

Declaration of Protest to the
2007 Commemoration of the
Bicentenary of the British
Parliamentary Abolition
of the Transatlantic Slave Trade

The Ligali Organisation
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This document of protest represents the concerns of a coalition of British organisations and institutions opposed to the intent and proposed format of the 2007 bicentenary commemorations planned to mark the 1807 British Parliamentary Abolition of the Transatlantic slave trade. It also proposes the institutionalisation and government support for a nationwide annual African Remembrance Day followed by a week of supporting commemorative events.

Introduction

The purpose of any commemorative event related to the fight against injustice is to remember and pay tribute to those who suffered and fought under unjust and oppressive systems. The focus is often to reflect on and learn from the lessons of history and honour the memories of the oppressed and not the oppressors.

For this reason, the continuing focus on the commemoration of the 1807 British Parliamentary abolition of the uncivilised and immoral enslavement of African people does a great disservice to the memory of over a million African people who remained enslaved for over thirty years by British slavers following the official parliamentary abolition.

The subsequent political apathy following the 1807 declaration exposed the hypocrisy of the British government and the European abolitionists who called for the gradual emancipation of African people. It was not until after two British parliamentary committees on enslavement that the state slowly moved towards the conclusion that;

‘if the British government didn’t bring an end to slavery in the colonies peaceably, then those [Caribbean] islands would soon be drenched in [slavers] blood, [because] the slaves would in the end emancipate themselves’ – *Henry Bleby*

In February 1833, a Bill went before a reformed House of Commons which supported emancipation. Unsurprisingly, it took another five years, until 31 July 1838, before captive African people were ‘legally’ freed. By that time, £20 million had been paid in compensation, not to the captured Africans and their families, but to the British slavers in the Caribbean to reimburse them for any loss of earnings. Yet at the time even this sum was deemed to be below the ‘market value’ of the enslaved Africans.

To commemorate the instigators of one of the most heinous crimes against humanity for their decision to stop their criminal and immoral activity is not an action that African people can or should commemorate, just as an abuse victim should not be expected to commemorate the day their abuser decided to abstain from their depraved actions.

Summary of primary objections

Objection 1

A commemorative focus on the works of European abolitionists will reassert the historic falsehood that African people were the passive recipients of emancipation. This is widely acknowledged as a complete fabrication. Further, it perpetuates the myth that the European abolitionist movement was solely motivated by moral integrity. The reality is that their movement was motivated by fear of retribution from God and the rebellion of African people.

The focus on the year 1807 also ignores the fact that it was only the enslavement of more African people via shipping trade that was abolished and not enslavement itself. Existing Africans held by slavers were not released from their state of enforced labour. There has been no formal apology to African people from the British government, who continue to maintain their offensive stance that the exploitation of African people was 'legal'. It is inappropriate and insensitive to expect the African British community to support an event which seeks to revere the very same institutions that forcibly enslaved our ancestors and refuse to accept such actions as a very obvious crime against humanity.

In light of the British governments reluctance to commemorate and honour the millions of African people who were lost through their inhumane actions and the subsequent revolutionary fights for self determination, the African British community will not support the British government for the political act of changing its mind about the abhorrent practice which Britain industrialised, 'legitimised', maintained and acquired the majority of its economic wealth from. To do so would be akin to expecting the Jewish community to commemorate the actions of Nazi Germany for deciding to dismantle its gas chambers.

Objection 2

William Wilberforce and Thomas Jefferson are often lauded as the heroes of the abolitionist movement. This myopic eurocentric propagation ignores the fact that many European abolitionists themselves held deep-seated racist opinion and were motivated to prevent the future capture of African people by a Christian belief that the persistent African resistance to forced enslavement would eventually result in the violent and revolutionary overthrow of their own people.

The motivation and risks faced by African abolitionists were entirely different from their European counterparts. To begin with, no African British abolitionist held or had held captured African people for the purpose of enslavement and all called for the immediate end to this practice along with an end to lynching, rape, racial segregation and discrimination. In contrast, many non African abolitionists, several of whom were also slavers, called for a staggered end to the exploitation of enslaved Africans in order that the financial loss to slavers could be minimised. Some of them also held the view that African people were incapable of handling their own freedom.

Objection 3

The image featured on the seal of the Society for the Abolition of Slavery, designed by Josiah Wedgwood, depicts an African man on his knees, hands raised and begging for his liberty. A similar image accompanies the famous poem 'The negro woman's appeal to her white sisters' by Richard Barrett, 1850. His publication depicts an African woman begging on her knees proclaiming 'this book tell man not to be cruel. Oh! that massa would read this book'. These images and the thought processes behind them are typical examples of the arrogant nature of those European abolitionists campaigning for the gradual emancipation of African people. It fails to promote the proactive African resistance to enslavement and instead depicts African people as passive recipients of European charity and incapable of self determination.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why can't African people just galvanise behind the spirit of the abolitionist movement?

The achievements of the European abolitionist movement were significant but the main proponents compromised its integrity. Thomas Jefferson, the father of the US movement was a racist, who not only held African people captive but was also responsible for the prolonged sexual abuse and subsequent impregnation of Sally Hemings, who became his possession from the age of fourteen. The father of the British movement, William Wilberforce, did not advocate the immediate and total end of African enslavement until pressured by alternative movements. His self appointment as the movement's champion and refusal to engage with the leading African British abolitionists Olaudah Equiano and Mary Prince meant that the African voice was left out of the key decisions he made on behalf of African people.

Why shouldn't we focus on the end of enslavement?

African people can not focus on the supposed end of enslavement for the same reason that the Jewish Holocaust commemorations do not focus on the abolition of concentration camps. The purpose of any commemoration should not be to focus on the victim status of the oppressed whilst elevating the notoriety of the instigators and architects of their sufferance.

Shouldn't we take advantage of and replicate the spirit of the 2005 Make Poverty History and Live 8 campaigns?

No. The simple truth is that despite the carefully constructed press releases, both campaigns failed to achieve their objectives. The principle tenet of the deal agreed by the G8 leaders at Gleneagles had been decided a month before the Live 8 concerts. In short, the concerts and conference were nothing but superfluous diversions to give the illusion of the existence of public influence on decisions that had already been made to the benefit of the West and the detriment of African people and nations.

The leaders of the campaigns failed their supporters and compromised the integrity of the anti poverty movement by not explaining this obvious point. This reluctance or perhaps liberal naivety is a result of campaign leaders working too closely with the same people responsible for maintaining the impoverished socio-economic climate in Africa. The total absence of authentic African voices as *the* legitimate advocates for Africa instead of the hand picked team compromising the Commission for Africa alongside and the plethora of well meaning media personalities meant that the deals brokered did not have the unequivocal backing of the very people it was meant to help. The final decision to 'gradually' tackle poverty in Africa is wrong and moral campaigners such as Bono and Bob Geldof should have condemned it but predictably failed to do so.

It took the abolitionists over three hundred years before they chose to act. Similarly, G8 leaders chose to defer completion of action against poverty till 2015. The heart of any revolutionary movement seeking equality and social justice must be based on non racist ideology. The stalling tactics integrated into this recent G8 deal would not have been

accepted if the child victims of this historic injustice were European. Geldof and Bono destroyed the credibility of the Make Poverty History movement when they decided to publicly endorse the G8 communiqué and subscribe to a 'Making Poverty History Eventually' approach. Their actions bear a striking similarity to that of Thomas Jefferson and Wilber Wilberforce in the support for a gradual, rather than immediate emancipation. As a result, the Emancipation Proclamation made by the American President, Abraham Lincoln, in 1863 did not actually free or empower any captive Africans until many years later, neither did the much lauded British 1807 declaration.

The indisputable and historically proven reality is that this gradual approach is primarily to the benefit of Europeans who profited from the barbaric enslavement of African people that spanned centuries and continue to benefit from the unjust and inhumane political, cultural and economic exploitation of Africa that result in millions of African people living under the cloud of poverty and economic inequality.

How can Europeans help rebuild a trust with African communities?

Contrary to popular belief, African people do not mistrust Europeans simply because of their ethnicity. Many mistrust them because of their collective past which exposes an ongoing history of racism fuelled aggression aimed at maintaining ill-gotten economic wealth. All European's inherit a legacy of socio-political power at birth. African people are aware of the historic unwillingness of Europeans to use this inherited power to challenge racism and seek true equality and social justice for anyone who is not European. Even when a European practices silence or inaction, he or she is purposefully maintaining a racial hierarchy based on capitalist and racist ideologies that put them at the top and African people at the bottom.

To gain the trust of African communities it is essential that Europeans work in partnership with African people to become authentic advocates of African affairs. This means listening to a diverse range of African people, rather than making assumptions based on existing media fuelled myths and stereotypes. It is also worth noting that not all African voices are authentic. Some African people have been taught to reject their own cultural backgrounds and heritage, lured by the promise of social and economic advancement. Unfortunately, the British media will only give publicity to an elite African minority whose compromised ideology suits their own agenda. To reverse this damage, it becomes necessary for honest Europeans to work to discover an oppressed and largely voiceless African majority. Once that has been done, those privileged with access to the media must use that advantage to speak up on issues affecting African people alongside us and not as in the case of Geldof... instead of us.

How can someone who is not African help with the fight for social justice and equality?

The answer to this question is simple. It requires that an individual honestly confronts any inhabiting conscious and subconscious prejudices that they may have. Secondly, they must be prepared to resign and eventually challenge any excess personal advantages gained by their inherited power. This does not simply mean literally relinquishing inherited wealth earned from oppressive regimes for example (although this would certainly be a positive move).

There is a famous quote which reads ‘All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good people do nothing’. Silence begets complicity and the perpetration of injustice. So in reality, relinquishing such power would mean actively engaging with campaigns and protests against racist institutions and practices. Finally, they must give shoulder to shoulder support, such as that afforded to the African American civil rights campaigner Dr Martin Luther King, to African led initiatives such as the call for the institutionalisation of a national day of African Remembrance as a replacement for the proposed 1807 commemorations.

Why African Remembrance Day?

In Britain, we currently nationally celebrate an annual Moth Day, Sleep Day, VE Day, Valentines Day, Poetry day and even a Wrong Trousers day based on an animation about a dog and his owner. Yet perversely, there is still no British recognition of an African Remembrance day despite support for the event across the Continent, Caribbean and Americas. As a result of this very conscious reluctance, the full details of Britain’s participation in the African Holocaust remain largely unknown. Other than a superficial knowledge about ‘slavery’, the British public are not educated about the legacy of Britain and Europe’s global enslavement and colonising regimes and their affect on Africans on the Continent and in the Diaspora today. This ignorance is what fuels the rampant racism and anti African sentiment that is rife in British culture. An annual day of African Remembrance supported by a week of events dedicated to remembering those African ancestors who have fought and died for self-determination, justice and social revolution and the African people and culture lost through enslavement, colonialism and racism would help reverse this dangerous trend of ignorance.

Declaration

We will not support and will actively campaign against any commemorative events themed around the actions of a eurocentric abolitionist movement until;

- The British government makes a formal apology for its leading role in the institutionalisation of the forced enslavement and commercial exploitation of African people.
- The British government recognises and sanctions local government support for a national African Remembrance day (currently marked in August) incorporating a national call for three minutes silence at 3pm.

Recommendations

1. We propose and call for community, institutional, organisational and government support for an annual African Remembrance Day with a week of supporting events.
2. To form a more rounded and factual picture of the history of enslavement, related rebellions and abolitionist movements, we propose the following recommendations to be part of an immediate change to the current academic and institutional¹ portrayal of this era of history. It should also be a foundation for any related events during the week of events supporting and promoting African Remembrance Day.
 - To redress the mass distortion to history that has written out the pro-active actions of African resistance movements it is imperative that all discussions on abolitionists and enslavement are prefaced with a substantive discourse on the roles of famous African anti-enslavement activists and abolitionists such as Olaudah Equiano, Mary Prince, Quobna Ottobah Cugoana, Harriet Tubman, Henry Highland Garnet, Sojourner Truth, Nat Turner, William and Ellen Craft, Solomon Northrup, Zombi of the Quilombo dos Palmares and the Maroons of Jamaica to name but a few.
 - There is a need to include an analysis explaining Britain's grave socio-political difficulties maintaining morale and military strength after learning of the frequent African uprisings in Haiti led by Toussaint L'Ouverture leading to the Haitian revolution in 1791 which by 1803 had driven European slavers out of Haiti.
 - A programme documenting the nature of the enslavement process and the emotional, cultural and physical repercussions for African people. This should crucially include the story of the Middle Passage and the demoralising, dehumanising practices on plantations.

¹ *Institutions include, but are not limited to, public galleries, museums, schools, colleges and local councils*

- Awareness must be raised about the legacy of enslavement affecting African people in the Diaspora (African British, African Caribbean, African American, African Brazilian etc) and on the great Continent of Africa.
 - A programme centered on the fight for reparations for the injustices of European enslavement of African people.
 - An awareness and analysis of the collapse of The African Adventurers Company and the untold history of the Royal Africa Company must be promoted. Additionally, there must be a focus on the numerous British companies who were involved in enslavement including, for example, Barclays Bank and Tate and Lyle.
 - There must be a focus on how British society, architecture, economic wealth and attitudes are influenced by the centuries of exploiting Africa, African people and their labour to build Britain and boost its economy.
3. Local governments must ensure that all usage of the seal of the Society for the Abolition of Slavery where African people are portrayed begging on their knees for emancipation are no longer used to signify anti-enslavement or the abolitionist movements.
 4. Local governments must take responsibility for the ensuring its public and educational institutions use non offensive language in all written or recorded media (see terminology guidelines).

Educational Reparations

As a means to culturally disinherit the Africans forced into enslavement, the British government deployed ruthless strategies to sever all references and connections of the enslaved Africans to their language, culture and identity. In order to repair the damning legacy still affecting African Britons, including those with Caribbean heritage we call for;

1. A modern worldview version of African and African British history to be made mandatory topics in the national curriculum.
2. African languages to be added to the modern foreign languages module in national curriculum, in particular, Kiswahili following the African Unions adoption of it as the Continents first official African language in 2004.
3. National recognition of African History Month in February as practised across Africa, the Caribbean, the Americas and the Diaspora.

Key Facts

1. The enslavement of African people is a crime against humanity as agreed by resolutions and declarations passed by the United Nations.
2. The British government has never made a formal apology for its role in the forced enslavement and exploitation of African people.
3. The British government has not and refuses to commit to reparations in an attempt to atone for its leading role in the commercial exploitation of African people.
4. The forced exploitation of enslaved African people played a central role in the industrial revolution and the subsequent economic prosperity of Britain.
5. The self sufficient African structures of governance and commerce prior to European intervention were destroyed by the forced enslavement of African people.
6. As a result of the incessant rape of African women by British slavers, many Britons share their genealogy with African people.
7. The impact of the enslavement of African people still manifests itself in society, especially in terms of culture, life style, educational achievement and family and gender relationships.

8. African people in Britain played a key role in the emancipation and the abolition of enslavement.
9. Museums, professional associations/institutions and private collectors have, as part of their collections, objects and artefacts which have been misappropriated from African nations.
10. The historical development of multicultural and plural societies in Britain and the Caribbean were created as a direct result of the exploitation of African people.

Worldview Historical Background

The era during which the organised global enslavement, exploitation and murder of African people by Europeans took place is widely recognised as the epitome of the most barbaric and morally repugnant atrocities committed by humankind. This ‘legalised’ criminal act of inhumanity was sanctioned by both the Christian church, the British Monarchy and European-led governments of the time.

The primary motivations for its occurrence were economic greed and a superiority complex fuelled by racist doctrine. The primary justification for these immoral actions were based on the notion that African people were uncivilised and it was the ‘white man’s burden’ to advance what they viewed as less developed people by imposing christianity and European notions of civilisation. The leading global participants in this crime were Britain and America. As a direct result of their actions over tens of millions of African people were physically, emotionally and culturally brutalised. The current economic order of the world is directly linked to the past and current exploitation of Africa and African people.

The myth of 1807

Despite 1807 being heralded as a significant date in the history of the abolitionist movement and the propaganda surrounding the work of William Wilberforce, over a million captured Africans were still regarded by the Britain Government as legal human property and forcibly held captive for over another two decades. So, whilst the so-called shipping trade in African people was made illegal, their on-going enslavement was not.

As a result, African people continued to rebel and resist their imposed captive state. In December 1831 for example, there was an African insurrection in Jamaica, where several Africans burned and destroyed slavers plantations. Such rebellions exposed the fundamental flaw in the 1807 declaration and forced the final end to Britain’s formal exploitation of enslaved Africans. Eventually, two British parliamentary committees on enslavement concluded that ‘if the British government didn’t bring an end to slavery in the colonies peaceably, then those [Caribbean] islands would soon be drenched in blood, [because] the slaves would in the end emancipate themselves’. In February 1833, a Bill went before a reformed House of Commons which supported emancipation. It took yet another five years before enslaved Africans were finally ‘legally’ freed.

William Wilberforce: Abolitionist advocate for gradual emancipation

In an 1807 pamphlet, William Wilberforce wrote ‘It would be wrong to emancipate [the enslaved Africans]. To grant freedom to them immediately would be to insure not only their masters’ ruin, but their own. They must [first] be trained and educated for freedom’.

Wilberforce's attitude was typical of those of the slavers who used Christianity to instigate and maintain control of African people. Instead of calling for the immediate freedom of African people, Wilberforce campaigned for reforms that could gradually lead to emancipation. In 1824, the abolitionist movement faced fractures when an alternative grassroots abolitionist movement led by Elisabeth Heyrick, publicly challenged Wilberforce's existing campaign and publicly called for the immediate emancipation of African people.

Thomas Jefferson: Abolitionist advocate for gradual emancipation

Thomas Jefferson has been widely promoted as the father of the American abolitionist movement. However during 1781, before he became President of the United States he wrote 'Notes on the State of Virginia'. In this document, he talks not about abolishing African enslavement completely but instead suggests that it is gradually eradicated and with the consent of the slavers.

His text attempts not only to justify his view that African people were biologically inferior and incapable of self determining but it also advocates that enslaved Africans should flee and start their own colonies in order to prevent interracial unions.

On the subject of intellect and creativity he wrote;

'Comparing them by their faculties of memory, reason, and imagination, it appears to me, that in memory they are equal to the whites; in reason much inferior, as I think one black could scarcely be found capable of tracing and comprehending the investigations of Euclid; and that in imagination they are dull, tasteless, and anomalous... [yet] The Indians... astonish you with strokes of the most sublime oratory; such as prove their reason and sentiment strong, and their imagination glowing and elevated. But never yet could I find that a black had uttered a thought above the level of plain narration... never see even an elementary trait of painting or sculpture...'

He also believed Africans to be incapable of love, declaring that 'they are more ardent after their female: but love seems with them to be more an eager desire, than a tender delicate mixture of sentiment and sensation.' In expressing his belief about the inferior beauty of African women he continues,

'...[African men's] judgment in favour of the whites, declared by their preference of them, as uniformly as is the preference of the Orangutan for the black woman over those of his own species. The circumstance of superior beauty, is thought worthy attention in the propagation of our horses, dogs, and other domestic animals; why not in that of man?'

However, while maintaining a strong public stance against interracial sex, Jefferson hypocritically embarked on a prolonged and paedophilic relationship with an enslaved African girl named Sally Hemming, who came into his 'possession' aged just 14 years old. Despite Jefferson's consistent remonstrance against miscegenation, Sally became

pregnant as a result of undergoing years of sexual abuse by Jefferson and gave birth to several of his children.

Jefferson however, felt somewhat obliged to start what became known as the Abolitionist movement. With the spirit of the American slavers such as himself abating, he spoke of how it was better that African emancipation was achieved with the consent of their 'masters' rather than the demise of slavers and their families through a violent and anticipated revolution. Jefferson lived in fear of retribution by God through the rebellion of African people. He believed that African reprisals against the sins of his nation and its people would be sanctioned by God. He explained;

'I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just: that his justice cannot sleep for ever: that considering numbers, nature and natural means only, a revolution of the wheel of fortune, an exchange of situation, is among possible events'.

Following his death after his tenure as President of the United States, it was revealed that Jefferson was responsible for the enslavement of over a hundred African people held captive in his estate. He also failed to free them in his will.

How language can be used to mask and perpetuate racism

Slave Trade

The term 'slave trade' is used to demean the African Maafa caused by the immoral and inhumane practice of selling human beings into servitude. The word 'trade' implies a legitimate and consensual transaction and belittles the magnitude of the atrocities committed against African people. Enslaved African people did not believe they were born to be enslaved nor were they bound by the pan-European laws that stated that it was legal to forcibly capture African people for the purpose of unpaid labour, rape and murder. Revisionist historians are now using the term 'slave trade' to assert that a majority of 'uncivilised' African people were wholly responsible for the African holocaust and sold their own people into enslavement. An extension of this exaggerated claim also implies that corrupted African people are responsible for selling the natural resources of the Continent to innocent and moralistic European investors.

Slavers or Plantation owners

Use of the term 'plantation owners' had one function in the English language. In direct contrast to the way that the label 'Nazi' is used to differentiate between those Germans who participated in the atrocities committed against the Jewish population, the phrase 'plantation owner' is a linguistic means of distancing British slavers from the repellent nature of the forced exploitation of African people. The title bestowed the slavers with an air of respectability and legitimacy when describing their despicable profession.

'black' or African

"The first difference which strikes us is that of color. Whether the black of the negro resides in the reticular membrane between the skin and scarf-skin, or in the scarf-skin itself; whether it proceeds from the color of the blood, the color of the bile, or from that of some other secretion, the difference is fixed in nature, and is as real as if its seat and cause were better known to us. And is this difference of no importance? Is it not the foundation of a greater or less share of beauty in the two races? Are not the fine mixtures of red and white, the expressions of every passion by greater or less suffusions of color in the one, preferable to that eternal monotony, which reigns in the countenances, that immovable veil of black which covers the emotions of the other race?"

Thomas Jefferson, 'father' of the American abolitionist movement

Is there any difference between 'people of colour' and 'coloured people'? Are white and pink non colours? A human couple leave Earth and go to Mars, nine months later the woman gives birth to their baby. Is that child now a Martian or a Martian of Earth descent? Have you ever heard of a 'brown person of Indian descent', 'a yellow person of Chinese descent', a 'pink person of European descent' or 'a red person of Amerindian descent'? Have you ever heard of a brown Indian, a yellow Chinese or a red Native

American? The answer to all these seemingly ludicrous questions is no. So why do we have 'black' African and 'black' person of African descent?

It is disrespectful and disempowering to label the cultural identity of any person by use of a single homogenous colour particularly if this label is historically linked with negative, social and cultural connotations and associations. In a bid to maintain an economic and cultural racial hierarchy, non Africans have accepted that it is offensive to call Chinese people 'yellow' or Amerindians 'red' but refuse to address the use of the word 'black' to describe African people.

The seemingly innocuous phrase 'black person of African descent' has been used to convince African people that they are 'black' and were maybe African a long time ago. This is untrue. Almost all so called 'black' people are Africans. Some have Caribbean heritage, others South American but regardless of current nationality, all are African. The word 'black' is connected to the European words negro, negre, nigra and the highly offensive n-word. All these derogatory terms have been used throughout history in official European documents justifying the enslavement and colonisation of African people. Their sole purpose is to disinherit African people from their culture and heritage to prevent them from rejecting eurocentric designated roles, cultural values and identities. African is our name, black is an imposed and branded label.

How language can be used to confer respect and self determination

African Holocaust and Maafa

Similar to the way that the label 'slave' is used by western media to almost exclusively conjure up images of enslaved African people, the term holocaust has also become synonymous with the ethnically motivated atrocities carried out by Europeans on their fellow European Jewish community. Nonetheless the death, destruction and violent rape of African culture, resources and people in the name of enslavement, apartheid, colonialism and neocolonialism remain an ongoing holocaust faced by millions of African people worldwide. The word Maafa is a Kiswahili term meaning 'an event of great disaster, calamity or terrible occurrence'. It is commonly used by Africentric academics to describe the more than five hundred years of barbaric crimes committed by Europeans against humanity.

'black' slaves or enslaved Africans?

Over the past one hundred years, there has been particularly contention about the appropriate way to describe the capture and enslavement of African people. Current eurocentric thinking argues that African people were legitimate 'property' according to British law and therefore the use of the derogatory phrase 'black slave' is wholly appropriate despite its effective removal of any reference to the individuals cultural heritage and identity. African academics and activists refute this and maintain that they were free Africans before capture and became 'enslaved Africans' after. The use of the word 'enslaved' indicates that historically, African people have always offered resistance

to enslavement and never capitulated to the role of being simply 'slaves'. This also explains why the term 'freed slave' is not only offensive but grammatically inaccurate.

Terminology Guidelines

There are many words and phrases in the English language that are geared towards maintaining inequality. However, despite the immature claims of a minority of people who think that revising the way we verbally communicate is 'political correctness gone mad', it has become a necessary part of addressing the way in which we think. Language is a key medium for conveying ideas about a society and culture. If populist and relatively frivolous words such as 'retrosexual', 'squeaky-bum time' and 'adulescent' can be integrated into modern day English dictionaries and language, there is no reason why we can not address racially offensive terminology with a view to revising and implementing positive and accurate changes.

The word African specifically relates to the indigenous people of the African continent and their descents in the Diaspora (Caribbean, Americas, Arabia, etc). The race-nationality model such as that currently employed by African-American, African-Brazilian and African-Caribbean communities more accurately describes the identity whilst fully articulating the history and geo-political reality of African people globally.

The miscellaneous usage of the label 'Black' within this document reflects its contemporary use as a means to denote a specific socio-cultural and political context. It is recognised as a colloquial term that was fashioned as a reactionary concept to derogatory racial epithets in the 1960's. It is offensive when used as a racial classification code word to denote African people. Other such denigratory terminology that remains offensive when made in reference to African culture, heritage or identity are 'Tribe', 'Sub-Saharan Africa', or 'black Africa'.

Terminology: Appendix

Word/ Phrase	Recommended (optional) replacement	Example / Context
Black	African	'Mary Prince was one of the first African women to escape British enslavement'
Black British	African British	'Olaudah Equiano was revered by most as the leading African British abolitionist'
Blacks (Negroes)	African people	'Many African people despise the English language label classifying them as black'

Female Slave	(captive/enslaved) African woman	'The enslaved African woman was raped and impregnated by the slaver'
Freed slave	(freed) African	'The freed African returned at night to release other enslaved Africans from captivity'
Negroid	Africoid	'She was described by scientist as having typical Africoid features'
Plantation owners	Slavers	'The slavers often used barbaric force to control the enslaved Africans'
Slave ships	Slavers ships	'The slavers ships held over 200 Africans captive'
Slave Trade	(commercial) exploitation of African people	'The Transatlantic exploitation of African people was a crime against humanity'
Slave	(captive/ enslaved) African (man/woman/child/people)	'The enslaved African people fought hard to retain their cultural identity'
South Africa	Azania (South Africa)	'The Government in Azania (South Africa) frequently acts in partnership with nations in Southern Africa such as Zimbabwe'
White African	European <African region>	'The Dutch in Zimbabwe were left empowered by the legacy of Cecil Rhodes'