

Addressing Maafa denial and slavery apologists

A brief guide debunking the myths and promoting the truth about the Maafa from an Africentric position



The Ligali organisation



Dedication

"He who tells the truth is never wrong"

Swahili proverb

This booklet is dedicated to the ancestors: those who died and suffered unimaginable physical, mental, emotional and spiritual pain, those who fought a righteous battle against obstinate oppression and those who ultimately, and willingly, died fighting for us. We owe a debt of gratitude that we endeavour to pay back in part through the continuing fight for justice to enable you to rest in the peace you deserve.

To all our children and future African generations: you are our reason to live, fight and die for the African right to self determine.

And finally, to all our fellow brothas and sistas presently striding along the road to liberation, may we continue to walk strong, proud and uncompromisingly in unity towards The Ultimate Goal.





Contents

Background	1
The Terminology Challenge	3
Introduction	8
Addressing Maafa denial and slavery apologists	9
Community Recommendations for 2007	23
Recommended cultural resources	25





Background

Reproduced with edits from 'The Challenge of the Maafa 2007: Outlining the African Perspective' an article in the 2006 African Remembrance Day event brochure

In 2007, the Government will be marking the bicentenary anniversary of the British abolition of slavery Act. For this purpose, they initially allocated over £16 million to various initiatives and organisations, a figure that has been increased by £4 million in recent months. The scene for the commemorative plans was firmly set when the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott failed to include authentic grass roots representation in the 2007 Advisory group organising the events for next year. The reason for this exclusion is simple; the British government is intent on rewriting history in a way that glorifies and exaggerates their role in the so-called abolition of enslavement whilst simultaneously marginalising the fundamental role of African revolutionaries who were the primary driving force behind European momentum to pass the 'slave trade' abolition Act in 1807.

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, barbaric and immoral enslavement of African people does a great disservice to the memory of millions of African people who remained in chattel enslavement 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

There has been a particularly heavy focus on disingenuously extolling the conservative evangelical Christian William Wilberforce as one of the 'leaders of the anti-slavery movement' and the saviour of a docile, passive and grateful enslaved Africa. In fact, Wilberforce, who was against suffrage of women, is far from the hero John Prescott and others project him to be. Wilberforce and his much lauded American counterpart Thomas Jefferson, sought gradual emancipation for African people on the basis that we were incapable of handling freedom;

'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'

Some of the other myths and distorted 'history' being promoted by the British government in 2007 included, but are not limited to;

- Presenting a myopic version of African history that only starts at British Slavery 500 years ago
- Retelling the history of Empire and casting colonialism as a force for good
- Portraying African people as passive recipients of liberal European justice whilst undermining the history espousing the action and impact of African revolutionary activists and mass resistance to enslavement
- The perpetuation and reassertion of institutionalised racist terminology
- Masking the reality and effects of today's neo colonisation and ongoing Maafa
- Completely writing out the role of African women in the history of African rebellion against enslavement and colonisation
- Endorsing 'the wilberforce effect', commonly known as Wilberfest which promotes the myth that one (European) man has the power to save the lives of millions of African people – note Bob Geldof is the modern day personification of this concept

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 (£1.4 billion in today's current value) 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.





The Terminology Challenge

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 ethnically inaccurate and offensive terminology with a view to revising and implementing positive and appropriate changes.

African or "black"

"The first difference which strikes us is that of color... 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

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 connected with negative, social and cultural connotations. Whilst it has been accepted that it is offensive to call Chinese people 'yellow' or Amerindians 'red' it is still permitted to use 'black' to describe African people.

Upholding the colour coding system of ethnicity maintains an offensive hierarchical system of a perceived cultural supremacy and dominance. Because of its cultural, spiritual and social connotation 'white' overrules and commands 'black'. 'White' = good, 'black' = evil. 'White' = correct, truth, 'black' = wrong, falsehood. These labels have become a normalised and integrated part of the world psyche and the so-called 'whites', or europeans as they are most appropriately known, who benefit most from this social organisation continue to resist the change needed to rectify this social and cultural injustice.

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 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. Most critically, the term also disinherits African people from their culture and heritage.





The word 'African' specifically relates to the indigenous people of the African Continent and their descendants in the Diaspora (Caribbean, Americas, Pacific Islands etc). The ethnicity-nationality model such as that currently employed by African Americans, African Brazilian and African Caribbean communities more accurately describes our identities connected by a common and unifying link whilst fully articulating the diverse historical and geo-political reality of African people worldwide.

The miscellaneous use of the label 'Black' 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. However, just as coloured and negro were acceptable terms of reference in their time, 'black' must also be recognised for the socially loaded term that it is. 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', 'Negroid' or 'black Africa'.

Enslaved African or "slave"?

Current eurocentric thinking argues that African people were legitimate 'property' according to British law and therefore the use of the derogatory phrase 'slave' is wholly appropriate despite its effective removal of any reference to the individuals cultural heritage, identity or humanity. African academics and activists refute this and maintain that the people they are referring to 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.

Maafa

The word "Maafa" translated into English language means "The Enslavement of (Mama) Africa". It is derived from a Kiswahili word meaning disaster, terrible occurrence, injustice or great tragedy.

The term was popularised in the Diaspora by the African American academic, Marimba Ani, who used it to also signify that the Maafa did not begin 500 years ago but covered a "1300-year-long period (652 CE – Present) of African conquest, enslavement, domination, oppression, exploitation and genocide at the hands of Europeans and Arabs".

When capitalised The Maafa uniquely refers to the injustice of the subjugation, contamination and loss of indigenous African cultures, languages, spiritual beliefs primarily by invading arabs and europeans.

It also incorporates the historic and ongoing commercial exploitation of Africa through enslavement, colonisation and neo-colonialism. These foreign policies result in present day atrocities and human rights violations in African and throughout the African





Diaspora that continue to occur as a result of foreign subjugation, intrusion and exploitation of African people, land, resources and culture. Its capitalised status is also a reflection of the duration of the process and the unprecedented scale of the inhuman treatment of African people.

The use of the words "Mama Africa" in the English translation has a special symbolic relevance as a direct reference to Africa being the birth place of humanity and the cradle of civilisation.

Forced labour camps or "plantations"

The use of the phrase "plantation" to describe the place in which African people were forced to work is a transparent attempt by Europeans to mask and 'civilise' what was the undeniably immoral and brutal practice of dehumanising people. The use of this word in the retelling of history is specifically used to undermine the atrocious nature of what should be referred to as 'forced labour camps'. As has become commonplace, the phrase 'plantation' is often indicative of a Eurocentric perspective whilst the reality for African people is that they were not working by consent nor were they treated in the dignified manner that you would expect as a 'legitimate' employee. Many women suffered miscarriages and stillbirths because of the excessive and oppressive nature of their work and violent and disfiguring beatings were common for African men and women. Thus, from a more accurate perspective, we refer to "forced labour camps".

Slaver or "plantation owner"/ "slave master"

Use of the term 'plantation owner' is a linguistic means of distancing British slavers from the repellent nature of their business which was the forced exploitation of African people. The title bestows the slavers with an air of respectability and legitimacy when describing their despicable profession.

Slaving vessels or "slave ships"

The inappropriate term 'slave ship' asserts that the naval vessels used to transport kidnapped African people were merely humble cargo ships of 'trade'. In reality, the British, amongst others, designed slaving ships to particular specifications which were designed to hold as many captive Africans in as confined a space as possible purely as a means of maximising what the slavers undoubtedly saw as potential profit. Ultimately, the conditions of these ships were grotesquely unhygienic and inhumane. Use of the term 'slaving ship/vessel' as opposed to 'slave ship' makes a clear distinction between a vessel being promoted as a passive means of transporting 'product', as implied by the latter term whilst the former description indicates a deliberate and aggressive process in which the African people who were kidnapped and trafficked were held in forced bondage.

Please Note: The term 'slaver' is sometimes confusingly used to refer to slaving vessels as well as people. We do not recommend this approach as it was initially part of a





strategy to prevent participants engaged in the process of the enslavement of African people being personally and professionally implicated by their immoral actions. These people preferred the terms 'slave master' and 'slave owner' as means of asserting authority and status instead of the more accurate phrase 'slaver'.

Enslavement or "slavery"

The word 'Enslavement' is used to make a definitive ideological distinction between 'slavery' by the oppressors and the 'enslavement' of African people. It remains immoral and inappropriate to commemorate 'slavery' which relates to the actions of the oppressor. British slavery is not the same as African enslavement. The only respectful commemorative process is that of a remembrance or memorial focused on reversing the injustices committed whilst restoring the history and legacy of the African people and culture lost through the process of enslavement. Slavery memorial is not the same as African remembrance.

"Transatlantic slave trade"

'The Transatlantic Slave Trade' is a commonly used eurocentric definition which attempts to turn the enslavement of African people into one of commerce in an attempt to diminish and avoid addressing the barbarism and immorality of the Maafa. The word 'trade' implies a legitimate and consensual transaction and belittles the magnitude and reality 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 the falsity that a number of 'uncivilised' African people were wholly responsible for the Maafa because they sold their own people into enslavement.

Whilst this may legally be considered a crime against humanity now, at the time it was not recognised as such by the exploiters of African people because whilst the perpetrators were acting inhumanly they were still human and following the collective will and immoral laws of their respective democratically formed governments and religious leaders. The enslavement of Africa has to be recognised as an unprovoked war, waged specifically and deliberately against Africa by nations welding inhumane practices, policies and a distorted sense of morality. It remains an open injustice against Africa that must be addressed. No person should ever use the terms 'slave trade' without qualifying them in this wider historical context.

The phrase Transatlantic Slave Trade is often erroneously used when attempting to translate the word Maafa into a European language. However many African people take offence at the way this eurocentric terminology portrays the Maafa as a commercial dilemma as opposed to a moral issue about the violation and subjugation of African human rights.





Abolitionist

The term abolitionist in the context of enslavement referred to those who attempted to use parliamentary procedure to abolish a process sanctioned by their own governments. Yet whilst many abolitionists were often an unwilling part of the enslavement process the majority did not favour the immediate cessation of slavery and instead promoted the notion of gradual abolition in order to have time to protect their own financial interests. As a consequence infamous abolitionists such as William Wilberforce campaigned for the trafficking in enslaved Africans to be abolished and not the entire dehumanising practice itself. These influential abolitionists were vehemently opposed to the African freedom fighters that fought for the total abolition of slavery. Wilberforce was one of many who supported military action to re-enslave the self determining Africans who as in Haiti, 1804 fought against enslavement and succeeded in establishing a revolution. It was another sixteen years after the passing of the 1807 Act to abolish the so called 'slave trade' that in 1823 the Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery was formed. Unsurprisingly, it was not initiated by Wilberforce but Thomas Fowell Buxton. Wilberforce retired from the House of Commons in 1825 and, contrary to British mythology, did not play a significant part in persuading Parliament to bring an end to slavery.

Most abolitionists were devout Christians who were not motivated by the welfare of enslaved African people, but instead agonised about retribution from God and the wrath that would be revisited upon the souls of Europeans responsible for subjugating African people. As such, following the 1833 Act for the abolishment of slavery, the abolitionists saw no contradiction or moral impropriety in paying reparations to themselves and then proceeding to colonise Africa using brutal force under the new banner of spreading Christianity, civilisation and commerce.





Introduction

Prime Minister, Tony Blair's recent refusal to apologise for Britain's leading role in the Maafa marked a noted increase in the British public's anti-African vitriol, much of which was ill-informed, racist rhetoric spurred on by the tabloid media.

Blair's personal statement of sorrow published in the New Nation newspaper, has been rightly criticised for what he did say as much as what he didn't. And of course, few failed to note the convenient timing of the this-is-not-an-apology statement, apparently crafted to coincide with his last few months as Prime Minister and therefore a means to 'enhance his legacy' if Valerie Amos' recently exposed written notes are to be taken seriously.

It was also timed to coincide with the hastily approaching 2007 bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act for which the government have planned a complete whitewash and revisionist version of history to promote the national resurgence in cultural arrogance and imperialistic ambitions.

During a trip to Africa in January 2005, Gordon Brown said that Britain should stop apologising for the brutally exploitative, oppressive and culturally assimilative nature of colonialism and Empire. To the applause of British racists everywhere, he announced that Britain should be proud of its imperial history.

Dianne Abbott, the African British Labour MP for Hackney disagreed with this viewpoint, and in a rare display of political integrity for an African politician in Britain said; "[Britain continues] to airbrush the truth of our recent colonial history... What the Chancellor fails to recognise is that such an apology has not yet been made. I am proud of many parts of British history but colonialism is certainly not amongst them".

Nevertheless, despite some people claiming that they want to have an honest debate about the Maafa, more often than not, such discussions are met with predictable and uneducated defensive statements not to mention anger, sarcasm, hatred, vengefulness and an inherent disrespectful flippancy from Britain's ethnic majority. All of this simply serves to highlight the culturally and emotionally immaturity of those who profess to know all, but in reality know little or nothing about the ongoing, 1,300 year Maafa waged against Africa and her people.

Contained in this booklet is a list of the most common arguments used to justify the enslavement of Mama Africa and deny the horrors of the Maafa. It is important that we also recognise that these Maafa deniers and slavery apologists emanate not only from non African communities but also from the compromised or ignorant people in our own community who seek to dilute and dismiss our pain and suffering and feel no need to facilitate justice for our ancestors.

Toyin Agbetu
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**"12 million Africans were transported. Some three million died."
Tony Blair, *New Nation newspaper*, Monday 27th November 2006**

The citation of 'three million died' is an insult to all African people and a legal attempt to place the human cost of African life at less than the estimated six million Jews who died during the Shoah/Holocaust. Scholars across the world have repeatedly and extensively disputed these under-estimated European statistics on the Maafa. The massive underdevelopment of Africa, which was caused by the forced depopulation of its human workforce is estimated by most historians to be in the region of twenty to one hundred million. This is discounting the millions of African lives lost during British colonisation and neo-colonisation exploitation.

**"Thankfully Britain was the first country to abolish the trade."
Tony Blair, 2006**

African freedom fighters involved in a relentless number of uprisings leading to the deaths of thousands of slavers were the first to form 'abolitionist' movements that fought to eradicate enslavement and stop the trafficking of Africans throughout their sphere of influence. In 1791, as a direct result of African insurrections against European slavers, Haiti was the first country in the Caribbean to end African enslavement. Meanwhile Denmark, as Lord Gifford highlighted in the House of Lords in 1996, was the first European nation to instigate the abolition of trafficking of African people although this was limited to the Madeira. In 1794, the French National Convention abolished slavery in all its territories although this law was repealed by Napoleon in 1802. Up until this date the British had rejected all calls for abolition.

**"As we approach the commemoration for the 200th anniversary of that abolition, it is only right we also recognise the active role Britain played until then in the slave trade."
Tony Blair, 2006**

Britain continued to play an active role in the Maafa after 1807. After the passing of the 1807 act the attacks against enslaved Africans by British slavers increased in their ferocity. It was not until 1833 that Britain passed the Abolition of Slavery Act and 1838 when it abolished the patronising and dehumanising "apprenticeship" scheme for formerly enslaved Africans and replaced it with colonisation; the process of enslaving whole nations of people in their own land rather than kidnapping people from their land and enslaving them in foreign territory.





“[We should] express our deep sorrow that it ever happened and... rejoice at the different and better times we live in today.”

Tony Blair, 2006

This is a very tainted opinion based only on the reality of Europeans in Europe and not on the quality of life for Africans on the Continent and in the Diaspora. The so-called 'debt' being repaid to non-African nations continues to cripple the development of some African countries whilst in Britain, recent studies have revealed that race hate crimes have increased by a third in the past year.

“It is hard to believe what would now be a crime against humanity was legal at the time.”

Tony Blair, 2006

Blair's statement asserts that the act of kidnapping, murdering, raping and enslaving human beings was not illegal in the seventeenth century. This is untrue. These criminal acts were unlawful by both African and European legal standards. The real issue is that the British judiciary believed Africans were sub-human and therefore the legal property of those Europeans whom they held captive. Blair's statement arrogantly chooses to ignore the existence and legitimacy of the African criminal justice system prior to contact with Europeans during the Maafa for which the acts of kidnapping, murder and rape were certainly not 'legal'.

His morally abhorrent claim that British slavery was legal at the time could also be used to justify apartheid in Azania (South Africa). Yet although the western world publicly condemned the latter, then just as during African enslavement, it was African freedom fighters who risked their lives to abolish the evil perpetrated against them by Europeans. It was not until the system was crumbling and it had become economically unprofitable that European nations chose to join the fight for the abolition of apartheid. Up until then Britain and many other European nations actually provided weapons to the evil regime.

“Personally I believe the bicentenary offers us a chance not just to say how profoundly shameful the slave trade was [but also] how we condemn its existence utterly and praise those who fought for its abolition”

Tony Blair, 2006

It is important to recognise the distinction between European abolitionists and African freedom fighters. Some abolitionists were anti-slavery, but almost all were pro-colonialism. In contrast African freedom fighters fought for the immediate emancipation from European tyranny, total and absolute freedom from oppression and indigenous self rule. Whilst the leading abolitionist movement of Europeans campaigned for a gradual end to the enslavement of African people, those led by British women and those in France were following the lead of true revolutionary movements such as that in Haiti which fought for total abolition. Until the names of the many African freedom fighters who risked and lost their lives fighting for freedom, are ingrained into the British psyche to the extent of such compromised individuals as William Wilberforce, no prominent





focus should be placed on the actions or dubious moral credentials of abolitionists for gradual change.

"I think there are all sorts of problems about how far you go in readdressing all the problems posed by what happened in the past"

Trevor Macdonald, 2006

In 1988, the US government through The Civil Liberties Act apologised on behalf of the people of the U.S. for the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. The Act also authorised \$1.2 billion for payments of \$20,000 to each of the roughly 60,000 internees still alive and for the establishment of a \$50 million foundation to promote the cultural and historical concerns of Japanese Americans.

In 2004, Germany apologised for murdering over 65,000 Herero to suppress the Nama uprising. The Germans drew the line at offering compensation but promised to continued paying reparations in the form of economic aid for Namibia which currently amounts to a lowly £7.5 million a year.

"... slavery was where it all started. I think we should understand that, realise that, and, ironically, be proud of that... What should be said to children is, do not be ashamed of slavery... It has made us who we are and made the whole west what it is... Black children can have some pride in this. We should be teaching about empire, but only in its full glory."

Tony Sewell, 2003

African history does not begin with slavery and end at abolition. This is one of the most fundamental flaws in the governmental and institutional approach to the Maafa, which seeks to compartmentalise an on-going process of exploitation and trim it down to 400 years. Reaffirming the history of 'slavery' in isolation will ultimately portray African people as having been nothing more than 'victims' and 'slaves' is incredibly dangerous to the mental, psychological and academic development of our children particularly if, as Sewell disingenuously claims in his quote, they will be asserting that African history 'started' with slavery. The enslavement of Africa is certainly not a story we should be teaching our children to take "pride" in. There was no "glory" for Africa in the odious and brutal acts of the British Empire which decimated and continues to abuse the human and natural resources of Mama Africa.

"At an estimated count of 27 million, there are more enslaved people in the world today than the number of Africans involved at the height of the Transatlantic 'slave trade'."

The Christian Science Monitor, 2004

Statements from organisations which deliberately compare the historic enslavement of African people with that of modern day trafficking and bonded labour are quite simply offensive and insulting as it is a cynical attempt to downplay the wide spread and extensive nature of the enslavement of Africa and is demeaning to the memory of our





ancestors and those who continue to suffer as a result of the Maafa. For the record however, these childish comparisons often come from a European assessment of enslavement which not only purposefully underestimates the number of Africans exploited but fails to incorporate the millions of African people enslaved by other foreign forces such as the Arabs. African people do not claim to have a monopoly on suffering but the constant undermining of our right to express our feelings about that suffering should never be belittled or dismissed by attempting to compare it to the suffering of others

Fundamentally, there is no moral justification for conflating the two distinct issues. The chattel enslavement of African people was not separate from a unique anti-African process which systematically dehumanised and forcibly stripped both cultural and spiritual identity from those who were enslaved. It is the legacy of this process and the global scale of the crime which involved all European nations which invalidates any legitimate comparison with trafficking and bonded labour. It is of course an abhorrent reality that people are forced to work for shamefully low pay to fuel globalisation and the demands of consumers in Western nations or exploited for the ever-expanding sex industry.

“A once lawful and prosperous trade that if it existed now would be a crime against humanity. As the Prime Minister is making clear, the abolition happened in Britain before anywhere else...”

Ruth Kelly MP, November 2006

The kidnap, rape, murder and forced servitude of humans was always an illegal act. It is only the morally insincere who continue to imply that the enslavement of African people was not a crime against humanity. The abolition of slavery begun in Africa, the Caribbean and certain regions of the Americas long before Western nations considered abolishing their immoral and barbaric practices.

“The slave industry shaped the Britain we know, for better and for worse.”

Trevor Philips, December 2006

This statement is highly offensive. It is no different from claiming that there are “good” and bad “benefits” for those who commit kidnap, murder, rape, oppression and exploit the forced labour of other humans. Ultimately, this is a very Eurocentric evaluation of history and one which consciously shows little understating of or empathy with the African experience.

“At least Britain recognises slavery as a crime against humanity”

In 2001, at the UN World Conference against Racism held in the South African city of Durban almost all Western nations rejected calls from African people to recognise the Maafa as a crime against humanity. The US delegation, led by former Secretary of State Colin Powell, actually boycotted the conference on this and other related issues.





Valerie Amos, the head of the UK delegation said Britain is prepared to use "strong words" like "abhorrence" to describe its assessment of the British role in the enslavement of Africans but argued that Britain could not refer to slavery as a crime against humanity because such an acknowledgement has legal implications before international courts that could force them to pay reparations.

Eleven European countries, led by Belgium which held the EU presidency at the time, were prepared to offer an outright apology for slavery, but they were blocked by Britain, led by Valerie Amos and the former foreign secretary, Jack Straw.

It took the tireless work of the African Guyanese member of French parliament, Christiane Taubira, to force the French government to become the first European country to legally recognise slavery as a crime against humanity. As a result, in 2006 the French president, Jacques Chirac, institutionalised an annual [slavery] Remembrance Day unsurprisingly focused around the actions of European politicians in parliament and not African activists and freedom fighters during the Maafa.

The enslavement and subsequent colonisation of African people by the British was not just a crime against humanity, it was a crime specifically against Africans. The numerous revolts against slaver raids across the Continent highlight the fact that this heinous practice was undoubtedly viewed as unjust and illegal by African nations. This was a crime committed against Africa and instigated in Africa by European, Arab and other foreign nations. Slaving Europeans justified this through Christianity by labelling Africans as a soulless people whom they placed outside of humanity.

In April, 1963, civil rights activist Martin Luther King said: "We should never forget that everything Adolf Hitler did in Germany was "legal" and everything the Hungarian freedom fighters did in Hungary was "illegal." It was "illegal" to aid and comfort a Jew in Hitler's Germany. Even so, I am sure that, had I lived in Germany at the time, I would have aided and comforted my Jewish brothers."

The refusal of politicians and their legal advisors to admit that slavery was a crime against Africa remains a deliberate attempt to hinder the identification of the injured party in case of future litigation.

"When we are looking at a historical phenomena which came to an end two hundred years ago in terms of Britain's direct involvement or that of British citizens in it, then I have to say to you that I think the chances of there being grounds for bringing legal actions upon such historical event is somewhat far fetched"

Dominic Grieve MP, 2006

In 1995, Queen Elizabeth II, who is also New Zealand's queen and head of state, approved a parliamentary bill which "apologizes unreservedly" to the New Zealand Maori in an attempt to atone for treaty violations and the invasion of its lands in 1863. The legislation included reparations amounting to \$112 million and the return of 39,000 acres to the Tainui people. The legislation states that "the Crown expresses its profound regret and apologizes unreservedly for the loss of lives because of the hostilities arising from its invasion, and at the devastation of property and social life which resulted". In





New Zealand's political parlance, the term "the Crown" denotes the Government, not the monarchy.

"It happened over two hundred years ago Africans should forget about it and move on"

"The passing of time does not lessen the crime"- African proverb

The process of enslavement of Africans by Europeans did not end over 200 years ago. In fact, the Slave Trade Act for "the more effectual Suppression of the Slave Trade" was only passed in 1837, a mere 133 years ago. The much hailed 1807 Act for the abolition of the 'slave trade' fell far short of ending the practice of chattel enslavement or putting an end to the exploitation of African people in forced labour camps of the Caribbean and Americas. In fact, even the trafficking of Africans did not end immediately with slaving ships and their captains still persisting in the illegal practice. When caught, they would often evade sanction by callously throwing enslaved Africans overboard to their death.

"African nations should apologise for 'selling' their own people"

Africans did not "sell" their own people. However there was a cabal of leaders who to protect themselves from European attack became complicit in the exchange and trafficking of prisoners of war with European slaving nations. In 1999, President Kérékou of Benin hosted a weeklong reconciliation conference where he, the Ghanaian President Jerry Rawlings and over forty African Kings attended and gave a historic apology for their respective nations involvement in the Maafa. Africans living in the Diaspora attended as well as those descendants of royal families with culpability that atoned for their sins and made reparations. This process revealed an emotional and cultural maturity that the UK so desperately lacks. It is also imperative to note that Africans were no more complicit in the Maafa than the minority of Jews who collaborated with the Nazis during the Holocaust.

"Slavery could not have happened without African involvement"

For the last decade, European media, politicians and academics have frantically attempted to reject culpability for their nation's role in the Maafa so as to avoid the pending issue of reparations. To this aim, they have attempted to distort world history to propagate a revisionist theory that it was the active collaboration of a majority of Africans that precipitated the trafficking of Africans for enslavement in exchange for baubles and trinkets. Their intention is to institutionalise the notion that the forced enslavement of family members is endemic to African culture and still practiced today in the forms of sex and child slavery, people trafficking and bonded labour.

However, the enslavement of African people by Europeans began in the 1400's when the Portuguese conducted savage inland raids on Africa. This led to the establishment of strong resistance movements on the Continent cementing centuries of conflict between European and African people.





“Colonisation was good for Africa”

James Feyrer and Bruce Sacerdote of Dartmouth College

In Kenya the British had a network of over 100 detention camps in which 1.5 million people, including almost the entire Kikuyu nation, were detained. These were supposedly people suspected of involvement in the Mau Mau uprisings. Estimates of the number of people who died under this savage regime range from 100,000 to 300,000. Acts of torture and abuse have been extensively documented, including the kinds of ritual humiliations recently highlighted by the British and American troops in their prisons in Iraq. Britain and its colonial partners depopulated Africa and continue to steal her natural and human resources under the banner of what they labelled their three c's - commerce, christianity and civilisation.

“Africans invented slavery and enslaved their own”

Africans have never engaged in chattel enslavement. In contrast europeans gassed, exterminated, tortured, dehumanised and murdered millions of their own during their own civil and inter-european wars. The forms of 'slavery' described in Africa prior to european intervention are often inaccurately labelled as such. 'Servitude' would be a more fitting description and as Olaudah Equiano highlighted in his memoirs, as a servant, he would be treated as part of the family, not demeaned as a human being and certainly not subjected to the ritualistic barbarity so eagerly employed by europeans and arabs in their interactions with African people. Chattel enslavement was a defining feature of european and arab nations who used to Christianity and Islam to portray the African people as a primitive beasts, devoid of a spiritual level of understanding and therefore utterly soulless.

It is important to recognise that African societies did not believe in or establish the european concept of mass imprisonment of criminals. Instead, a process of reparation, justice and rehabilitation was the preferred social enterprise. It was these individuals along with those who were legitimate captives of war or the subject of dispute that were inducted into a system of servitude. They were never placed outside of humanity by their fellow Africans. Despite their crimes against the community, these people were generally treated as members of the family with a moral, spiritual and communal obligation to fulfil. Again, the description 'slavery' is a totally inappropriate term to describe what would today be described as community service.

“Why should the Queen have to apologise?”

From 1561, Queen Elizabeth supplied British merchants with ships and provisions to proceed with the trafficking of African people. In 1564, she took shares in the venture after having sponsored slaver, John Hawkins by lending him her very own 700-ton vessel, Jesus of Lubeck also known as the “good ship Jesus”, specifically for the purpose of capturing Africans on the West African coast.

The Royal Adventurers, a company established by King Charles II were audaciously granted a 1,000 year monopoly to trade in West Africa and to enslave and exploit the





trafficking of captive African people. When they later went bankrupt, the Royal Africa Company, founded by sixty-five members of the British royal family and aristocracy, took over their holdings.

“Slaves were better of on plantations because they were fed and had their medical needs taken cared of.”

The British used the word “plantation” to lend an air of respectability to what were in fact forced labour camps. The conditions of these working prisons were less than hygienic whilst the intensive and overwhelming working demands made of them made them more susceptible to illness and disease. Miscarriages and still births were also shockingly common for African women who were required to maintain their level of work despite their physical constraints. The number of suicides and murders following attempted escapes by Africans was also significant. Africans on the labour camps did not always have their physical ailments attended to by a medical practitioner as this was often regarded by the slaver as an unnecessary expense that was simply not cost effective. Slavers created a system of public lynching, excessive whipping, body mutilation and limb dismembering to terrorise enslaved Africans. This included the public beheading and placement of African skulls in places where all could see. This was meant to serve as a deterrent to African freedom fighters intent on liberating their families. Not even children were spared having their body disfigured. Evil slavers used a hot metal poker to ‘brand’ them as property belonging to the slavers estate.

The conditions of these labour camps were anything but humane and did not compare in any shape or form to the cultural, spiritual and morally superior environment of Africa. The phrases ‘plantation owner’ and ‘slave master’ were used to lend an air of dignity and social authority to the immorality of their profession. However, a more appropriate description of them would be ‘slavers’.

“It wasn’t the British who started slavery but it was us who ended it.”

The British passed the abolition of slavery Act in 1833 but did not in fact end their formal role in the practice. Written into the Act was the new system of ‘apprenticeship’ in which Wilberforce and his supporters believed those Africans who were formally enslaved had to now be ‘trained’ to handle their own freedom. This system forced the still enslaved Africans to work under terms that saw them as ‘legally enslaved’. Their labour ultimately financed the resources required for the British government to pay reparations to slavers for their loss of profits. When Africans rebelled against this system diminishing the profit margin for the British nation, this along with several other key factors, led Britain to transform the enslavement process into one of colonisation. Eventually, in 1844 when the British Empire was suffering economically from its loss of forced labour it established a system of indentured labour using people from India.





“Maybe the Danes and Vikings should apologise for oppressing the people of this country.”

This is a facetious argument. There is a culturally immature and offensive penchant by non Africans to conflate the issue of the enslavement of African people with that of modern day trafficking. Some then talk about slavery in Roman times, others refer to the enslavement of Europeans by Barbary pirates. This is widely recognised as a ploy to divert the topic from focusing exclusively on the pain and injustice still faced by African people. Often at times it is indicative of the culturally imperialistic mindset of some individuals who ultimately feel no need to respect the experiences of African people and therefore dismiss any attempts at dialogue by making comparisons with other, unrelated periods in history. It also displays an inherent inability to debate the merits of an apology on the facts as they relate to the enslavement of African people.

“We should stop focusing on slavery in the past and tackle modern day slavery today.”

There is no reason why we should not be able to do both. The issue of how the human rights of Africans were grossly violated by European and Arab nations is often glossed over with the simple cliché line that “slavery was a crime against humanity”. But it was more than that; it was also a crime committed directly and intentionally against Mama Africa and her children. Until there is full acknowledgment of the scale of injustice and unresolved inequality plaguing the lives of over a billion African people on this planet then there will be no peace on this issue. The people who wish to sweep the Maafa under the carpet fail to realise that this is a process that continues to this very day. The emotional and psychological integrity of Western nations is also at risk here; any individual, community or nation that steadfastly rejects the opportunity to examine the past and present will simply continue to perpetuate the injustice of their forefathers. For this reason, nothing but a full and emotionally sincere apology accompanied by a desire to separate and activate justice will be acceptable.

“How does slavery impact upon African people in Britain today, surely there is no one alive today who suffered or benefited from slavery.”

British slavery was one of the most unadulterated forms of institutionalised racism sanctioned at a national and pan-European level. Anti-African ideology permeated every cultural orifice of the UK including its language, government, churches, religion and monarchy. Deaths in custody, human rights abuses, socio-political apartheid and today's commercial exploitation of the labour of African Britons and immigrants all fuel the spiralling political inequality experienced by Africans in Britain. Africans in the Caribbean, Africa, South America and other regions of the world also share this experience of political and economic inequality. The enduring legacy of enslavement and the current practice of political and economic injustices impressed on African people globally have yet to be addressed by Europeans and will not be addressed by them in any constructive manner until they acknowledge, accept and take responsibility for the past.





“Revisiting the sins of the past is meaningless”

Britain is a Christian nation and therefore, anyone familiar with the Bible will be aware that in Exodus 20: 5, as part of the Ten Commandments it is stated that the sins of the father will be revisited upon their descendants. Exodus 34: 6-7 continues, “Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in loving kindness and truth; who keeps loving kindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children”.

However, there are contradictory sets of verses in Deuteronomy 24:16 and Ezekiel 18:20 which recounts the Law of the Pentateuch and reinterprets the commandments to place them in the legal context of the Jewish court system. African people have been the epitome of “compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in loving kindness and truth”. However, Africans belonging to the Christian faith have a righteous duty to ensure that they “by no means leave the guilty unpunished” and assist Africans fighting for truth, justice and reparations to help bring the iniquity of European slavers upon their children who without shame inherit, exploit and protect the evil privileges obtained through the subjugation of African and other peoples of the world.

“Why reject Blair's statement simply because he did not use the words ‘sorry’ or ‘apology’”.

It is morally repugnant to play politics with the unresolved suffering of the millions of innocent African people denied justice. This is exactly what Tony Blair attempted to do with his personal insincere expression of ‘sorrow’ which he made purely in an attempt to enhance his political legacy. In reality, it not only disgraces him for his shallow and ethically vacant intentions but also exposes and shames those who sought to coerce us into accepting it.

“How can you apologise for something you were not personally responsible for? Britain ended slavery over two hundred years ago.”?

Even if we accepted the spurious claim that enslavement under the label of ‘apprenticeship’ was abolished in 1834 this would not alter the fact that the so-called abolition occurred barely over one hundred and thirty years ago. The oldest age an African person is known to have lived within the west is just under one hundred and twenty years old highlighting the fact that the so-called abolition of British slavery occurred just over a generation ago.

The legacy of British slavery still exists and equally important is the fact that the enslavement of African people never ended. The British merely transformed the process of chattel enslavement and perfected and represented it as colonisation, later to be transformed to neo-colonialism or ‘globalisation’. Today, millions of African people are subjugated by the corrupt political systems of governance imposed by the British during colonisation and maintained covertly and overtly through non-African support. The legacy of British slavery is that these Africans are forced, through the political-economic





exploitation of nations such as Britain, to work for less than £1 a day. The inhumane conditions created by the corrupting influence of european institutions such as the World Bank and IMF ensure that the majority are denied access to free medical or educational resources. Many europeans willingly accept their inheritance of 'white' privilege which propagates racist anti-African ideology and maintains the socio-political inequality that oppresses Africans and other non european groups across the world. Hypocritically, whilst they personally accept the benefits of their slaver ancestors they simultaneously refuse to take responsibility of their slavers misdeeds. A sincere precursor to making an apology would be to recognise and accept responsibility for both the crime and legacy as a single entity.

"But it wasn't just us, shouldn't arab nations also have to apologise for enslaving African people?"

Yes they should. Whilst eurocentric history marginalises this aspect of the Maafa it is important that if they are truly sincere about addressing the Maafa in a respectful manner, they do not just focus on what elements are of direct relevance to Britain's ethnic majority. They must also play a role in bringing to the fore the significant role that arab nations played and continue to play in enslaving, raiding and invading Africa in what many Africans refer to as the 'Arab land grab'. Nonetheless, this should not be used to reduce or evade discussion of Britain's culpability for its leading role in both the enslavement and colonisation of Africa and her children.

"The enslavement of Africans by arab nations was a humane and trickle trade in comparison to that practiced by europeans"

This is absolutely untrue. The arab world has, until now, largely succeeded in burying the history of their involvement in the Maafa. Unfortunately, a minority of African Muslims have developed a distorted sense of loyalty towards their arab brothers and are uncomfortable when speaking of arabs as enslavers of Africans.

The attempted arab usurpation of Africa begun over 1400 years ago with numerous invasions and seemingly amiable attempt by arabs to trade with Africa. The arabs were not alone with this intent and Persians and South West Asians, such as the Hyskols and the Assyrians, were also involved in the invasion of Africa although the Arabs became the most dominant amongst these marauding groups. Arabs and Persians invaded and settled on African land, usually in coastal cities along the Indian Ocean, such as Zanzibar and Mombassa to facilitate their exploitative activities. A large number of Africans were captured and taken to Middle Eastern arab countries, such as modern day Iran.

Many enslaved Africans in Arabia began to convert to Islam. This contradicted the Islamic beliefs of the invaders, where the enslavement of fellow brethrens was deemed haram (unlawful). As a result, Arabs chose to enter deeper into the African Continent, capturing African women and men, from countries such as Malawi, southern Sudan, Zambia and western Africa. Enslaved Africans were then 'sold' to far away regions such as India and China. The Chinese were also involved in the enslavement of Africans and Chinese slavers 'bought' Africans from arab intermediaries or directly from the coastal





areas, such as present day Somalia. Arabs 'took advantage of regional wars in Africa to 'buy' captives from the victor and turned one group against another' using the same divide-and-conquer strategy that Europeans used.

As with Europeans, Arabs justified their appalling actions by regarding Africans as an inferior 'race' which was sub-human. In the 14th century, the noted Arab historian and philosopher Ibn Khaldun wrote 'the Negro nations are, as a rule, submissive to slavers, because Negroes have little that is essentially human and possess attributes that are quite similar to dumb animals'.

For every one African man enslaved, two African women were enslaved and these women and young girls were used by Arabs and other Asians as concubines. This sexual abuse continues today. A leading Saudi government cleric and author of the country's religious curriculum has recently called for the outright re-legalisation of slavery. More than one hundred thousand Africans subjugated by Arabs during the 12th century are presently believed to be living as old-fashioned chattel 'slaves' in Mauritania.

While there has been a heavy media focus on trafficking of women from Thailand, Russia and the Ukraine, the trafficking of African women to Arab nations has been ignored. As recently as 2000, Lebanese authorities returned the bodies of dozens of Ethiopian women to Ethiopia. The women had been trafficked into prostitution and sexually abused; suicide was the registered cause of death for all of them. Despite these shocking statistics, the Lebanese authorities have failed to take any significant steps to change the status quo. Women trafficked to these countries are taken under false pretences of job opportunities and better lives, however upon arrival they are subjected to a life of servitude.

Conservative estimates place the number of African people enslaved by Arabs and Arabised Africans at some 25 million and it is estimated that a further 20 million African women, children and men died throughout the Arab slave trade.

"Issuing an apology will only lead to African people clinging to a culture of victimisation"

African people are falsely accused of clinging to a culture of victimisation by the British media irrespective of the apology debate. Europeans must accept the real effects of their racist doctrine perpetrated against Africa and her children across the world. The issuing of a sincere apology to recognise the injustice that is the Maafa is an unrelated matter. Moreover, the notion that African people cling to most is that of justice. It is justice that leads us to seek to address the atrocities of the past and present and it is the selfish desire to maintain the benefits and profits, privileges gained by injustice that prevent Europeans from doing the same.





"I feel no shame for slavery. I am angry that the British people are being made to feel guilty for something they had nothing to do with".

It is hypocritical for people who assert this position when they will all too readily cling to the false history of British abolitionism which the vast majority of them "had nothing to do with". It is disingenuous to randomly select aspects of history to emphasize whilst dismissing any culpability for those aspects of history that may be uncomfortable to confront. A slaver descendent or beneficiary of the enslavement of Africans may either take pride in their nation's role in so-called abolition and accept their culpability in slavery or deny their legacy as abolitionists and reject the veracity of their history as an imperial slaving nation. They can not have it both ways.

"African people have a chip on their shoulder."

Institutional racism still exists. Ethnically targeted socio-political apartheid still exists. Africa is still exploited by European, Arab and Asian nations and Europeans still maintain and militarily enforce a system of 'white' male supremacy. African people object to the lack of decisive action needed to tackle these and other such injustices borne from the legacy of the Maafa.

"Both "slaves" and "enslaved people" are descriptions that simply describe the result of a process - the act of enslavement - which can be reversed. Neither suggests any kind of innate inferiority on the part of the person who is the object of that process."

Fraser Steel, BBC

The BBC's arrogant and persistent labelling of African people as 'slaves' instead of referring to them as enslaved Africans is offensive. The process of chattel enslavement employed by the British included asserting an aggressive cultural disinheritance strategy amongst Africans. Enslaved Africans were punished for their attempts to retain their names, language or spiritual beliefs. This was done in a desire to reduce them to the status of sub-human property without land, culture or identity. This subjugation of African identity remains in practice today as British media institutions such as the BBC almost exclusively refer to enslaved Africans as 'black' slaves and propagates the n word on an almost weekly basis.

"You only want us to apologise so that we have to pay you compensation".

Let me begin by noting that reparation is not just about money; it is not even mostly about money; in fact, money is not even one percent of what reparation is about. Reparation is mostly about making repairs. self-made repairs, on ourselves..."

Professor Chinweizu at the First Pan-African Conference on Reparations, Abuja, Nigeria, April 27, 1993

The call for reparations is not a cynical attempt on the part of African people to get rich. For the most part, African people themselves have been increasingly engaged in 'self





repair' as advocated by Professor Chinweizu. He also makes the point that reparations for the immense range of inhumane crimes committed by the British against African people during the Maafa cannot be calculated in mere monetary terms although, it is not unreasonable to expect financial compensation as part of a more holistic approach to reparations.

The true injustice of this situation is highlighted by the fact that whilst the British government passed the 1833 Abolition of Slavery Act, which proclaimed an end to British slavery, the British created a system of forced labour called 'apprenticeship' for enslaved Africans. This insulting process ultimately helped to fund the £20 million compensation (£1.4 billion when converted in current monetary terms) paid not to enslaved Africans and their families but to British slavers. This moral impropriety affected all of the UK's major institutions with even the Church implicated when the Bishop of Exeter's received over £12,000 pounds for the six hundred enslaved Africans his estate held in captivity.





Community Recommendations for 2007

Whether you are an individual or an organisation, there are several ways in which you can help support Truth in 2007.

Support Truth in 2007

The Truth 2007 initiative marks a unique opportunity for the African community in Britain to increase community cohesion and promote self determination with a view to telling Our story. Truth 2007 is an educational and information based project that was instigated in Bristol by (Operation) Truth 2007, a Bristol founded national campaign to raise the awareness of African people about the local and national plans the Government have in place to 'commemorate' and 'celebrate' the passing of the 1807 Abolition of the Slave Trade Act. The movement has since become national and embraces organisations across the UK. Truth 2007 will feature a series of lectures, debates, interactive workshops and informal social-political gatherings organised by the community for the community.

The community can become part of this project by helping to promote Truth 2007 events and generate media and resources that counter the falsification of history promoted by the British government. Details of events and educational resources can be found by visiting the Truth 2007 website at www.truth2007.org. Supporting events can be as simple as forwarding emails, downloading, printing and photocopying leaflets and flyers and distributing them at libraries, schools, bookshops, retail outlets etc. You can also establish or join an Operation Truth regional coalition.

You can also organise your own Truth 2007 event where you live. We can provide you with a resource pack which will provide information and advice on how to organise events for your own local community. Anyone that organises events under the Truth 2007 banner, and adheres to the main principles as outlined in the Truth position statement is free to use the Truth and Operation Truth logos on any promotional material (flyers, websites, leaflets etc) to show solidarity and support for this community led initiative. Please email us at info@truth2007.org for further information.

We would also encourage members of the community to write to local schools or download the template letter from the Truth 2007 website to request that they exclude your children from lessons focusing primarily on abolitionists such as William Wilberforce until they balance their curriculum by highlighting the primary role of African freedom fighters involved in resisting the Maafa.

Government plans for Wilberfest celebrations in 2007 have already been sanctioned and organised with no input from the African community in Britain. We would therefore advocate a boycott of Wilberfest events that distort and marginalise our history.





Support for an African Remembrance Day

We advocate support for an African Remembrance Day supported by a month 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. In Britain, there is currently national celebration of 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 institutional 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 Maafa remain largely unknown. Other than a superficial knowledge of '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.

Significantly, we should not support or endorse what the French have now institutionalised as a 'Slavery Memorial day'. Remembering the act of 'slavery' is not the same as remembering the Africans who were murdered, dehumanised and oppressed during the Maafa and the pivotal role that we played and continue to play in resisting odious forms of oppression under the umbrella of european supremacy. When so much was and continues to be vested in referring to us as objects, property, commodity, slaves, negros, blacks, non-whites, we must always seeks to focus on remembering our ancestors, our culture and our history which were undoubtedly African. Hence African Remembrance, that doesn't limit our history to 500 years of british slavery, is the most progressive and respectful way forward.

We recommend that you download the template letter from the Truth 2007 website and write to your local MP's and councillors to suggest that they support an annual day of African Remembrance that does not limit our history to being the victims of British slavery.

Support for a two minute silence

We encourage support for an annual two minute silence during Notting Hill Carnival to remember the African people lost during the Maafa. We recommend that all participating vendors partake in this symbolic gesture of national reflection.





Recommended Resources

Cultural resources are an imperative part of developing the decolonised, liberated African mind. So, for those interested in learning about the Maafa and understanding the truth and consequence of history on our present and future, we have listed a selection of books that we would recommend as essential reading.

Our story has increasingly been reclaimed by African activists, writers, historians and scholars and their work is thankfully limitless. For this reason, our list of resources is far from exhaustive. However, we hope that at the very least, we can steer people to that enlightening path of self determination through a realisation of our potential.

Non-fiction reference and fiction texts

Autobiography of Malcolm X	Omowale Malcolm X /Alex Haley
The African Origin of Civilisation	Cheikh Anta Diop
Civilization or Barbarism	
Black Africa: The Economic and Cultural Basis for a Fedarated State	
Seize the Time: The Story of the Black Panther Party and Huey P. Newton	Bobby Seale
The Black Jacobins	CLR James
Nkrumah and the Ghana Revolution	
They Came Before Columbus	Ivan Van Sertima
How Europe Underdeveloped Africa	Walter Rodney
Destruction of Black Civilization	Chancellor Williams
Africa: Mother of Western Civilisation	Yosef ben-Jochannan
Capitalism and Slavery	Eric Williams
African World Revolution	John Henrik Clarke
Things Fall Apart	Chinua Achebe
Anthills of the Savannah	
Devil on the Cross	Ngugi Wa Thiong'o
Decolonising the Mind	
Trial of Dedan Kimathi	Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Micere Githae Mugo
Freedom	Githae Mugo
Black Skin, White Masks	Manning Marable & Leith Mullings
King: Biography of Martin Luther King Jr	Frantz Fanon
African Women and Feminism	Ho Che Anderson
Black Looks	Oyeronke Oyewumi (Ed.)
Ain't I A Woman	bell hooks
Sisters of the Yam: Black Women and Self-Recovery	
N****s, Negroes, Black people and Afrikans	Paul Ifayomi Grant
Blue Skies for Afrikans	
For Women and the Nation: Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti of Nigeria	Cheryl Johnson-Odim and Nina Emma Mba





The Destruction of Black Civilization
Black Women in Antiquity
Race First
Reinventing Africa
Africa Must Unite
African Life and Customs
Genocide in Nigeria: The Ogoni Tragedy
Yurugu: An Afrikan-centered Critique of European Cultural Thought and Behavior
Let The Circle Be Unbroken: The Implications of Afrikan Spirituality in the Diaspora
The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustav Vassa, the African
Declaration of protest to the 2007 Abolition Commemoration

Chancellor Williams
Ivan Van Sertima
Tony Martin
Ifi Amadiume
Kwame Nkrumah
Edward Wilmott Blyden
Ken Saro Wiwa
Marimba Ani (also known as Dona Richards)

Olaudah Equiano
The Ligali Organisation

Visual Media

Pressure
The Spook Who Sat by the Door
The Middle Passage
Burning an Illusion
Distinction
Roots (TV Miniseries/Book)
Music is the Weapon
Malcolm X/ A Huey P Newton Story/ When We Were Kings/ Four Little Girls
Lumumba
Life and Debt
John Henrik Clarke: A Great and Mighty Walk
Femmes Aux Yeux Ouvert
Moolade/ Xala/ Faat Kine
Drop Squad

Horace Ove
Sam Greenlee/ Ivan Dixon
Guy Deslauriers
Menelik Shabazz
Avril Russell
Alex Haley
Fela Kuti
Spike Lee

Raoul Peck
Stephanie Black
Dir. St. Clair Bourne
Anne Laure Foly
Ousmane Sembene
David C. Johnson

Music, Poetry and Spoken word

Equal Rights/ African
Redemption Song/ War/ Buffalo Soldier
I'm an African
Fear of a Black Planet / Fight The Power
Marcus Garvey/ Garvey's Ghost
Plantation Lullabies / Cookie
African People
Perceptions / Black Is?
Life + Debt / Revolution
Trojan Roots Box Set

Peter Tosh
Bob Marley
Dead Prez
Public Enemy
Burning Spear
Me'shell NdegeOcello
Jay Boys
Fertile Ground
Dennis Brown
Various





Songs in the key of life / Misrepresented
People
Self Love
Mi Revalueshanary Fren
Beware Soul Brother
Secret Lives
The Selected Poems of Nikki Giovanni
The Africa EP
The Revolution will not be televised
Supa Sista
The Best of the Best of Fela Kuti
I'm an African/ Assassination
African Woman
Katrina (What's Going On)

Stevie Wonder
Jaguar Wright
Linton Kwesi Johnson
Chinua Achebe
Imruh Bakari
Nikki Giovanni
Tuggstar
Gil Scott Heron
Ursula Rucker
Fela Kuti
Dead Prez
Burning Spear
Angry Afrikans

Non African produced Media

Shaka Zulu
The Iceman Inheritance
Stealing a Nation
What If Everything You Thought You Knew
About AIDS Was Wrong?

William C. Faure
Michael Bradley
John Pilger
Christine Maggiore



