

It is a great honor to have been present in New York for the second session of the United Nations Permanent Forum for People of African Descent. We reflect upon the remarkable progress we have achieved since the establishment of the first-ever United Nations permanent forum for people of African descent in Geneva, Switzerland just last year.

This monumental initiative arose from our collective determination to address the urgent challenges faced by individuals of African descent on a global scale. However, during this time of reflection, a realization has dawned upon me—one that compels me to shift the focus of my statement. We are all well aware of the persistent problems within our communities, challenges that have been acknowledged by great minds throughout history, including Brother Malcolm, Marcus Garvey, Nelson Mandela, Prophet Noble Drew Ali, and even Gaddafi himself. They all recognized and understood these issues.

And yet, despite this awareness, we find ourselves today still seeking new ways and platforms to discuss the same problems. I firmly believe that our efforts should go beyond mere discussion. We must harness the power of this mechanism to become a catalyst for change. The time has come to actualize the dream of the African Union and propel it forward with unwavering determination.

At the heart of this endeavor lies the establishment of a consulate that represents all 54 African countries in a centralized location. This consulate, envisioned as a symbol of unity and collaboration, will consolidate our strengths and foster a shared vision for progress. Gaddafi, a champion of this cause, emphasized the importance of our sovereign nations working together to achieve the United States of Africa.

We stand on the shoulders of giants, and the groundwork for this vision has already been laid, with billions of dollars invested in these plans. Let us not confine ourselves solely to discussions about the challenges we face. Instead, I propose that the board of the United Nations Permanent Forum for People of African Descent extends their support to us as we strive to establish this consulate. Through this collective effort, we can bring to life the grand vision of a united Africa, representing the hopes and aspirations of all 54 countries within the African diaspora.

We must not forget the significant investments that have already been made in this direction. A staggering \$70 billion from Libyan oil money has been channeled into an African development bank, enabling us to achieve self-sufficiency as people of African descent. Additionally, \$1 billion has been allocated for the establishment of a Caribbean development bank, focused on the growth and development of the Caribbean Islands. With such substantial resources and the support of the United Nations Permanent Forum, we can take monumental strides towards the realization of the United States of Africa.

Let us seize this moment, drawing inspiration from the giants who came before us, and work together to shape a brighter future for all people of African descent.

Thank you,

Regina Silas

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