

Address to the 12th session of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

Topic: The UN International decade for People of African Descent

Geneva, April 8 th, 2014

Statement presented by Mrs. Dr. Barryl A. Biekman, Tiye International

Mr. Chair

distinguished delegates,

My name is Barryl Biekman. I have the honour to address you in my personal capacity as representative of Civil Society and People of African Descent. I address you as a long standing activist in the combat against racism and for the rights of People of African Descent.

The organization on whose behalf I speak is Tiye International in cooperations with The African European Women's Movement Sophiedela, The National Platform of the Dutch Slaverypast, PanAfstrag, The Pan African Diaspora Union and the African and African Decendants Network, AD Experts and AD Students in the Netherlands, welcome the decision by the UN General Assembly to declare the International Decade for People of African Descent, starting on first January 2015.

We fully support the statement that was delivered on the opening day of this session by the World Against Racism Network. In our view that statement summarized basic criterias that must be met for producing a successful outcome at this session that can be acceptable to People of African Descent and many NGOs who have been longstanding supporters of the Decade.

First and foremost we wish to stress the need for the Draft Programme of Action for the International Decade of People of African Descent produced by the Working Group of Experts to be respected and adopted as the long term guidelines for the Decade to complement the actionable Programme of Activities to be negotiated by this working group. It is a Draft whereby diverse NGO's including ours in the Netherlands use the opportunity to deliver input. It was a very energetic process.

We support the NGO proposal that the Intergovernmental Working Group should agree and the General Assembly should adopt the Draft Programme of the Working Group of Experts as the "United Nations International Framework for the International Decade" to conceptually guide the observance of the Decade.

We also support the statement of the International Committee for the respect and Application of the African Charter n human and peoples Rights, delivered by mr Maluza.

We would find it totally unacceptable that this important document which was developed with strong support and involment of People of African descent be downgraded or left without intergovernmental support when the majority of countries have already accepted it.

It is on this moment the only document that if it is adopted can make possible that the symbolic violence that we people of African descents for instance face in the Netherlands, can stop.

In this regard I speak about the Racial Profiles that still is using by the Justice and Police authorities, media and press. The racist caricature within the concept of Santa Claus and Black Pete and last but not least the side panel of the Golden Carriage of the Royal House with naked enslaved Africans and Indonesian People. A Carriage which are using every in September of every year. For decades people of African Descents are struggeling to make politicians and the society, companies and schoolleaders aware that this acts are continuation of the crimes against African People.

We agree with the statement by the Chair of the Working Group of Experts who underlined the need for new efforts to disseminate the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action as the International Decade is unthinkable without the DDPA.

We would like to have an explanation why the combined publication of the three Durban documents from 2001, 2009 and 2011 is still not available for distribution to non-governmental organisations

as requested by the Human Rights Council at its September 2013 session.

The International Decade is undertaken in direct implementation of the DDPA and this fact should be used to further popularize and build support for the DDPA. Supporting the DDPA has been a difficult matter in the former slave trading countries and DDPA defenders constantly feel that their human rights work is not appreciated.

The International Decade must bring a change to this deplorable situation. At last as for the Indigenes peoples we advise the adopting of a Permanent Commission for People of African Descent.

Thank you Mr Chair