

**Address of the Participants of the "Decolonization: Silent Revolution"  
Conference organized by Baku Initiative Group**

**Date: April 15. 2025**

**Location: United Nations Headquarters in New York**

**Title: Reparations: Confronting the Legacy of Colonialism**

We, the participants of the *Decolonization: Silent Revolution* conference, organized by the Baku Initiative Group (BIG) on April 15, 2025, categorically condemn the enduring structures of colonialism and the continued refusal of colonial powers to take responsibility for their historical crimes. Colonialism—characterized by systemic exploitation, forced labor, cultural and spiritual alienation, and the brutality of slavery—has inflicted irreparable damage on Afro-descendant communities worldwide. These injustices persist through modern forms of economic oppression, cultural destruction, and systemic political marginalization.

The *Decolonization: Silent Revolution* conference, held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, was an urgent call to action. We reject empty rhetoric and demand immediate, concrete reparations. Reparations are not acts of generosity but an overdue debt, rooted in principles of justice, human dignity, and historical accountability.

***Key Considerations***

The colonial regime was not a mere historical event but a violent, systematic aggression that destroyed civilizations, plundered resources, and enslaved entire populations. The forced displacement, economic subjugation, and human exploitation under colonialism created structural inequalities that persist today. The flagrant examples of these consequences are observed in the countries which are still under the colonial domination of France and Netherlands such as Guadeloupe, Martinique, French Guiana, Reunion, Comorian Island Mayotte, Bonaire, Sint Maarten and others. Reparations are not an option—they are an inherent obligation tied to decolonization. The exploitative economic structures imposed under colonial

rule continue to enrich colonial powers while impoverishing Afro-descendant populations. The global economic system remains rigged in favor of the colonizers. Reparations must include the full redistribution of stolen wealth, the return of expropriated lands, and the dismantling of neocolonial economic policies that perpetuate dependency and exploitation. The deliberate erasure of African languages, traditions, spirituality, and cultural identities was an act of war against entire civilizations. The theft of cultural and spiritual artifacts, and the destruction of indigenous knowledge must be rectified through immediate repatriation and institutional investment in cultural resurgence. Reparations must guarantee the complete political emancipation of these communities, ensuring representation, decision-making authority, and institutional power. The crimes of colonialism—namely genocide, enslavement, and systemic oppression—are crimes against humanity. Colonial powers must publicly acknowledge their guilt, provide full transparency regarding their colonial crimes, and establish legally binding mechanisms to compensate affected communities. Any refusal to comply should be accompanied by international sanctions and diplomatic consequences.

### ***Call for Immediate Action***

We, the participants of the *Decolonization: Silent Revolution* conference, demand the following immediate actions from the international community:

- To take the necessary steps to the reparations be paid by the colonial powers. This means direct financial compensation, the return of stolen lands, significant investments in education and healthcare, and the creation of economic justice funds to sustainably empower Afro-descendant communities.
- The return of stolen cultural and spiritual artifacts is not up for debate—it is a right. Any institution, government, or private collector holding looted heritage must be compelled to return it, with legal penalties for non-compliance.
- Afro-descendant cultures must be protected by strict international laws. Reparations cannot be empty gestures, memorial acts, or symbolic apologies. The economic crimes of colonialism must be fully addressed, illegitimate debts must be canceled and repaid, when reimbursed, fair trade policies must be implemented, and stolen wealth must be fully refunded.

- Legal systems must be enforced to hold colonial powers accountable. Afro-descendant communities must no longer be excluded from power. They must have full representation in global institutions, national governments, and decision-making bodies.

The time for action is now. Reparations are not charity, they are justice. The world must hold colonial powers accountable.

At the end we would like to take this opportunity to extend our sincere gratitude to the Baku Initiative Group for organizing this conference and providing a platform to advance the urgent call for justice, reparations and decolonization heard.