



SYMPOSIUM OF EPISCOPAL CONFERENCES OF AFRICA AND MADAGASCAR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Faith and Ethical Communities Unite to Champion Reparative Justice for Africans and People of African Descent**

**Addis Ababa, February 25, 2025.**

In alignment with the African Union's (AU) 2025 theme, "*Justice for Africans and People of African Descent through Reparations*," a two-day workshop will be held on February 27-28, 2025, at the Kuriftu Resort African Village and the African Union Commission in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. This initiative aims to address the enduring impacts of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, slavery, and colonization, while promoting healing and reparations for affected communities.

Organized by SECAM (Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar), the AU Catholic Chaplaincy, HWPL (Heavenly Culture, World Peace, Restoration of Light), COPAB (Pan African Conference on Ethics and Bioethics), IAPD-Africa (Interreligious Association for Peace and Development), URI (United Religions Initiative), and other key partners, in collaboration with the Citizens and Diaspora Directorate (CIDO) of the African Union Commission, the workshop will gather AU officials, diplomats, religious leaders, scholars, human rights advocates, and policymakers to advance the AU's reparations agenda.

**The Call for Reparative Justice**

For centuries, Africans and people of African descent have endured the consequences of historical injustices, including economic disenfranchisement, social marginalization, and psychological trauma. The legacies of slavery, colonization, apartheid, and genocide continue to impact communities today. Recognizing this, the AU is dedicated to addressing these issues through comprehensive policies, advocacy, and global engagement.

Ghana, a leader in the reparations movement, has made significant contributions to this cause through initiatives like the 2019 "Year of Return." This workshop aims to build on such efforts by amplifying the voices of faith-based and ethical organizations in the pursuit of justice.

**Workshop Agenda Highlights**

The two-day event will feature a diverse program, including keynote addresses, panel discussions, and faith-based perspectives on reparations.

**On Day 1 (February 27, 2025)**, the workshop will take place at the Kuriftu Resort African Village, beginning with a keynote address by Dr. Rita Bissoonauth, Head of the UNESCO Liaison Office to the African Union Commission (AUC) and Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). This will be followed by panel discussions featuring perspectives from African Traditional Religion, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, along with insights from diaspora and global faith leaders. A special session will focus on the ethical and moral imperatives of reparations, with contributions from HWPL, URI, All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), CIDO, and SECAM. An open forum will provide participants an opportunity for dialogue and policy recommendations, concluding with a dinner hosted by SECAM for all attendees.



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On **Day 2 (February 28, 2025)**, the event will move to the African Union Commission. The agenda will include presentations on transgenerational trauma, genocide, and peace-building initiatives in Africa, as well as discussions on economic reparations, including microfinancing opportunities. International perspectives on advancing justice through reparations will also be explored. The event will conclude with the signing and presentation of the Addis Ababa Declaration on Justice for Africans and People of African Descent Through Reparations, followed by closing remarks and commitments from participating organizations.

**Expected Outcomes**

The workshop seeks to enhance awareness of reparative justice within faith communities and the public. It aims to establish a coalition of faith-based and ethical organizations dedicated to this cause and to develop policy recommendations and an action roadmap in partnership with the African Union. Additionally, a formal commitment document supporting the AU's 2025 reparations theme will be produced as an outcome of the workshop.

**A Unified Call to Action**

This workshop underscores the essential role of faith and ethical communities in shaping public opinion, influencing policy, and fostering reconciliation. By collaborating with the AU and global stakeholders, these organizations can play a transformative role in advancing justice and restitution for Africans and people of African descent.

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