

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Saint Kitts and Nevis



PRESS RELEASE

No: 052/2025

Fourth Session of the UN Permanent Forum on People of African Descent echoes calls for Reparatory Justice

Basseterre, Saint Kitts, April 23, 2025- Basseterre, Saint Kitts, April 23, 2025- The Fourth Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on People of African Descent was held at the UN Headquarters in New York, from 14-17 April 2025. The Session which was organized by the United Nations Human Rights Office was held under the theme, "Africa and People of African Descent: United for Reparatory Justice in the Age of Artificial Intelligence," provided a further platform for global calls for reparations, for those impacted by slavery and colonialism.

The Secretary General of the UN, H.E. Antonio Guterres, in his statement delivered by his Chef de Cabinet, Courtenay Rattray at the Forum's opening ceremony advocated for, "the need for reparatory justice frameworks grounded in international human rights law. Developed with the inclusive and meaningful participation of affected communities. That acknowledges the terrible harms and injustices caused, and their continued manifestations and ramifications."

Thematic discussions and side events were held during the week-long Fourth Session, highlighting the critical issues of reparatory justice, human rights for women and girls of African Descent, policymaking and systematic racism and artificial intelligence and digital justice for people of African descent. The Forum also marked the 10th Anniversary of the unveiling of 'The Ark of Return' a Permanent Memorial at the United Nations dedicated to honouring the victims of slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

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According to the Saint Kitts and Nevis Permanent Representative to the United Nations, H.E. Dr. Mutryce Williams, who participated in several of the events, " The Permanent Forum for People of African Descent continues to play a pivotal role as it relates to elevating the discourse for the urgent need for reparatory justice, and addressing the historical legacies of enslavement, colonialism, apartheid and genocide. As a woman of African descent, and Permanent Representative of a country that has a population comprised of predominantly people of African descent, I join my colleagues in the global call for reparations, for a strengthened partnership between Saint Kitts and Nevis, CARICOM and the African Union in the global reparations' movement, for an intersectional approach to this urgent matter, and most importantly for concrete results on reparations, that is, moving past the dialogue, and negotiating reparations packages with the various entities that benefited from slavery. I also call for the continued support of The Permanent Forum of People of African Descent."

The Permanent Forum of People of African Descent was formally operationalized by UN Resolution 75/314, on 2 August 2021, as a consultative and advisory body to the UN system and the Human Rights Council. It serves as a vital platform for improving the safety and quality of life and livelihoods of people of African descent worldwide.

According to the UN, "The mandate of the Forum includes providing expert advice on addressing racism, contributing to a draft UN declaration on the rights of people of African descent and monitoring progress made during the International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024) and the Second International Decade (2025-2034), as well as coordinating UN efforts to advance justice and development for Afro-descendant communities."
