

DECLARATION ON THE INITIATIVE OF ERECTING A PERMANENT MEMORIAL IN HONOUR OF THE VICTIMS OF SLAVERY AND THE TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE

The Heads of State and Government of the Latin America and the Caribbean States gathered in Costa Rica, on the occasion of the III Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), on January, 28th and 29th, 2015;

Recalling the tragedy and horrors of the inhuman system of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, which uprooted from their homes 15 to 20 million men, women and children, who were shipped and traded as cargo to the Americas, receiving an inhuman, unfair and despicable treatment and subjected to torture, abuse and forced labour;

Underscoring that Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade are of the gravest crimes against humanity, the consequences of which are still present in society, and have neither been adequately researched nor recognized;

Welcome the formation of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Reparations Commission, and notes its ongoing work to define the issues and challenges arising from the centuries-long Atlantic slave trade and the genocide committed against indigenous populations, as well as the key areas identified by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Reparations Commission: chronic diseases, education, cultural deprivation, psychological trauma and scientific and technological backwardness;

Recalling United Nations resolution 68/237 on 23 December 2013 by which, it proclaimed the International Decade for People of African Descent from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2024, as well as United Nations resolution 69/19 on November 21 2014 “Permanent memorial to and remembrance of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade”;

Recognizing the importance of educating present and future generations about the causes, consequences and lessons of Slavery in ensuring that this dark period in human history is never repeated;

Welcoming the increased attention that the Permanent Memorial Initiative at the United Nations and its associated activities have brought to the issue of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade:

1. Endorse the initiative to erect at a place of prominence and accessibility at the United Nations Headquarters, a permanent memorial in honour of the victims of Slavery and Transatlantic Slave Trade;
2. Recalls the establishment of a trust fund account for the Permanent Memorial, in the United Nations Trust Fund for Partnerships — Permanent Memorial, administered by the United Nations Office for Partnerships, and notes the current status of contributions to the Trust Fund;
3. Expresses deep appreciation to those Member States, which have contributed to the Permanent Memorial Initiative;

4. Encourage those States that have not yet done so, to make a contribution to the Fund established for the Permanent Memorial;
5. Commit to ensuring that such a heinous system is never allowed to recur, and in this regard, further commit to support the completion of the Permanent Memorial Initiative.

Belén, Costa Rica, January 29th, 2015