

# A UNITED AFRIKA

## The AU Diasporan Campaign Hits Stride in Maryland

### The State of Afrika:

#### *Foundations for Organizing The Diaspora*

Every bit of archaeological evidence indicates that the first humans were found in Afrika. *Olduvai Gorge* in Kenya was the site of the discoveries by the *Leakeys* (1950s) of what are considered to be the first remains that were indisputably classified as human. The fossil known as "Lucy" was estimated to be between two and three million years old.

We all know *KMT* (*Kemet, Kemit, Kimit, Kamit, Khamit*) as "Egypt" today. While older structures have been found in Ethiopia, the Giza Pyramids, the Sphinx and the numerous tombs of the Pharaohs are strong indicators that the KMTic Empire was the oldest and greatest civilization in the earth's history. Their achievements in astronomy (Sirius, or Sothis, and the

*Sothic Calendar*), medicine (*Imhotep*, the true father of medicine) and engineering (the mysteries of the Pyramids), are still being deciphered by today's scientists. Those who questioned the fact that KMT's people were Black Afrikans were refuted in



### The African Union Diaspora Initiative: *A Seat At The Table?*

Here, we will take up where the accompanying article leaves off. We've discussed the primacy of Afrika in human history, the scourge of colonialism and its younger sibling, neo-colonialism. The current condition of the Mother Continent, from its human suffering to the stripping of its resources and riches, is already known. We've briefly discussed the efforts of Afrikan people to organize ourselves, from Slave Revolts to the OAU.

At the turn of the century, the OAU ceased to exist, and in its place was born the **African Union (AU)**. One of its early aims was to bring the Afrikan Diaspora into various councils of the AU to take a hand in decision-making, but also to help revitalize the continental organization through the infusion of material and human resources.

#### **The OAU Becomes the AU**

In 2001, the AU was voted into existence by the Afrikan Heads of State, officially ending the old OAU. While the primary purpose of the OAU was "to assist African countries in achieving political independence and economic self-sufficiency", the primary aim of the AU is "to achieve a Pan-African

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## Back, Again

Back in March 2005, we published what looked like the final issue of **KUUMBAREport** Newsletter. After eight years and thirty-six issues, our adventure in self-publishing had come to an end. We didn't know it at the time, but that's what it was--*finis* to our attempt to inform and inspire the Afrikan Community to action and to organize itself.

I had started the Newsletter in 1997 with the intention of it being a free bimonthly eight-to-16-page publication that included some news, some analysis, and some opinions. It would concentrate on Pan-Afrikanist, Indigenous and Peace-and-Justice-related concerns. It would support itself by selling advertising space to Afrikan-centered, or at least pro-Black, businesses and organizations that would no doubt be drawn to this community-oriented concept. Surely that would be enough to at least sustain the Newsletter, if not actually make enough money in a few years for me to be able to expand it to a full

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## Why Organize? And Why The AU?

As I've talked with people in Maryland and the region about the African Union Diaspora Initiative (See accompanying stories), I've encountered a variety of reactions, some well thought-out and others simply mean-spirited. I'll dispense with the mean-spirited ones first.

There are some who have called individuals who are involved in the effort "agents" or "opportunists". All I have to say to those claims is this: unless you have some evidence to show me, aside from your own personal issues with one or more of the Afrikans involved with the effort, you only do a disservice to yourself and to Afrikan people by appearing to be attempting to disrupt an effort to achieve unity in the Afrikan Diaspora. The practice of attempting to finger members of an organization as "agents", without any evidence, was one of the most prominent and destructive strategies used by the *real* agents, those who had been planted in the Black Panther Party

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## Foundations for Organizing, from Page 1

1974 by famed Senegalese historian **Dr. Cheikh Anta Diop** (author of the groundbreaking books *Civilization or Barbarism* and *African Origin of Civilization: Myth or Reality*), who proved *nine different ways* that the people of ancient KMT were Black Afrikans and not White Europeans.

### From The First Invaders to the Neo-Colonialists

The invasions from the north, finally resulting in the conquest of much of KMT, are also well documented. The many wars waged against the KMTic Empire, as well as the slow, inexorable creep of European communities into Afrika, led to the forced migrations of Afrikan people to various areas of the continent, where some societies were rebuilt (*Ghana, Songhay, Angola*), while others were unable to cope with harsh conditions and went into decline. Even those civilizations that were able to thrive were often attacked by the advancing Eurasian armies, resulting either in further migrations or destabilizing wars against the invaders. This has been extensively documented by researchers such as **Dr. Chancellor Williams, Dr. Yosef ben-Jochannon, Dr. Tony Browder, Dr. Leonard Jeffries, Dr. Asa Hilliard, Dr. Amos Wilson, Dr. Jacob Carruthers** and countless others.

This was, of course, followed up by the enslavement of Afrikans, first in the eastern part of the Continent through the incursions of Eurasian so-called "Arabs", and then in the western areas as Portuguese, French, British, Spanish and American slave traders looted the Motherland for her human capital.

**The Scramble for Afrika** was officially inaugurated at the *Berlin Conference of 1884-85*, in which the Western European powers divided Afrika up among themselves. **King Leopold of Belgium** received one of the "crown jewels" of Afrika, the Congo, which has since been known as the Belgian Congo, Zaire, and finally the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The Dutch Boers and the British would colonize Kenya, South Africa and Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). The Portuguese would take Angola and Mozambique. All of North Afrika would come under heavy Arab-Islamic influence. Only Ethiopia, under the leadership of **Emperor Haile Selassie I**, would survive the countless attempts by Europeans to conquer Afrika, including turning back the fascist army of **Benito Mussolini** during World War II.

**Neo-Colonialism** represented the second major wave of European conquest in Afrika. Primarily represented in American

and European interventions in various countries, it was perhaps highlighted by the apartheid regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), the military junta in Congo under **Mobutu Sese Seko** and the **Babangida-Abacha** military dictatorship in Nigeria. All of these neocolonial regimes not only subjected the people to some of the world's most vicious repression, but also led to unfettered access by the West to the resources of these countries.

### The New Scramble for Afrika's Resources

To this very day, major multinational corporations continue to extract the natural resources from Afrika at an obscene rate. Among the chief products taken from various parts of the continent are the following:

- **Coltan:** Columbite-tantalum. Used in mobile phones, CD players, DVD players and computers. DR Congo is the source for over 80% of the world's tantalum powder deposits.
- **Diamonds:** Often referred to as "blood diamonds", the sparkling stones that are promoted in the West as "a girl's best friend" and under the slogan "a diamond is forever" were used to fuel civil wars in Angola (1990s), Sierra Leone (1990s-2000s), Liberia (1990s-2000s), Cote D'Ivoire (1990s-2000s) and DR Congo (still). **Cecil Rhodes** founded DeBeers early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to sow tribal strife and prop up the apartheid governments in South Africa and Zimbabwe through the mining and sale of diamonds, which were also taken from Namibia and Guinea with the benefits going to the large multinational corporations and *not* to the people.
- **Gold:** "The lure of gold has fueled massive human rights atrocities in the northeastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo," **Human Rights Watch** said in a report titled *The Curse of Gold*, published June 2, 2005. "Local warlords and international companies are among those benefiting from access to gold rich areas while local people suffer from ethnic slaughter, torture and rape." The web site [www.africafocus.org](http://www.africafocus.org) contains voluminous information on the pain and suffering caused in Afrikan countries, especially the DR Congo, because of the West's lust for gold.
- **Oil:** Nigeria is thought to be the most oil-rich country in Afrika, and one of the most oil-rich in the world. Thus, the Niger Delta Region is literally crawling with oil giants eager to drain the area of its "Black Gold". **Chevron, Exxon**

## KUUMBAReport

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**OUR PURPOSE** is to educate the public and share ideas about community news, events, health and history. **OUR VISION** is an educated, organized and mobilized populace committed to the Ancient Afrikan principles of **Ma'at** (truth, justice, righteousness, harmony, reciprocity, balance, compassion, order and propriety) and the preservation of Afrikan, Indigenous and other world cultures promoting peace, unity, respect, and true freedom.

and *Royal Dutch Shell* are among the largest. Inaction by Shell is seen as having given tacit approval to the military dictatorship of General *Sani Abacha* to execute *Ken Saro-Wiwa* and other Ogoni environmental activists on November 10, 1995. Oil deposits in Sudan are seen as a primary reason for the efforts of China and certain Western nations to jockey for influence there while the Darfur conflict continues to rage.

### The Current Economic Status of Afrika

Afrika is considered to be the richest continent in the world, but with the world's poorest people inhabiting it. Because of the Scramble for Afrika, her archeological treasures are on display in museums in Europe and the United States, her diamonds and gold are fetching huge profits for European and American multinational corporations, her oil and minerals are providing energy and circuitry to keep the West's exploitative infrastructure running, and her people are seeing none of the benefits.

Compounding the problem is the fact that many of the neocolonial regimes amassed obscene levels of debt to Western financial interests as they impoverished their people and made their colonial puppets rich. These puppet dictators then hid their personal loot in Western banks, never to be seen again by their victims, the masses of Afrikan people in their home countries. Prime examples of this are the apartheid regime in South Africa and the Mobutu dictatorship in Congo. Today, those debts are being held over the heads of the people those neocolonial regimes once oppressed, resulting in what is called "odious debt".

The *Group of Eight* industrialized nations ("*The G-8*": United States, Great Britain, France, Japan, Germany, Canada, Russia and Italy) recently offered "debt relief" to several Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC's), mostly in Afrika. However, to qualify for this "debt relief", a country must open itself up to foreign investment, divert its national budget from social programs to private-industry development and open up its local markets to goods from western countries, many of which are heavily subsidized by the United States and Europe. The results are that education and public health budgets in these countries are slashed, heavily-subsidized Western products can now out-compete indigenous Afrikan goods, the local markets collapse and the people suffer yet again.

### The Current Health Status of Afrika

Afrikan people continually find themselves subjected to massive epidemics brought on by famine, lack of medical care and, some people say, biological warfare. Malaria is the biggest killer on the continent today. A lack of adequate mosquito netting and the greed of major pharmaceutical corporations have caused this crisis to continue unnecessarily. HIV/AIDS is continuing to devastate Afrika at an alarming rate, an epidemic that started, depending on who one talks to, as a result of an accident involving a vaccine for polio or from the creation of a biological weapon. But regardless of its cause, HIV/AIDS continues to ravage the continent in part because of the unavailability of generic anti-retroviral (ARV) drugs, but also due to the dictates of the West, withholding crucial education and public health assistance unless abstinence is exclusively taught in Afrikan schools and communities. This points to the subordination of public health concerns to the desire to foist a sociopolitical agenda upon the people.

### Current Population Movement From Afrika: The "Brain Drain"

After the forced relocation of Afrikans to the Western Hemisphere and the subsequent removal of much of Afrika's material resources, many people still living in Afrika chose to venture to the West of their own free will (or so they like to think). The impoverished state of many Afrikan countries in the wake of European colonialism and neo-colonialism led many of Afrika's sons and daughters to move to areas of the world where opportunities for a better life were more plentiful. Many fail to realize that, far from an endorsement of the West, this activity was really an indictment of the European and American practice of stripping and stealing Afrika's resources from what is still the most resource-rich land in the world, and those who left Afrika for "greener pastures" were in fact simply following their own natural resources to the home of those who stole it. In any event, this activity has amounted to a major "brain drain" of Afrika's best and brightest from the land that needs them the most.

There are two current manifestations of this "brain drain": *Afrikan citizens moving* to the United States (largely from Nigeria, Somalia and Ethiopia, but including other countries as well) and other western countries in search of better opportunities, and *Descendants of once-enslaved Afrikans* in the United States and other western hemisphere nations who have developed certain levels of economic power (though we don't use it effectively).

### The Oppression of Afrikans in the Diaspora

We are well aware of the struggles we've endured in the United States, from slavery through Reconstruction, through Jim Crow and the Civil Rights Movement, and on through the rise and fall of the Black Power Movement, followed by what can only be described today as a new era of slumber for Afrikan People in America. Through all of these trials and struggles, we as a people continue to survive despite the economic, social and legal exploitation, discrimination and suppression we have faced in the areas of education, business, economics, criminal injustice, public health and White terrorism. All of these ills continue today. As Ancestor *Kwame Ture* (Stokely Carmichael) stated many times, the fact that they continue in this day and time can be traced to the fact that, as an Afrikan People, we have failed to effectively organize ourselves. This same situation exists in other areas of the Diaspora, from South America to the Caribbean, Europe, Asia and Oceania.

### Slave Revolts in the United States

Among the earliest efforts of Afrikan People to organize ourselves in the United States were the Slave Revolts. The little-known *1811 Slave Revolt*, in Louisiana, was the largest slave revolt in history. Led by *Charles Deslondes* of the Andry Plantation, the revolt swept through at least seven plantations between January 4 and January 7, 1811, and swelled to over 1,000 Afrikan rebels before it was turned back and routed by the US Army nine miles upriver from New Orleans. The Afrikans who were caught were killed and their heads were stuck on poles along the Mississippi River in an attempt to frighten other potential rebels into submission. Some of the Afrikans escaped into the swamps and joined the Maroons. *Nat Turner's Rebellion* was the most famous of the Slave Revolts. *Gabriel Prosser* and

**Denmark Vesey** were among the other prominent organizers of armed resistance to slavery among Afrikan people.

### Afrikan in America and the Struggle to Organize

We have formed a multiplicity of organizations, fraternities, sororities, business collectives, study groups and even paramilitary underground organizations, but there has been no effective means of achieving the complete organization of our community as a Pan-Afrikan People. Early Pan-Afrikan organizations that included Afrikan-Americans in appreciable numbers included the *African Blood Brotherhood* and the *Pan-African Congress*. Probably the closest we in the Diaspora have come to a truly viable worldwide Pan-Afrikan organization was the Honorable *Marcus Mosiah Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association-African Communities League (UNIA-ACL)*, which still exists today despite the effort to destroy it by eliminating its Founder.

The *Nation of Islam (NOI)*, the *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)*, the *Urban League* and the *Black Panther Party for Self-Defense* are all organizations that were created to pursue social justice in the United States, primarily for Afrikan people. But they all had limits. The NOI, being a Muslim organization, was unlikely to attract the Christian and Traditional Afrikan spiritual community in large numbers. The NAACP, partly because of its Jewish and elitist roots, has always struggled to earn the support of the masses of Afrikan people, as has the Urban League, with its reputation for sociopolitical and economic conservatism. The Panthers were hampered not only by their image as a gun-toting revolutionary army and their commitment to Marxism, but also by the murderous campaign launched against them and similar organizations by the *Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)* in the 1960s-1970s.

### Former Slaves Establish Afrikan Homelands

Afrikan people have sought to return home several times since their enslavement in the United States. A group of Afrikans, freed from the bonds of slavery, won the opportunity to repatriate to the continent, where the country of *Liberia* was founded. Since that time, western interference, as well as a degree of alienation felt by the repatriated Afrikans toward their newfound indigenous neighbors, has led to decades of war and instability. That western interference continues today with current Liberian President *Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf*, the first female Head of State in modern Afrikan history, endorsing the establishment in Liberia of the *African Command*, or AFRICOM, as a permanent US military installation in the War on Terror.

*Haiti* remains the only independent Afrikan nation in the western hemisphere that earned its independence through force of arms. The Haitian Revolution, led by *Baukman Dutty*, *Toussaint L'Overture* and *Jean-Jacques Dessalines*, finally fought off both Spanish and French invaders in 1804. However, the French government, with the help of the United States, succeeded in using "international law" to punish Haiti for winning its independence, first stripping most of the trees from the island nation, leaving much of it an agricultural wasteland, then legally forcing Haiti to pay reparations to the French for depriving them of their ill-gotten land and slave force. To this day, evangelists in the United States cite Haiti and its current population's suffering as punishment from God for having "sold their souls to the devil and the island spirits" in exchange for their liberation from the "God-fearing" European invaders and usurpers.

### Modern-Day Repatriation Efforts: The Ghana Nkwanta Project

The Nkwanta Region is located near the North Volta River in Ghana. *Elder Adunni Oshupa Tabasi NuNu Afua Frie-Frie II*, known in New York City as "Elder Adunni", has succeeded in making available 8,000 acres of land in the Nkwanta Region of Ghana for Afrikans who wish to repatriate home. She hopes to do the same in other countries, as well as elsewhere in Ghana.

### The OAU and the AU

The *Organization of African Unity (OAU)* was founded May 25, 1963 under the leadership of *Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah*. Nkrumah saw the need for Afrika to unite to throw off the yoke of neocolonialism once and for all. His commitment to revolutionary scientific socialism, however, did not sit well with some of Afrika's more "moderate" heads of state, some of whom preferred to appease the West in order to consolidate their own hold on power in their countries. As a result, the OAU was never able to fully realize its mission and fell into decline.

The *African Union (AU)* succeeded the OAU in 2001. Its primary aim is "to achieve a Pan-African unification of the 54 African countries into a single Union of African States" (David Horne, Ph.D, *The AU Initiative: Eating The Elephant One Bite At A Time*, Pan-Afrikan Organizing Committee, 2007). In 2003, the African Union's Constitutive Act was clarified to extend an invitation to the Afrikan Diaspora to more fully participate in the AU. It is that invitation that has led to the current organizing effort in several states in the US, including Maryland, to elect Representatives and Observers for an *AU Diasporan Caucus*.

## The AU Diaspora Initiative: A Seat At The Table?

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unification of the 54 African countries into a single Union of African States" (Dr. David Horne, *The AU Initiative: Eating The Elephant One Bite At A Time*, Pan-Afrikan Organizing Committee, 2007).

### Why Invite the Diaspora?

A major reason for this invitation was as an effort to reverse the "Brain Drain" and the "Resource Drain" that currently is taking the continent's sons, daughters and resources away from Mother

Afrika: "The need to involve the Diaspora in the relentless effort that is required to achieve ... a Union of African States was recognized and codified in the original Constitutive Act that established the African Union (and officially disbanded the OAU) in 2001. In 2003 and 2005, that Constitutive Act was amended and clarified regarding the Diaspora, such that the operative statement now is Article 3(q) that the AU hereby '... invite(s) and encourage(s) the full participation of the African

Diaspora as an important part of our continent, in the building of the African Union” (Horne).

### Defining the Diaspora

At an April 2006 Pan African Roundtable/Forum in Los Angeles, the following definition of the “Diaspora” from the AU was accepted: “The African Diaspora are peoples of African descent and heritage living outside the continent, irrespective of their citizenship and who remain committed to contribute to the development of the continent and the building of the African Union.” According to Horne, “It means there are Pan African Black and Brown folk who represent the African Diaspora and who will be encouraged to come forward and invest some time, energy, will and money to move Africa ahead.”

### The Invitation to the Diaspora: The Constitutive Act

As Horne notes in his position paper *The AU Initiative: Eating The Elephant One Bite At A Time* (PAOC, 2007), “The need to involve the Diaspora in the relentless effort that is required to achieve ... a Union of African States was recognized and codified in the original Constitutive Act that established the African Union (and officially disbanded the OAU) in 2001. In 2003 and 2005, that Constitutive Act was amended and clarified regarding the Diaspora, such that the operative statement now is Article 3(q) that the AU hereby ‘... invite(s) and encourage(s) the full participation of the African Diaspora as an important part of our continent, in the building of the African Union.’”

### The Campaign to Create the “Sixth Region” of Afrika

The Diaspora has unofficially been designated as the “*Sixth Region of Afrika*”. The five “official” Regions are Central, North, South, East and West Afrika. Throughout the documentation of the AU and its *Economic, Social and Cultural Committee (ECOSOCC)*, widely considered to be the “entry point” for Diasporan representation (See below), specific mention is made of the Diaspora as a distinct part of the Afrikan World, responsible for organizing itself and electing its own Representatives to the AU’s various committees. Official documentation has not been completed to formally designate the Diaspora as the Sixth Region, but *we in the Diaspora are expected to organize ourselves* based on that status.

### The Diasporan Secretariats and WHADN

The AU established Regional Secretariats around the world to “help facilitate bringing the Diasporans into this process” (Horne). Those Regional Secretariats are as follows:

- **Eastern Hemisphere African Diaspora Network (EHADN):** Established to set criteria and processes for the Eastern Hemisphere to organize itself.
- **Western Hemisphere African Diaspora Network (WHADN):** Established to set criteria and processes for the Western Hemisphere Diaspora to organize itself. Examples of this assistance include the December 2002 AU-Western Hemisphere Diaspora Forum in Washington, DC, the March 2006 Pan African Unification Meeting in Atlanta, GA and the April 2006 Pan African Roundtable/Forum in Los Angeles, CA which created the current model being used to organize and elect Representatives and Observers to the Diasporan Caucus. WHADN will not organize the Diaspora. We must do that. But

WHADN has provided the essential framework in which we will be able to organize the Diaspora.

Each of the Regional Secretariats is divided into Sub-Regions, each of which is responsible for its own specific organizing efforts. The Sub-Regions of the *Eastern Hemisphere* include Asia and Oceania. The Sub-Regions of the *Western Hemisphere* are Canada, United States, Caribbean and Central America, Latin America not including Brazil, Brazil and Europe.

### The Entry Point for the Diaspora: ECOSOCC

The African Union’s *Economic, Social and Cultural Committee (ECOSOCC)* is the first AU Committee into which the Diaspora is expected to integrate itself. It is the Civil Society committee of the African Union. It is made up of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), which are largely designed to represent the interests of the people of the Afrikan World. Seats in ECOSOCC are to be assigned through democratic processes and the will of the masses of the people in the localities that elect them.

At present, ECOSOCC will consist of 150 seats for Representatives from the Afrikan World. 130 of those seats are designated for Continental Afrikan Civil Society Representatives, while 20 are to be for Representatives from the Diaspora.

## ACCEPTING THE INVITATION: THE ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVES

### Background

Dr. David Horne, in his position paper *The AU Initiative: Eating The Elephant One Bite At A Time* (PAOC, 2007), explains the overall concept as follows:

*In every part of the world in which Afrikan folk live, there is a tradition and practice of having Town Hall-like gatherings to discuss important issues and events, and of consensus voting for handling those issues. Building on that tradition, in cities and states in each of the six geographically-identified areas of the AU ‘Sixth Region’, there needs to be at least one Afrikan-centered group that will initially accept the challenge of contacting other groups in their state, country or region, conducting educational gatherings on the AU, and assisting sub-regional organizations in hosting and coordinating a Town Hall meeting and caucus to elect AU Representatives. Since it is a requirement and expectation of the AU that such Diasporan Representatives be sent from a body comprising as diverse a number of Diasporans in the particular area as possible, ‘Sixth Region’ Representatives are not supposed to self-select ‘themselves’.*

*One or several existing Afrikan-centered organizations, clubs and associations in each part of the Diaspora will then take the initiative in their own areas to call forth at least one general Town Hall meeting/caucus of Diasporans interested in the AU process. Thus, in the USA, existing Pan African organizations in each of the 50 states are expected to contact other Afrikan descendants in that state to attend at least one Town Hall meeting/caucus to be educated about the AU, to discuss a Pan-Afrikan agenda, and to elect AU Representatives from that state. If one meeting or gathering is sufficient to accomplish all that, great, but the usual expectation (and all of the experience thus far) is that it will take at least two*



*gatherings. Similarly, Afrikan-centered organizations in Canadian provinces, in Caribbean countries, Central/South American states and countries, and European countries, are expected to organize, advertise and hold AU Town Hall meetings/caucuses to elect Representatives.*

### **The Steps to Claiming the Diaspora's Seats in ECOSOCC**

To ensure that seats in ECOSOCC are assigned through democratic processes, specific steps must be taken to ensure that the masses of the people are informed about the process and given an opportunity to participate. This process was approved by WHADN for Afrikans in the Diaspora to utilize, and that process is being followed in the Sub-Regions. The essential steps include the Town Hall, the seating of the Council of Elders, the Nomination of Representatives and Observers, the Review Process, the Caucus for Election of Representatives and Observers, and Diplomatic and other Training to prepare the Representatives and Observers for the Diasporan Caucuses and the African Union meetings. These steps are covered in more detail below.

### **The Pan-Afrikan Town Hall**

The first step in the process is the holding of a ***Pan-Afrikan Town Hall***. The purpose of the Town Hall is to inform the Pan-Afrikan public about the African Union and the African Union Diaspora Initiative. Questions are encouraged, discussed and answered. A ***Pan-Afrikan Agenda*** is discussed as far as it reflects the needs of that community. The ***Community Council of Elders (CCOE)*** is nominated or elected (See below). At the end of the meeting, ***Representatives*** and ***Observers*** are also nominated and elections are scheduled to finalize the community's choices as Representatives and Observers to the African Union (See below).

### **The Pan-Afrikan Agenda**

During the discussion of the Pan-Afrikan Agenda, several topics can be discussed. The essential issues impacting the Afrikan Community can be reviewed. Some examples might be police brutality, the prison-industrial complex, crime, disparities in health care, the response to Hurricane Katrina, the holding of political prisoners, institutional racism and COINTELPRO. The important thing to remember is that the Agenda should reflect issues of concern to the Afrikan Community in *this* state. The Minimum Qualifications and lists of Essential Duties for the Community Council of Elders (CCOE), Representatives and Observers will also be reviewed (See below).

### **The Community Council of Elders (CCOE)**

If an established Community Council of Elders does not already exist, one is nominated and usually elected at the Town Hall Meeting, either through a majority vote or, preferably, through Afrikan Consensus. In the Afrikan tradition, the CCOE is charged with presiding over the process once it is in motion. They will make final decisions, provide advice on the agreed-upon agenda, and maintain contact with the elected Representatives and Observers so that relevant information pertaining to the AU and the Diaspora can be shared with the community.

***Standards for Membership in the CCOE:*** While there is no hard-and-fast rule, CCOE members are usually expected to be at least forty (40) years of age and have a tangible track record of Pan-Afrikan service. The CCOE should be comprised of an odd

number of Elders, no fewer than three and no more than 15. Members are elected for 2-year terms.

***When the CCOE is elected:*** The elections of the CCOE members should take place during the Town Hall, before nominations are solicited for Representatives or Observers.

***Responsibilities of the CCOE:*** The CCOE is not simply a ceremonial Council of the Wise to whom the community comes for advice. The CCOE will have specific duties to perform, and as such this constitutes an important responsibility. Thus, nominations to the CCOE should not be made or accepted lightly. The primary tasks of the CCOE will be:

- (1) Receive the nominations for Representatives and Observers.
- (2) Send letters to each nominee requesting biographical information pertaining to the Minimum Qualifications for Representatives and Observers (See below).
- (3) Review information submitted by nominees to determine those that meet the Minimum Qualifications.
- (4) Complete a Nominees Report to document the candidates that will vie for the positions of Representative or Observer.
- (5) Preside over and conduct the Elections of the Representatives and Observers at the Caucus Meeting (See below).
- (6) Ensure that required diplomatic training sessions for the elected Representatives and Observers are held or made available, and that Representatives and Observers attend those sessions.
- (7) Maintain consistent contact with the Representatives and Observers, and ensure that all news pertaining to the community from the Representatives and Observers is shared with the community.
- (8) Do whatever is necessary, within the limits of its resources, to support the activities of the Representatives and Observers elected by the community.

### **Nomination of Representatives and Observers**

At the Town Hall Meeting, after the CCOE has been elected and the Pan-Afrikan Agenda has been discussed, nominations are solicited from the assembled community for Representatives and Observers to the African Union. During the nomination process, all nominees will be accepted providing they meet the Minimum Qualifications for Candidates as discussed during the Town Hall review of the Pan-Afrikan Agenda. Since this is a Pan-Afrikan meeting, our intention is to attract as many members of the Afrikan community as possible, from all socioeconomic, spiritual and political walks of life. The only requirement is that everyone be truly committed to the uplift of Afrika and her people. Bias, prejudice and personal issues have no place in the proceedings. Names can be called out or written and submitted to the CCOE and the conveners of the Town Hall.

***Individuals who are nominated*** to be AU Representatives or Observers are then requested to do the following:

- (1) Send a Resume or Activities Summary that directly relates to the ***Minimum Qualifications*** (See below).
- (2) Send a brief essay (3 to 5 Pages) stating why the nominee thinks they are well qualified to become an elected Representative of the Diaspora to the AU.

- (3) Complete the *Acceptance/Declination Form* to document that the nominee either accepts or declines the nomination.

### The Review Process

After the list of nominees for the positions of Representative and Observer are determined at the Town Hall, the CCOE will send letters to each nominee requesting biographical information (Resume, Activities Summary and essay) pertaining to the *Minimum Qualifications for Representatives and Observers* (See below). These letters will be accompanied by a list of the Minimum Qualifications (for the nominee's reference) and an *Acceptance/Declination Form* for the nominee to return, accepting the nomination, or declining the nomination and removing her/himself from the process.

The CCOE will review the information (Resumes, Activities Summaries and essays) submitted by the nominees to determine those that meet the Minimum Qualifications.

The CCOE will then complete a *Nominees Report* to document the candidates that will vie for the positions of Representative or Observer.

### The Caucus/Election of Representatives and Observers

The Caucus will be the next major meeting of the Pan-Afrikan community. At this meeting, any remaining questions regarding the election of AU Representatives and Observers will be addressed, then the actual election process will commence.

- (1) The final list of names of the nominees who have met the Minimum Qualifications will be announced.
- (2) A Candidates' Forum will take place, in which each nominee will respond to a specific set of questions and make a statement attesting to her/his qualifications to become a Representative or Observer.
- (3) A brief discussion will commence. If there are only two candidates for Representative and only five for Observer, the organizers may ask the community if Afrikan Consensus exists to agree to name the candidates as Representatives and Observers. Otherwise, the matter will be put to a vote.
- (4) To vote in the election, community members must be at least 18 years of age, have residence in the state and be of Afrikan descent (African-American, Afro-American, Afrodescendant, Afrikan, New Afrikan).
- (5) Voting should be done using printed-paper ballots that will be counted and certified by the CCOE.

### Diplomatic Training

All Representatives and Observers are required to attend a series of Diplomatic Training Sessions to ensure that they are well-versed in international and diplomatic law. This training will be introduced and arranged with the gathering of the elected Representatives and Observers in Washington, DC.

### The National Meeting of Representatives, or Sub-Regional Caucus

This group consists of the elected Representatives from each state. Assuming each state were to proceed with their elections, this would yield 100 Representatives. This meeting would occur at least once a year, shortly before the meeting of the Diaspora Representatives in the *Regional Caucus*. The purpose will be to

establish and ensure clarity and unity on the Agenda it will present from the Afrikan community in the US, as well as to determine the four (4) US Representatives that will travel to the Diasporan Caucus and to the AU/ECOSOCC meeting.

### The Full Meeting of the Diaspora Representatives

The ultimate aim is to create a body called the *Sixth Region Diasporan Caucus*. This group will meet at least once a year as a collective, shortly before the AU Commission meetings, and will include the chosen Representatives from each of the sub-regions. Here, they will formulate a Common Agenda for the Diaspora to present at the *2008 African Union Summit* as delegates to ECOSOCC.

### The Diaspora Goes to the African Union in 2008

This meeting is scheduled to occur in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in March or April 2008.

## RECOMMENDED MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

### Planning Committee

Members should be representatives of Afrikan-centered, Pan-Afrikanist organizations or associations operating in the state in which the Planning Committee is organizing. They should fit the definition of "diaspora" as established by the African Union: "The African Diaspora are peoples of African descent and heritage living outside the continent, irrespective of their citizenship and who remain committed to contribute to the development of the continent and the building of the African Union" (April 2006). Members should reasonably conform with the further explanation of that definition as given by Dr. David Horne, PAOC-RUF: "Pan African Black and Brown folk who represent the African Diaspora and who will be encouraged to come forward and invest some time, energy, will and money to move Africa ahead."

### Council of Elders

While there is no hard-and-fast rule, and each community will decide for itself who the members will be, CCOE members are usually expected to:

- (1) be at least forty (40) years of age.
- (2) have a tangible track record of Pan-Afrikan service.
- (3) be comprised of an odd number of Elders, no fewer than three and no more than 15.
- (4) serve terms of 2 years.

### Representatives and Observers

These Qualifications were used in California and New York (with minor revisions) to nominate their Representatives and Observers. Again, they are meant to be utilized by each local community as guidelines, which may be changed as the local communities deem necessary, but it is expected that most Pan-Afrikan communities will choose Qualifications similar to these:

- (1) Must be elected by a credible constituent body (as required by the AU).
- (2) Must be at least 18 years of age.
- (3) Must have a demonstrated history of Afrikan-centered work in and/or for the Black (Afrikan descendant) community.

- (4) Must identify with being a member of the Afrikan and Afrikan descendant population.
- (5) Must have consistent access to financial resources that will allow for the travel to Afrika and other locations where AU or AU-related meetings will be held, as well as for accommodations. While Representatives are not expected to be independently wealthy, that fact is that the AU cannot provide consistent travel expenses for Representatives. In many cases, this means that the Representative must be supported by the community (s)he represents, such as through fund-raising activities by the CCOE or other sources.
- (6) Should be of strong moral character, as (s)he will be representing millions of Diasporan Afrikans.
- (7) Must have the ability to write well, or have access to someone who can accurately transcribe meeting notes, to be able to regularly report the official decisions of meetings to the community.
- (8) Must have time for this commitment, including the latitude to be out of the country for periods up to several days or weeks at a time for AU business. There will be an average of four meetings per year for Representatives, including at least one national (USA) meeting, one Diasporan meeting outside the USA, and up to two in Afrika (from one week to one month in length).
- (9) Must be willing to attend a series of diplomatic training sessions to become properly prepared to represent the Diaspora at the international level.

As of this writing, California, Texas, New York, Ohio and Washington State have already completed the Representative Election Process. South Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Washington, DC are also trying to get their Town Halls and Elections completed before the late-September deadline. Maryland is scheduling its Town Hall for mid- to late-August, with the Election to be held in mid-September. See the Announcement in this issue for more details.

## Why Organize? And Why The AU?

{Continued From Page 1}

and the American Indian Movement in particular, by the United States' Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

So much for the "agent" charge.

Some of the concerns hold more water. They tend to center around the degree to which corruption is thought to reign within the African Union itself. The heads of state of several of the Afrikan nations are thought to be either closet Pan-Arabists (Ghadaffi of Libya and Al-Bashir of Sudan), or crotchety old dictators desperately holding on to power (Mugabe of Zimbabwe), or pro-Western puppet wannabes (Mbeki of South Africa, Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia), or simply shaky rulers whose legitimacy is still doubted by many (Museveni of Uganda, Kabila of DR Congo). In short, corruption is thought to run rampant among the African Union heads of state.

The fact that the AU has not completed the process of officially codifying the concept of the "Sixth Region" (the Diaspora) of Afrika, despite the voluminous evidence of its invitation to the Diaspora to join it through its Economic, Social and Cultural Committee (ECOSOCC), is even more troubling to some. What if the AU suddenly withdrew its invitation to the Diaspora? What if we do all this work to elect Representatives and Observers from the United States and other sub-regions of the Diaspora, and the AU pulls the rug from under our feet at the last minute? Won't all this work have then gone to waste?

Of course not.

Perhaps the main reason why the Diaspora had not been recognized before now is the fact that *it is not organized*. We have been literally scattered about the planet, geographically and politically, like Your Brain On Drugs. When we finally heed the advice of **Ancestor Kwame Ture** (Stokely Carmichael) and organize ourselves, we will be better able to see how our many struggles come together. We will be able to crystallize our struggles into one Grand Agenda that will resound with the force of millions of Afrikans from all the corners of the

world. And we will have the opportunity to speak in a voice that is much too loud and widespread to ignore.

And because we will have done this according to the standards and procedures prescribed by the African Union--a democratic process in which Representatives and Observers are elected, not self-appointed or anointed by the elite--and because we will have done it in accordance with the AU's schedules and through their designated entry point, ECOSOCC, it will be impossible to discredit our effort without losing credibility on the world stage. We will have the moral upper hand, as well as public credibility, because we will have followed all the rules.

If the AU decides it doesn't care about any of that and simply chooses to ignore the Diaspora anyway, we still needed to organize ourselves. The only difference is that, in that case, we will be organized to act as an outside pressure group as opposed to an inside advocacy group. Either way, the Diaspora must be organized, which is what we are doing here.

There are other groups that are working to organize the Diaspora, such as the Afrikan Diaspora Union and other offshoots of the historic Pan Afrikan Movement Summits. They are doing great work, but they are not taking advantage of the option offered by the AU's invitation to the Diaspora to join with it. Ultimately, it's my hope that we will be able to come together with those organizations, as well as with those who have the principled suspicions I've listed above, to create a truly unified Diaspora and finally, a United Afrika. I could not call myself a Pan-Afrikanist if I did not share that hope and seek any way possible to bring that hope to fruition.

Finally, a word or two for those who wonder why we are even bothering to organize in the first place. They would point to their comfortable homes, their big screen TV, their cable or satellite dish and their nice car and say, "Aren't we doing well? Isn't this the Land of Opportunity?" And I would direct their attention to Sean Bell, murdered in cold blood by New York City police on the morning of his wedding day. I would point



to Abner Louima, Amadou Diallo and the other victims of police brutality and murder. I would point to the health statistics that show that Afrikan people in the US are still discriminated against in the health care arena, even when their socioeconomic status is equal to that of their White counterparts. I would point to the continued prevalence of discrimination in employment, in financial lending, in housing. I would point to the fact that the mass media continues to paint crime, violent crime and drug-related crime as a Black Problem, when in fact Whites commit 70% of all crime, violent, drug-related, you name it. And I would point to the federal government's response to Hurricane Katrina, which was to cast the Afrikan people who were stuck in New Orleans as being too stupid or too immoral to leave "when they had the chance", which was to accuse the people who were trying to survive with organizing gangs of thugs who went on looting sprees and anti-White rampages of violence, and which prompted Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco to dispatch armed National Guard squadrons to New Orleans not to search and rescue, but to search and destroy: "They are battle-tested soldiers from Iraq. They are locked and loaded. They are ready to shoot and kill if necessary, and I suspect they will."

I would point to Afrika, a continent that, in the 1884-85 **Berlin Conference**, had been divided into 54 tasty slices by the European powers, not for the benefit of the Afrikans living there but for the exploitative purposes of the Europeans. I would point out that Afrika is the richest continent on earth but the poorest people live there. I would point out the continuing legacies of slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism. I would point out the fact that Afrikans around the world, by and large, do not speak their ancestral languages, do not practice their indigenous spirituality, do not dress as their ancestors did, do not call themselves by Afrikan names and do not come from countries that were even allowed to determine their own boundaries

naturally like most countries are. We continue to exist under identities foisted upon us by our historical oppressors and tormentors.

Look at all that evidence and then tell me that everything is fine for Afrikan people in the United States, or anywhere in the world.

On August 4, 1857, Ancestor Frederick Douglass said the following:

*"If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground, they want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters. This struggle may be a moral one, or it may be a physical one, and it may be both moral and physical, but it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will. Find out just what any people will quietly submit to and you have found out the exact measure of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them, and these will continue till they are resisted with either words or blows, or with both. The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress."*

And the Honorable Marcus Mosiah Garvey once said:

*"The thing to do is to get organized; keep separated and you will be exploited, you will be robbed, you will be killed. Get organized and you will compel the world to respect you."*

As I see it, we have two options from which to choose. Those options are to Be Involved. Or, **Be Enslaved**.

Bro. Cliff  
Editor

## BACK, AGAIN {Continued From Page 1}

magazine, publish more frequently and more widely, and even carve out a niche for myself as a professional journalist.

Each and every one of the thirty-six issues lost money, once the expenses of production, publication and distribution (lotsa gas money) had been figured in. All but a scant few had lost over a hundred dollars each, and several lost two hundred or more. For a big publishing house, that may not be a particularly large sum of money, but for a self-published work that had come out of personal savings and credit card debt, the cumulative loss of funds that could have gone to food, mortgage and bills was tremendous.

What had happened? Well, several things. Among them was my own complete ineptitude at promoting the Newsletter to the businesses, organizations and individuals who might have supported it through their advertising dollars. I've never been a salesman, and as such found it difficult, and at times even distasteful, to attempt to "sell" it to anybody. I felt, perhaps, that the information in it was so important that it should be able to sell itself. But people in general are inundated constantly with the efforts of others to "sell" their products, their stories, their outlook on life, and Afrikan people are probably bombarded more than any other community in that regard. Our collective

disposable income, estimated at about 850 billion dollars now (rivaling all of North Afrika and the Middle East!), is coveted by so many who do not have our best interests at heart. But the pull of their siren song of rampant consumerism is powerful, and we find it difficult to move away from that intoxicating message to heed the call of activism, resistance, independence, self-determination and --*dare I say it?*--revolution.

My inability to capture the attention and imagination of enough of our people was magnified by the fragile existence of the Afrikan-centered activist. Many who called themselves Pan-Afrikanists quickly forgot that self-identification when times got too rough, *or* when they got too comfortable. When we become sufficiently discouraged or deprived of our essential nourishment, we lose our revolutionary fire in the interest of self-preservation (not that there's anything wrong with that). Likewise, when we get rich and fat, we forget about the basic inequalities and injustices that led us to stand up and fight the system in the first place. We are either beaten down or bought off by The System.

It can be hard to keep in tune with that essence that had sustained you. Fortunately, sometimes someone throws you a lifeline that can keep you going until it's time to rise again. For

me, as living expenses increased (we moved) and the bills piled up, forcing me to suspend publication of the Newsletter, another door opened, courtesy of **Baba Dalani Aamon**, Founder and CEO of **Harambee Radio**.

Harambee Radio broadcasts over the Internet at [www.harambeeradio.com](http://www.harambeeradio.com). Baba Dalani had met me at an event in Philadelphia called "Black Folks and the Media", which had been organized by **Empress Phile Chionesu**, Founder of 1997's historic **Million Woman March** in Philadelphia. Baba Dalani, upon being introduced to me by "Empress Chi", offered me the opportunity to produce a weekly, 15-minute segment on **Harambee Radio**. I wasn't sure I could fill 15 minutes a week, but Baba Dalani assured me that I would have no problem. Within a few months, the **Kuumba Radio Report** was an *hour long* (sometimes longer) and well on its way.

The radio show allowed me to keep in touch with what was going on in the activist community, as well as to learn more about what was going on in Afrika. We produced shows about the **Day of Mourning/Misgiving Day** in Plymouth, Massachusetts in November 2005. In July 2006, I traveled to New Orleans, Louisiana to see the remaining devastation from **Hurricane Katrina** and to meet with members of the **Peoples Hurricane Relief Fund**, a coalition of liberal, Pan-Afrikanist, Black Nationalist, anarchist and other organizations that had come together to fight for the right to return and rebuild for the dispossessed of New Orleans and Mississippi. In the process, I met new friends, made new contacts and, perhaps, set the stage for the triumphant return of **KUUMBAReport** Newsletter.

I had been running out of patience with myself for more than a year, saying over and over again that we would resume publication. I've talked with several people, in Baltimore MD,

in Washington DC, in Philadelphia PA, in New York NY, in Richmond VA and in New Orleans LA, who surprised me by remembering the Newsletter and what it tried to do. So, finally, *I've had it*. Starting with this, the August 2007 issue, we're officially announcing the launch of the Second Season of **KUUMBAReport** Newsletter.

We hope this run is more successful than the previous one (though some might say that 36 issues was pretty good for a first run, this time I hope we can do it without losing our shirt). We hope that we'll be able to meet, and even surpass, the standard of research, journalism, analysis, and Pan-Afrikan spirit that was reached in the first 36 issues. We hope you'll let us know how we can make this re-incarnation of **KUUMBAReport** more relevant to you and to the Afrikan Community as a whole.

Our next step, once we've stabilized our distribution and production, is to proceed with a Web Site. We've been working on it, and soon we'll accelerate that effort to get a presence on the World Wide Web. We'll continue with the **Kuumba Radio Report** on **Harambee Radio**, and we encourage you to listen to all the wonderful talk shows on Harambee Talk Radio, located on the Internet at [www.harambeeradio.com](http://www.harambeeradio.com).

Please feel free to get in touch with us, whether you want to find out about getting the Newsletter in your area, you want to subscribe, or you have a suggestion for us. We'll have a Web Site soon, but in the meantime we can be reached by e-mail at [kuumba@verizon.net](mailto:kuumba@verizon.net).

**Peace and Power!**

Bro. Cliff  
Editor

## JUSTICE FOR MARSHALL EDDIE CONWAY!

Marshall "Eddie" Conway is currently in the 37th year of his incarceration in the Maryland prison system for a crime that he did not commit. As an important member of the Baltimore chapter of the Black Panther Party, Eddie was targeted by local, state and federal police under the FBI's infamous COINTELPRO.

Despite being a model prisoner, infraction-free for over 27 years, Eddie has been repeatedly denied parole by the State of Maryland. For years, Eddie is seeking a new trial that would uncover the "dirty tricks" that were used to target and unfairly convict him of killing a Baltimore police officer in 1970. Eddie himself has repeatedly stated: "At no time in my life have I killed or attempted to kill anyone. I have no involvement in that incident. I'm innocent." The Baltimore City Council seems to believe him, having passed a unanimous Resolution in 2001 calling for a review of Eddie's case.

### What Can You Do To Help?

Write to Maryland Governor **Martin O'Malley**, Lieutenant Governor **Philip Brown** and Maryland's State Legislators to demand that Eddie be granted parole or a new trial. Join or support the organizations fighting for Eddie.

To contact the Governor, write to: Governor Martin O'Malley, State House, Annapolis, MD 21401; or call: **1-800-811-8336** (phone) or **410-974-3901**; faxes to: **410-974-3275**. The Governor's e-mail address: [governor@gov.state.md.us](mailto:governor@gov.state.md.us); the Governor's Web Site: [www.gov.state.md.us](http://www.gov.state.md.us)

To offer your support to the Marshall E. Conway Support Committee, contact **Kuumba Events and Communications** at: P.O. Box 1723, Baltimore, MD 21203-1723  
E-mail: [kuumba@verizon.net](mailto:kuumba@verizon.net).

**"All Power To The People"**



**The Fifth Annual  
Happily Natural**  
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Saturday August 25, 2007 Noon - 7pm  
Hotchkiss Field Community Center  
701 E. Brookland Park Blvd (RVA)

[www.happilynaturalday.com](http://www.happilynaturalday.com)

**Happily Natural Day** is a family oriented, grassroots festival dedicated to social change & holistic health and wellness. We bring together artists, musicians, vendors, activists and scholars from all across the country by utilizing music, lectures and workshops as tools for learning & community empowerment.

Hosted by the **Universal Negro Improvement Association & African Communities League (UNIA-ACL)** in collaboration with **Camp Diva**, the 5th Annual Happily Natural Day will be held at **Hotchkiss Field Community Center** at **701 E. Brookland Park Blvd** in **Richmond, Virginia** on **August 25th, 2007**.

In conjunction with a myriad of community organizations and institutions, Happily Natural has established events from **August 24th-26th** under the banner of **Black Freedom Weekend**. This year's special guests will include **Queen Afua**, author of *Heal Thyself* and *Sacred Woman* and founder of the **Heal Thyself Center** in Brooklyn New York; and **Runoko Rashidi**, historian, research specialist and world traveler focusing on the global African presence and the African foundations of world civilizations.

Founded in 2003, in four short years Happily Natural Day has become one of the most critically acclaimed pro-African celebrations in the state of Virginia. In the spirit of UNIA-ACL Founder Marcus Garvey, Happily Natural Day is organized to uplift the African American community and has been celebrated successfully each year supporting African owned and run institutions in the Mid-Atlantic region.

For more information, please visit our Web Site at <http://happilynaturalday.com>.



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# Katrina&Rita TRIBUNAL TRUTH crushed to EARTH will RISE!

## Why a Tribunal?

*“They carried out a campaign of terror and genocide”* is the clear charge against the United States government by the people of New Orleans and the Mississippi Gulf Coast region displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Katrina and Rita left over **2,000 dead or missing and over 800,000 without homes, jobs or help**. Between August 29<sup>th</sup> and September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2005 the world witnessed the monumental failure of the US government to protect and respect the lives of working people, the majority of whom were African American and poor. This failure is the direct result of the national (race), class, and gender oppression that is inherent in the US government throughout its 230 year history.

Since Katrina and Rita the government has:

- Ø Forcibly removed tens of thousands of residents;
- Ø Disenfranchised tens of thousands of voters;
- Ø Refused to adhere to its own policies and procedures pertaining to the security and well being of internally displaced persons (IDP's);
- Ø Grossly mismanaged resources for the reconstruction of the region, including awarding no-bid contracts to big corporations connected to the Bush administration;
- Ø Eliminated environmental and worker protection laws;
- Ø Unjustifiably criminalized thousands of Survivors, particularly the displaced;
- Ø Set up a reconstruction process that excludes effective input, oversight, and control over the process by the majority African American population; and
- Ø Threatened to seize large portions of New Orleans owned and occupied by African Americans to ethnically cleanse the city and prevent the return of its historic majority.

There were and still are countless abuses being actively committed against African American and working class communities of the Gulf Coast by the US government. The tragic scenes of Katrina victims facing death, destruction, abandonment and forced relocation and occupation at gunpoint in herds like animals gave rise to outrage across the globe. This is why we are calling for an **International Tribunal for justice and restitution**.

## What is a Tribunal?

The **International Tribunal** is a **Peoples Court** where the people, the direct victims of these crimes, will try the US government before a body of esteemed international legal and political figures. At the Tribunal an Independent and International Body of Jurists will deliberate and render a verdict that will be pursued in domestic civil courts and international courts like the Inter-American Court and the International Criminal Court.

## The Charges

Katrina and Rita survivors are here to bring serious charges against the Federal, State and local governments with violating and negating their fundamental human rights. These criminal acts occurred in three phases: [1] Pre-Katrina, [2] Katrina storm, flood, occupation, and removal (evacuation) related abuses, and [3] post-Katrina. The charges include:

1. **Crimes against humanity,**
2. **Ethnic cleansing and genocide,**
3. **Racial discrimination, and**
4. **Denial of the rights of displaced persons, including the right to return.**

## The Goals

1. **Hold the U.S. government accountable for its crimes against humanity;**
2. **Demand restitution and justice for the Survivors of Katrina and Rita;**
3. **Advance the Katrina-Rita reconstruction movement;**
4. **Build a national and international campaign against the U.S. government's program of ethnic cleansing; and**
5. **Demand that the U.S. government adheres to UN guidelines on Internally Displaced Persons (IDP's).**

## The Call

Katrina and Rita Survivors and advocates are convening an International Tribunal on Katrina and Rita. The tribunal will be held in New Orleans **August 29 - September 2, 2007**. We call on organizations, individuals and governments internationally to sign on as endorsers and to **contribute time, resources, and funds** to support this important event.

## Some Endorsers are:

Caribbean Conference in Solidarity with the People of Haiti  
Archbishop Njongonkulu of South Africa  
King Downing, National Coordinator of ACLU Campaign  
Against Racial Profiling  
National Conference of Black Lawyers  
United Teachers of Los Angeles  
Ward Churchill, The International Tribunal on the Rights of  
Indigenous Hawaiians-1993

## Join Us!

To participate in the Tribunal organizing process or for further information contact:

**Leon A. Waters at the Peoples Hurricane Relief Fund**  
504.301.0215 or [info@peopleshurricane.org](mailto:info@peopleshurricane.org)