



## **CALL FOR PAPERS**

### **AU ECHO 2025 EDITION**

#### **The Year of Reparations**

#### ***THEME: “Justice for Africans and People of African Descent Through Reparations”***

The payment of reparations, including reparatory justice, for historical crimes and mass atrocities committed against Africans and people of African descent has always been part of the priorities of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), now the African Union (AU) since the inception of the OAU in 1963.

Since its launch in 2002, the AU has taken several decisions and supported initiatives to spearhead and promote the advancement of the cause of justice and the payment of reparations to Africans, and the restitution of cultural artifacts, relics, and heritage pillaged during colonisation and enslavement, to the African countries from where these items were looted and stolen.

Following in the tradition of the global Pan-African movements, the continental movement for reparations, including reparatory justice in Africa, started with political activism by prominent politicians during the campaigns for national liberation and independence.

The OAU officially inaugurated the 12-Member Group of Eminent Persons (GEP) at a meeting in Abuja, Nigeria on 28th June 1992. The mandate of the GEP was to develop a political agenda and review the issue of reparations in relation to the damage done to Africa and its Diaspora by the trans-Atlantic slave trade, slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism. The First Pan-African Conference on Reparations, sponsored by the GEP and the Commission for Reparations of the OAU, as well as the Federal Government of the Republic of Nigeria, was convened from 27th – 29th April 1993 in Abuja, Nigeria. The outcome document of the conference is [the Abuja Proclamation on Reparations](#). The Abuja Proclamation represented a key moment in the contemporary history of African reparations efforts, because it served as a catalyst for revitalizing reparation movements, and was the first common position taken by the political leadership of Africa.

The AU joined the United Nations (UN) at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance held from 31st August to 8th September 2001 in Durban, South Africa to adopt the [2001 Durban Declaration and Programme of Action](#). The Durban Declaration highlighted the effects of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance, and provided a comprehensive and visionary blueprint that embodies the world’s commitment to tackle the scourge of racism in all its forms and manifestations. In particular, the declaration “acknowledged that slavery and the slave trade, including the transatlantic slave trade, were appalling tragedies in the history of humanity, and further, that slavery and the slave trade are crime against humanity and should always have been so, especially the transatlantic slave trade, and are among the major sources and manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and that Africans and people of African descent were victims of these acts and continue to be victims of their consequences.”

These harmful effects caused by slavery and the slave trade also applied to colonization, apartheid, and genocide. Furthermore, the declaration strongly affirmed that victims of these human rights violations, especially in the light of their vulnerable situation socially, culturally, and economically, should be assured of having access to justice, including legal assistance

where appropriate, and effective and appropriate protection and remedies, including the right to seek just and adequate reparation or satisfaction for any damage suffered as a result of such harm caused, as enshrined in numerous international and regional human rights instruments, in particular the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

Another milestone by the African Union in galvanizing the momentum on reparations, including reparatory justice, took place in 2021 when the AU Commission in collaboration with the Government of Senegal and the Open Society Initiative in West Africa (OSIWA), held a Continental Experts Workshop on the Restitution of Cultural Property and Heritage from 30th November to 2nd December 2021 in Dakar, Senegal to develop a Common African Position Paper on the Restitution of Cultural Property and Heritage, and to produce a Framework for Action on the Negotiations for the Return/Restitution of Illicitly Trafficked Cultural Property from the Continent. The workshop also afforded an opportunity to reflect on restitution policies for cultural property in Africa, and establish networks of African cultural experts, policy makers, dealers, auctioneers, museum curators among others, working in combating illicit trafficking in cultural property and heritage. The workshop was preceded by an online Regional Economic Communities (RECs) Consultation on Restitution of Cultural Property on 29th November 2021 that brought together continental to review continental and regional initiatives on the restitution of cultural property and heritage.

The African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) in November 2022 passed a [Resolution on Africa's Reparations Agenda and the Human Rights of Africans in the Diaspora and People of African Descent Worldwide \(ACHPR/Res.543 \(LXXIII\) 2022\)](#). The resolution, inter alia, reaffirmed the 2001 Durban Declaration and Programme of Action as a comprehensive framework addressing racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance, and acknowledged the significance of the International Decade for People of African Descent (2015 – 2024) in advancing recognition, justice and development of people of African descent worldwide.

At the 36th Ordinary Assembly of the Union held on 18th – 19th February 2023 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the Heads of States and Governments of the Member States, pursuant to the [Assembly Decision \(Assembly/AU/Dec.847\(XXXVI\)\)](#) endorsed a proposal by the Republic of Ghana to co-organize with relevant stakeholders, and host an international conference in 2023 on the theme: [“Building a United Front to Advance the Cause of Justice and the Payment of Reparations to Africans.”](#) See the [Accra Proclamation on Reparations](#).

In addition, the AU Assembly decision requested for the AU Commission, in consultation with Member States, ECOSOCC and other AU organs as well as the RECs, to establish an African Committee of Experts on Reparations for the purpose of developing a Common African Position on Reparations and incorporate therein, an African Reparatory Programme of Action, and to collaborate with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to establish an African Caribbean Joint Mechanism on Reparative Justice based on the resolve of the [Global African Diaspora Summit](#) held in South Africa in 2012.

### **The Call:**

Referencing the decisions or declarations of the AU as well as above quoted and other documented pronouncements and actions by the African Union, and in line with the theme of the year for 2025, interested parties are hereby called upon to submit for the 2025 edition of the AU ECHO, incisive and evidence based articles on the potential of and progress made in the implementation or mainstreaming of AU decisions in the field of compensation for enslavement and colonisation (Reparations) as well as initiatives that are being undertaken at institutional, country and continental levels to demonstrate the targeted efforts aimed to tackle the scourge in all its forms and manifestations.

To support their arguments, writers should reference any or a number of the following:

- Agenda 2063, available here <https://au.int/agenda2063/overview>
- Relevant treaties of the AU <https://au.int/en/treaties>
- [The Abuja Proclamation](#)
- [2001 Durban Declaration and Programme of Action](#)
- Documents mentioned in this call

View previous editions of the AU ECHO [here](#)

### Submission Requirements & Deadline:

- Original contributions will be accepted from institutions, organs and employees of the African Union, AU member states, African academic institutions, think tanks, civil society organisations and representative groups (e.g. women, youth), industry experts and the wider African public. The editors reserve the right to reject papers they deem to be inconsistent with the guidelines outlined in this call for papers.
- A connection should be made to the theme of the year for 2025 outlined in this concept note, and its objectives
- Languages: Articles for publication may be submitted in English or French.
- Word count: Not more than 1500 words per article.
- Images: Pertinent photographs and other illustrations that enhance the articles are welcome and should be sent in the same email as the article, but as separate attachments. These must be original to the author and/or be under a creative common license. Authors must confirm their ownership of such illustrations and captions must be provided. **Photographs should be a minimum 1mb in resolution.** Embedding photographs in a word file may lead to disqualification.
- Submissions should be in word format. No PDF submissions will be accepted.
- All submissions must contain the full name and contact details of the sender, his/her organization / job title (if applicable), and a brief summary of the article.
- Submissions will only be accepted through email as guided below.
  - **Title / subject of email: SUBMISSION – AU ECHO 2025- (INSERT TITLE OF ARTICLE)**
  - **Receiving emails:**  
Send all manuscripts and correspondence to [Gamalk@africa-union.org](mailto:Gamalk@africa-union.org), copying the Managing Editor at [MusabayanaW@africa-union.org](mailto:MusabayanaW@africa-union.org) and [DIC@africa-union.org](mailto:DIC@africa-union.org)
- **DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION**
  - Manuscripts must be received before **17.00 East African Time (GMT+3) on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2024**

### About the AU ECHO:

The AU ECHO provides a platform for the 55 Member States of the African Union, and African citizens to profile the successes of Africa, and to impart knowledge and experiences borne from African led initiatives, based on the instruments and decisions of the African Union. It is published on an annual basis by the Directorate of Information and Communication of the AUC with content largely related to the AU's Theme of the Year.

The AU ECHO is distributed to AU Heads of State and Government, Ministers, senior policy makers' delegates, and media during the AU Summits and other substantive meetings and conferences as well as to offices of the African Union. Distribution is also made to development partner organisations and consulates / embassies in Addis Ababa. Soft copies are posted online on <https://au.int/en/documents/1148>