rum, tobacco, and other produce of the soil, waited many years, indeed generations, for their university and their descendants are still waiting for the technology that will help them to enter the 20th century on more equal terms.

Pan-Africanism to a great extent has been blunted by the need for a common denominator on which to write the political interest of the various elements of the African diaspora. There has been largely merely the rejection of racial discrimination and a general resentment against a white ruling minority - that held these groups loosely together. This limitation has severely retarded the drive necessary to alleviate:

- Our failing economy today;
- Our increasing foreign debt today;
- The widening gap of underdevelopment today;
- The outdistancing of technological advancement.

These are all common denominators of clear political concern.

One of our immediate requirements needed now is an aggressive policy of demanding equality in educating black technocrats as a pre-condition for the preparations of our people to enter the 20th century with greater confidence and ability, and equal footing.

Let me boldly attempt the complexities of definition. Pan-Africanism, as history and study will reveal, has meant different things at different times even to such great Scholars as Dr. W. E. B. Dubois and the erudite Leopold Senghor whose "negritude" emphasized the element of racism. Some of these interpretation have consequently set loose emotional argument in full flight but does not effect a logical analysis of the subject, sufficient for it to be pursued as a coherent movement. I would, however, say that it includes the following concepts:

Pan-Africanism can be described as a movement of ideas expressive of cultural unity, political independence and the desire to develop Africa and all peoples of African descent on the basis of equality of rights.

In the heart of this movement, Africa is the real homeland of all those who are aware of their commitment to our fore-fathers. It is because Pan-Africanism stands for the economic, technological, social and political advancement of the whole continent of Africa that I find it easy to marry conceptually the ideas of Justice and Reparations.

May I humbly suggest as another proposal that we utilize this opportunity to analyze study and rationalize the basic theoretical principles of the Pan-African movement. Some 10 years ago, I was in a discussion with certain Commonwealth leaders debating what even then, was not a new idea. It may give an indication of one of the forms Reparations could take. Ever since many political leaders made successive pilgrimages one after another to representatives of the developed world with monotonous regularity, certain features began to demonstrate with the utmost clarity an attitude of mendicancy and deficiencies. The erstwhile masters, at home in London, Paris, or elsewhere, usually were accompanied by carefully selected groups of experts. These specialists provided the resource material for the discussion. They provided all the answers. Our leaders - always the petitioners usually have little to fall back onto for support. We usually had very little other than Justice and emotion on our side. The idea being discussed some 10 years ago was the need for a 3rd World-Think-Tank - a permanent body of carefully trained specialists from among our own people, set up by the establishment in a foundation for research. It would be a resource base to supply our leaders with necessary preparations for their need in such meetings.

The process of the adjustment must take some time, for education, technology or otherwise is not an "instant fix". We are optimistic, however, in the knowledge that even under the heavy pressures of past and present history, the 3rd World has produced example for brilliance among our sons and daughters in every profession. Their achievements have made us proud. Nevertheless, the strain to get there has been great, and unnecessary, and unjust. Today the 3rd World is burdened with foreign debts for which no satisfactory solution has yet evolved. The establishment of such a foundation would be a worthy act expressive of sincerity towards the process of solution of that problem.

A problem to fund such a Research Body could utilize many of our own brilliant sons and daughters graduating annually in the universities of the world with doctorates and degrees in every possible subject. I believe the idea in modified form has arisen at various times. The Ex-President - General Obasanjo - in his forum expresses it. President Nyerere in his South-South Chairmanship has thought of it. Ambassador Salim, the Secretary General of the O. A. U. is aware of it. Chief Emeka Anyaoku, Secretary General of the Commonwealth is admirably poised to project it.

There is yet another approach to finding a remedy of redress in this call for Reparation. There are many precedents from history old and recent in which payments of large sums have been offered to the Jews, the Japanese - Americans, the Germans and others, to expiate injuries meted out to them.

At present not only are we suffering from the backward boomerang of earlier under-development, but we are all saddled by the burden of foreign debt - which is to many countries clearly impossible of repayment. Up to today no satisfactory solution has evolved in tackling this problem globally. I recommend that our common commitment to the just solution of our present dilemma impels us directly to greater efforts of cooperation between governments, institutions and other civic associations to request as a first token of sincerity towards Reparations that the chains represented by Foreign Debts be removed from around our necks. Nigeria could lead this drive on cooperation of governments.

Let me close with the belief that our joint efforts will raise our vision from the plane of patient hope, through a plan of action, and on to the higher dimensions of actual expectation and achievement.