STATEMENT OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS
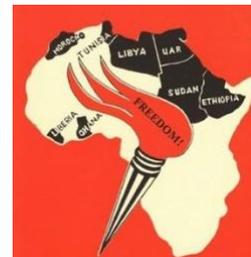
All-African Peoples' Conference
Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon, Accra
05 – 08 December 2018
Theme: 'Revisiting the 1958 All-African Peoples' Conference - Towards the Unfinished business of Liberation and Transformation'

PREAMBLE

We, the over 300 pan-Africanist students, academics, public intellectuals, activists, trade unionists, cultural workers and working peoples from 34 countries including Algeria, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, France, Gambia, Ghana, Haiti, India, Jamaica, Japan, Lebanon, Namibia, Nigeria, Kenya, Saharawi, Sierra Leone, South Africa, St. Lucia, Tanzania, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, United Kingdom, United States of America, Virgin Islands and Zimbabwe, on four continents (Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe), recently participated in the 60th Anniversary of the All-African Peoples' Conference at the University of Ghana, Accra, from 5th to 8th December 2018.

We deliberated over the four days in plenary and parallel sessions, informal caucuses, cultural events and heard two keynote speeches. We also convened in six thematic groups to identify issues and recommendation for an official statement on the 60th Anniversary commemoration. The outcome of these deliberations, which has been the subject of further consultations and revisions is contained in this Statement.

We recognised the quagmire of immiseration plaguing the African masses as a result of neo-colonialism, the contemporary policy of imperialism. We noted the ideological and policy dominance of neo-liberal capitalism and the oppressive economic and social policies that have impoverished African populations and engendered perennial warfare. We recognised the sham independence, balkanization, and debilitating borders inherited from the colonial era that have been counter-productive to the forces of African liberation, unity, and social transformation. We noted our keen awareness of the environmental deterioration that has accompanied capitalist operations and exacerbated global warming to the detriment of humanity. We expressed dismay that the problems that bedevilled Africa at the time of the first All-African People's Conference of 1958 still afflict Africans throughout the planet.

Our conference prioritised the voices and concerns of the youth, the working peoples, and the oppressed women of Africa, recognising that these social forces are at the forefront of struggles to deal with the unfinished business of the All-African People's Conference of 1958. Our collective vision to end the oppression of African women, the working peoples, and youth goes hand in hand with the need to organize these sectors of Africa's population and thereby improve their self-conscious agency and the quality of their lives.

We also took note of the need to inculcate in all Africans the Pan-African historical consciousness as an essential step in the decolonizing of minds, the political remobilization and the repair of the lives of all Africa's peoples. We also recognised the need to illuminate the historic debt owed to African people by imperialist usurpers and capitalist exploiters. We vowed to use the arts and new tools of political mobilization and education for the emancipation of Africans and the transformation of Africa.

We are also critical of the lethargic performance of the current leadership of the African Union with respect to addressing the challenges facing global Africa. This has allowed our states to welcome foreign military bases and intrusions of former colonial powers in the affairs of independent African states. It is our contention that electing progressive leaders in Africa will strengthen the AU in the long run, just as a core group of leaders within the Organization of African Unity was able to forge ahead with the OAU Liberation Committee that spearheaded the fight against apartheid.

Our resolve to rectify all the challenges facing Global Africa today is reflected in this statement which we have issued to guide further deliberation and action on the issues we have prioritised.

ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1.   On Pan Africanism Today, Tomorrow and Building a New Politics of Substantive Democracy and Security,

We note the following as matters of concern:

- the process of decolonisation is incomplete as there are African territories still under colonial rule;
- the dominant political systems in Africa today are based on a Euro-American hegemonic construct, largely imposed through colonial rule and post-colonial control, incompatible with some key African beliefs, cosmologies and values and unable to deliver substantive democracy to the peoples of Africa;
- elite capture and control of processes and institutions of governance have resulted in politics and practice in many African countries that are exclusive, non-representative, and undemocratic;
- weak economic institutions that are unable to ensure equality and equity or effectively enforce regulatory mechanisms designed to protect African economies from exploitation and natural resource pillage;
- weak and unrepresentative political parties that lack Pan-Africanist orientation;
- ossified, colonially-created national borders that inhibit mobility and freedom of movement within Africa;
- official Pan-African organizations that are not sufficiently reflective of Pan-Africanism or aspirations of the majority of African peoples at home and abroad;
- ongoing cleavages and very minimal interactions amongst the peoples of Global Africa (viz. continental and diasporic Africa) persist;
- the underutilization of the mobilizing potential of the arts and newly emerging communications technologies and social media.

We commit to addressing these issues, and make the following key recommendations:

- Global Africans immediately end any and all existing forms of formal colonial rule of African peoples. Specifically, we call for the end of the colonial control of the Western Sahara by the government of Morocco;
- Global Africa creates systems of inclusive democracy that address issues of representation, equity and fairness for all groups in Global Africa and reflect the spirit and ideals of Pan-African emancipation;
- the dominant elite political class must be replaced by formations that represent and empower diverse social groups (farmers, peasants, youth, precariat, labour, traders, cultural workers etc.) in all branches of government in Africa;
- Global Africans should support the formation of political parties undergirded by Pan-African ideals, goals, and objectives;

- serious and concrete steps must be taken to dismantle colonial borders created during and after the Berlin Conference of 1884/85;
- the decision to institute an AU Passport should be expedited and implemented fully in the shortest possible time. The eligibility criteria for passports should include the entire Global African family, to facilitate visits to and movement within Africa at minimal cost;
- development, control, ownership and use of facilitative technology and media, including newly emerging technologies and social media, should be encouraged;
- there is urgent need to consolidate the use of local languages on social media to deepen and widen the space of interaction within Global Africa;
- policies and practices must be put in place to regulate the control and ownership of information and communications media to promote smooth interaction amongst Africans;
- African organizations must intensify support for the #Black Lives Matter Movement and other continental and global struggles.

2. On Pan-African Epistemologies for Knowledge Production,

We note the following as matters of concern:

- Africa centred epistemologies (how we know what we know), that is, the frameworks and methodologies for how we know, discover, and theorize, are necessary for the production and validation of knowledge that empowers;
- knowledge is power and knowledge is ideological, thus institutions that transmit knowledge should be recognised as instruments of power and locations of political struggles;
- no 'knowledge products' are truthful in an absolute sense. Africans have been wilfully miseducated by the imperialists to denigrate indigenous knowledge. Their collective intellectual capabilities have been undermined to facilitate subjugation and marginalization;
- knowledge production in African universities is characterised by exclusionary class, race and gender politics and elitism. This is because many African universities are based on the Western European model which is different from earlier models used in Africa;
- in African universities today, the complex disciplinary organization of knowledge has proved unconducive to addressing Africa's pressing development challenges;
- the African intelligentsia have been perpetuating colonial knowledge and privileging Western perspectives on the world;
- only with the end of colonial rule did it become possible to establish new schools of history that better reflected the perspective and interests of African peoples such as the Dakar School, the Dar es Salaam School and the Ibadan School. Kwame Nkrumah was instrumental in the establishment of the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana to spearhead an intellectual revolution to accompany Africa's social revolution. All these initiatives are struggling against an ever-stronger tide of Western hegemonic scholarship on Africa.

We commit to addressing these issues, and make the following key recommendations:

- Global Africans should be able to access the knowledge and self-knowledge that empowers generations. Such knowledge should be taught at the earliest grade levels possible in Africa;
- there is the great need to democratize and decolonise knowledge production in Africa beyond the walls of Western style universities;
- Global Africans need to create independent learning institutions that are Pan-African in content and context;
- Global Africans develop (an) African language(s) that can be used across Africa, and include non-verbal languages such as dance to communicate;
- academic scholarship should be joined with civic activism. This means that our institutions and struggles will include Pan-Africanist scholars and activists working together;

- Global Africans create curricula that enhances our collective Pan-African personality; and work with these curricula in a diversity of spaces, both within and outside the formal education systems;
- Pan-African knowledge products should utilize multimedia productions;
- Pan-African knowledge producers study and understand policy processes and identify and engage with the perspectives and fears of policy makers to ensure the influence of African centred scholarship on policy processes, policies and outcomes;
- the All-African Peoples' Conference be organised at shorter intervals of time (perhaps every two years).

3. On Ending Imperialist Domination and Transforming Africa's Economies,

We note the following as matters of concern:

- Africa's economies are structurally dependent on the production and export of raw material commodities which feed industrial production, job creation and incomes in other economies. Africa retains the negative environmental and social burdens of this type of production;
- internally, the most important sectors of Africa's economies are dominated by Western transnational capital. In spite of current anxieties across Africa, China does not yet control any economic sector in Africa even as its influence is increasing rapidly;
- African states act as protectors and promoters of the rights of foreign investors. Currently bilateral investment treaties (BITs) and international investment agreements (IIAs) offer foreign companies excessive rights with little, if any obligations;
- Africa's ruling elites are largely comfortable overseeing realities within which there is widespread unemployment, a crisis of livelihoods in rural areas, and urbanization amidst deindustrialization. As a result, there are growing inequalities – class, gender, generational and regional – across Africa;
- increasingly precarious working conditions are undermining the livelihoods of workers in the 'informal' economy. This together with increasing unemployment and a rise in the number of youth who have never been in formal employment has resulted in deteriorating living conditions in many African countries.

We commit to addressing these issues, and make the following key recommendations:

- the stemming of and return of illicit outflows of capital from Africa;
- the economic systems of African countries be redesigned and directed towards facilitating the self-reliance and self-sufficiency of African states and their peoples;
- the peoples of Africa reclaim the African state to ensure the domestication of local capital and to direct local capital and resources to domestic industrialization to serve the interests of the working people of Africa;
- the process of domestic industrialisation must be directed towards serving local needs for goods and services and the development of local markets so as to ensure food sovereignty, sustainable production and the dignity of livelihoods;
- domestic industrialisation aimed towards stimulating local production be directed towards education, health, housing, transportation and infrastructure, as well as industries that are beneficial to the people at large;
- Global Africans develop and disseminate analysis that promotes the understanding that neoliberalism and the neoliberal economic system are anti-people, anti-solidarity, anti-collective, and bolstered by the expansion of debt and numerous debt cycles which perpetuate crisis and undermine the sovereignty and autonomy of African states as well as their control of their political economy;
- African economies need effective trade barriers and protections;

- African states need to promote genuine custodianship of natural resources, foster democratic decentralization and ensure that any economic activity is ecologically sustainable;
- African states develop mechanisms which account for the economic 'value-added' of migrants and develop strategic backwards linkages with both the historic and contemporary diaspora communities;
- Global Africans rein in and dismantle the power over African economies of foreign states, financial capital, transnational corporations (TNCs) and other corporate forms and place restraints on the self-aggrandizement, state capture and corruption of local elite;
- African states redesign banking systems to create a peoples-centred banking system based on financial cooperatives such as credit unions as an important model to direct people's resources and generate projects that are paid, designed and controlled by peoples' currency and agency;
- African states reimagine an economic system based on a partnership between state and cooperative enterprises across all sectors;
- Global Africans recognise and actualise the centrality of the state with regards to transforming Africa's economies;
- promoting development strategies rooted in Pan-Africanism and regional integration on the basis of the recognition that most African economies are too small and weak to carry out sustainable transformation, is imperative.

4. On Climate Change and Environmental Repair,

We note the following as matters of concern:

- a global capitalist order, in which Africa is inundated with capitalist production that is profit motivated has contributed significantly to deforestation and forest degradation;
- new destructive visions of nature have infiltrated and destroyed the indigenous African relationship with nature;
- indigenous institutions and values considered nature to be sacred. The current conception of nature as dualistic and separate from humans, which has led to environmentally unsustainable production practices, has been imposed on Africans;
- unsustainable mineral exploitation dominated by foreign firms, rips Africa of its natural resources, while industrial waste destroys rivers and streams;
- Africans themselves play a role in environmental destruction that contributes to global warming. Practices such as littering of plastics and other waste material is a major challenge for most of Africa's natural environments;
- there is a lack of sensitisation on the destructive effects of illegal mining on the natural environment in Africa.

We commit to addressing these issues, and make the following key recommendations:

- Global Africans must be committed to planting and caring for trees. In this regard, it is especially important that indigenous trees be preserved;
- Africans must return to indigenous relationships with nature where nature is not a commodity to be exploited for human benefit but integral to humanity in a sustainable manner; A Pan-African vision is needed in this respect;
- the full involvement of communities in the management of nature is imperative, and communities must be primary beneficiaries of resources from nature;
- information on climate change and global warming must be made available to communities to guide actions of people;

- African governments should place more land in the hands of local farmers and encourage sustainable farming practices to encourage food sovereignty and ecological conservation;
- increased sensitization of the harmful effects of certain local practices on lands and forests is vital to efforts at reducing global warming;
- African regional bodies, governments, and communities should hold the private sector responsible and task it through stringent regulations to repair and restore the environments destroyed through the activities of individual corporate entities;
- universities in Africa need to increase research on desalination of sea water to increase provision of water for agriculture and domestic consumption, especially in drier regions of the continent, to reduce pressure on and degradation of in-land water bodies;
- increase investments in the recycling of by-products to reduce waste, and encourage the reduction in wasteful consumption;
- climate change be recognised as an important economic issue.

5. On Restorative and Reparative Justice,

We note the following as matters of concern:

- the current discourses on reparations and restorative justice are limited to what others can do for Global Africa but this should extend to what we can do for ourselves as Africans on the continent and Africans in the diaspora. We cannot wait for external reparations before we repair ourselves and our environment;
- there is need for a New paradigm to understand the changed economic situation after 1492 and for the interpretation of African history for the cause of reparative justice;
- the use of a positivist legal framework in explaining justice in Africa is inimical to the cause of reparative and restorative justice;
- the UN Conference Against Racism of 2011 has recognised slavery as a crime against humanity. Most African States have not incorporated this reality into their current international relations policies. In this respect, institutional failure in Africa is the cause of current forms of slavery and human trafficking in Africa. We condemn all forms of modern slavery including the trafficking of human bodies arising out of the institutional failure on the African continent;
- debates about the issue of reparations are critical to the effort to clarify and implement the outcomes of the World Conference Against Racism (WCAR) Program of Action;
- it is important to recognise that reparations are not necessarily about money, but mainly about the dignity of the African.

We commit to addressing these issues, and make the following key recommendations:

- push for the establishment of a global education program on reparative and restorative justice in the context of WCAR outcomes to assist in the clarification and identification of perpetrators in both the trans-Atlantic slave trade and trans-Sahara slave trade;
- organise to secure recognition of the historic ecological debt and reparations owed to Africa's people for slavery and colonial plunder;
- an All-African dialogue on reparations be established. This dialogue should be modelled on the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission and should allow all states and civil society groups in Global Africa the opportunity to share experiences, feelings and to seek healing for our collective roles in the African slave trade both as victims and perpetrators;
- there must be clarity on the recipients of reparations for Africa – survivors of the enslaved outside Africa and Africans on the continent;

- there must be the mandatory inclusion in the curricula in Global African secondary and tertiary education systems, compulsory courses on the history of Africa and the African diaspora. This curriculum change is urgent to reverse the current dominant view that Africans were enslaved to be Christianised and modernized;
- African, Caribbean, and other-African majority states in other parts of Global African should engage in self-reparation particularly in the following areas: resource and land reclamation and restoration, correction of education systems, return of lost populations, removal of the legacies of the colonial system including images, nationalisation of African assets in the name of the working people, and correction of legal frameworks in Africa;
- there must be a systematic effort to ensure the return of cultural artefacts taken from Africa during the colonial period and after;
- Global Africans show solidarity with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and African states support CARICOM's ten-point plan and the Global Africa Congress' twelve points plan and set-up an AU Commission on Reparations to advance the cause of reparations and restorative justice;
- Global Africans support the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign against the State of Israel until this state recognizes the social and political rights of the Palestinian peoples;
- universal African citizenship and free movement of African labour across Global Africa must be realised to curtail and stop modern forms of enslavement and trafficking of Africans;
- awareness, analysis, and action are required for social change. Our patience in going through the process will lead to a more likely successful outcome in the struggle for reparation and restoration.

6.   On Youth, Workers, Progressive Women, and Africa's Transformation,

We note the following as matters of concern:

- Africa is blessed with a youthful population. However, there is much sustained work to be done to ensure that the potential of Africa's youth is fully realized for the benefit of all the peoples of Africa;
- unemployment and underemployment are currently complicating the full inclusion of the youth in efforts to achieve the realisation of their potentials;
- African women and girls continue to suffer physical and psychological violence, marginalisation and discrimination, which threaten the full realisation of their personhood and citizenship; LGBTIQ persons - men and women - are at particular risk in this connection;
- the persistence of certain cultural practices and patriarchal institutions in state and civil society normalise, endorse, encourage and perpetuate gender inequalities across Global Africa. Institutions and processes of socialisation often teach rigid gender roles that emphasise the inferiority and subordination of girls and women to males, thus perpetuating blatant inequity and inequality between men and women in all realms – economic, cultural, social and political;
- violence and discrimination against women are often carried out with impunity, facilitated by a patriarchal and increasingly militarised states, and compounded by the absence or collapse of critical social services and the privatisation of public goods;
- African workers have lost many of the victories of an earlier era such as the rights to collective bargaining, the rights to decent wages, the rights to a decent quality of life;
- only the strengthening of the organisations of working peoples, women and the youth across borders, economic sectors and industries can strengthen the peoples of Africa.

We commit to addressing these issues, and make the following key recommendations:

- Global Africans value and harness the creativity and innovations of the youth, recognising them as an integral part of bringing our collective vision into fruition;
- those privileged with positions of leadership fully appreciate and actively fulfil their responsibilities in preparing, including and providing for youth in every aspect of work;
- Global Africans recognize, in particular, the need for holistic African-centred education systems and spaces, which embrace the rich diversity of our past and present realities and experiences as African people, and which prepare our children and youth to be the agents of Africa's transformation into the future that we envision for ourselves;
- Global Africans nurture trans-border and trans-sector youth movements, including those working with particular constituencies e.g. students, professional associations, trade unions and other organisations of working people;
- different movements working towards Africa's transformation must be linked up, catalysing and facilitating the organising across borders of all kinds, including across the Continent and Diaspora to make these separate initiatives one emancipative movement that recognises and embraces diversity and inclusivity within the collective vision for a united, strong, Africa.
- children and youth must be at the heart of these movements, and be provided with appropriate spaces and processes for their full inclusion, regardless of their abilities, location, or place in society;
- women and girls must be welcomed as active, integral and full members in the pan-Africanist emancipatory movements, and efforts made to bring in and create support structures as appropriate for all those who have been historically excluded or marginalised in our movements, such as rural women and LGBTIQ persons;
- Global Africans realise, respect and enforce women's full political, social, cultural and economic rights under appropriate legal and policy frameworks;
- African states create comprehensive social services systems that provide appropriate and holistic systems of support for all girls and women, and pay attention to the unique needs of non-traditional family units, such as those headed by single women, as well as those particularly at risk in contexts where their safety and security is compromised;
- all individuals, institutions and governments committing violence against African peoples, and particularly against all girls and women be held accountable;
- Global Africans find, document, celebrate and amplify our feminist ancestors and recuperate women's histories of struggle and enduring economic, social and political contributions to the African experience.

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