

A Declaration: Africa, Remember Who You Are

When Spider webs unite, they can tie up a lion (Ethiopian Proverb)

On this **Africa Liberation Day May 25, 2020**, we, as people of faith and conscience, stand together during this COVID-19 crisis to lift up the ideals of Africa's liberation.

Let us recognize and confidently assert the power and dynamism of Africa's people. The origins of the human family lie in Africa, the "cradle of humanity." Africa's great universities, like the University of Timbuktu in Mali dating back to the 12th century, stand as powerful examples of the brilliance, innovation, and genius of African people. Women like Nzingha, fought for the liberation of her people from as early as the 1600's.

Let us look inward and find our gold within. Currently home to over 1.3 billion people, Africa is leapfrogging, thanks to her innovation; from the *Ushahidi* platform to mobile banking perfected by African developers, *now* a much-needed lifeline given COVID-19's economic disruptions. COVID-19 has also spurred a revolution of new technologies—from solar powered hand washing stations *made in* Ghana, to Madagascar's promise of new treatment, and Senegal's test kits that are now saving lives throughout the continent. The global pandemic will continue to limit markets from other continents.

Let us join forces to pursue economic justice now! These advances emerge despite a difficult context. The continent bleeds from resource exploitation, leaving its health systems fragile. Weak governance continues to expose Africa to organized criminal practices by foreign governments and multinationals who skillfully avoid taxes, manipulate prices, and limit opportunities for manufacturing. Africa loses more through illicit outflows to foreign governments and elites, than it gets from aid and foreign direct investment, combined. We assert that Africa's debt has been paid many times over. In fact, the world owes Africa and Africans reparations for the horrors of slavery, colonialism, apartheid, and ongoing resource exploitation. We believe a STRONGER, UNITED Africa and a better world is inevitable.

Let us mobilize domestic resources to make universal healthcare a reality. Economic justice must include quality public healthcare for all. In April 2001, African Union member states agreed to allocate at least 15% of their annual budgets to health. Nearly 2 decades later, most countries have fallen far from the mark. COVID-19 is an opportunity to hit the reset button. We reject the push by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to privatize essential services—including health.

Let us protect the planet and its people and democratize all essential services! We people of African descent have the power to build a better future. We demand full commitment to women and girls as leaders, entrepreneurs, and agents of change. We will not be fully free until we decolonize our minds and maximize the creativity of our youth. We must harness Africa's blessings of sun and wind to power new jobs, grow our own food, and drive a more just economic development model.

Let us honor the sacrifices of our ancestors and demand leadership that puts the interests of the people first. We call upon the African Union, national leaders, faith-based institutions, social movements, civil societies, the diaspora and all people of good will to free ourselves from the shackles of oppression; break from the tutelage of the West and China; and promote accountability at all levels of human interaction.

We stand as a bridge to the blessings of future generations. Let us remain strong—as spider webs united, believing, and living our Creator endowed rights to dignity and justice.

Our Africa Liberation Day 2020 Call to Action – Let us Unite to Liberate Ourselves! – The Future is Ours!

By the Coalition for Africa's Liberation and Restoration (CALAR)

A PRAYER FOR AFRICA RENEWAL: GRATITUDE, REPENTANCE AND COMMITMENT

Thanksgiving

We give thanks to God our Creator for abundant blessings bestowed on Mama Africa and her children, rich fertile lands, mineral resources, diverse plants and animals, and lush tropical climate. We give thanks for the resourcefulness of Africans, for vibrant cultures and peoples. We thank God for the wisdom of our ancestors who recognized that we are custodians of the earth and the importance of family and unity. Your blessings upon us are too numerous to count.

Repentance

We ask for forgiveness for our failure to appreciate God's abundant blessings upon us, to cherish our uniqueness and the distinctive place of Mama Africa in human history; the land of abundance that has sustained most of the world for many millennia and continues to provide vital resources for humanity. Forgive us for rejecting ourselves and the liberators you send to us, our lack of unity, and our contributions to undermining our development. Forgive our leaders for their failures to work for the common good, for mortgaging the heritage of Africans to dishonest exploiters; for embracing policies that cripple Mama Africa and drive her children to perilous ventures in search for greener pastures, drowning in the Mediterranean, trapped in slavery, deprived of their dignity, treated as disposable goods and slaughtered for their organs.

Commitment

We declare the dawn of a new day as we commit ourselves to work as a united family for a better Mama Africa; to celebrate who we are as a people on the continent and in the Diaspora, to cherish our gifts and talents, and to appreciate the many blessings creation has bestowed on us. We commit to looking within to harness our talents and our abundant resources for the integral development of Mama Africa and her children. We commit to mental decolonization and the eradication of the dependency mindset.

Standing on the shoulders of our ancestors, we commit to building a true Pan-African Family where every African man, woman and child feels at home regardless of ethnicity, language, or religion. We commit to deepening our faith in our creator, in our abilities and in each other. We call upon our ancestors to accompany us in this undertaking and may the Spirit of our Creator inspire and guide us. Amen!

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