



# The Ark of Return

*Acknowledge  
the Tragedy*

*Consider  
the Legacy*

*Lest We Forget*

Unveiling of the  
Permanent Memorial  
to Honour the Victims  
of Slavery and the  
Transatlantic Slave Trade

25 March 2015

United Nations Visitors Plaza

2:00 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.



United Nations



# *Programme*

Minute of Silence

*Moderator:*

**H.E. Mr. Courtenay Rattray**

Chair of the Permanent Memorial Committee

Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations

*Remarks by:*

**H.E. Mr. Sam Kutesa**

President of the General Assembly

**H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon**

United Nations Secretary-General

**H.E. Ms. Portia Simpson Miller**

Prime Minister of Jamaica

**Ms. Irina Bokova**

Director-General of the United Nations Educational,  
Scientific and Cultural Organization

**H.E. Mr. Tété António**

Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations

**H.E. Mr. Asoke Kumar Mukerji**

Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations  
on behalf of the contributors

**Mr. Rodney Leon**

Architect and Designer of The Ark of Return

Ribbon Cutting

*Performance by:*

**Djoniba Dance & Drum Centre**

Procession to the General Assembly Hall

**The completion of the Permanent Memorial has been made possible by the following voluntary contributions**  
(received as of 17 March 2015)

**Member States**

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Afghanistan	Grenada	Namibia	United Arab Emirates
Algeria	Guyana	Netherlands	
Antigua and Barbuda	Haiti	New Zealand	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Argentina	Honduras	Nicaragua	
Australia	Iceland	Oman	
Azerbaijan	India	Pakistan	United States
Bahamas	Indonesia	Portugal	
Barbados	Ireland	Qatar	Uruguay
Belgium	Israel	Republic of Korea	
Belize	Italy	Saint Kitts and Nevis	
Bhutan	Jamaica	Saint Lucia	
Botswana	Japan	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	
Brazil	Kazakhstan	Saudi Arabia	
Burkina Faso	Kenya	Senegal	
Canada	Kuwait	Singapore	
Chile	Libya	Slovenia	
China	Liechtenstein	South Africa	
Congo	Lithuania	Spain	
Costa Rica	Luxembourg	Sri Lanka	
Cyprus	Malaysia	Sudan	
Denmark	Malta	Suriname	
Ecuador	Mauritius	Sweden	
Egypt	Mexico	Syrian Arab Republic	
Equatorial Guinea	Monaco	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	
Estonia	Montenegro	Togo	
Finland	Morocco	Trinidad and Tobago	
Georgia	Mozambique	Turkey	
Germany	(On behalf of the Southern African Development Community Group of Ambassadors)		

**Other Contributors**

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Martinique  
The Alexander Charitable Trust (San Marino)  
Boris and Inara Teterov Foundation (Latvia)  
Ford Foundation  
Global Sustainability Foundation  
Rush Communications  
United Nations Federal Credit Union  
Contributions were also received from individuals around the world

# About the Permanent Memorial

In December 2007, the United Nations General Assembly designated 25 March as the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade and welcomed the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) proposal to erect “at a place of prominence at United Nations Headquarters a permanent memorial to honour these victims”.

The Permanent Memorial Committee is comprised of Member States from geographical regions around the world as well as representatives of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Office for Partnerships, representatives from the United Nations Secretariat and civil society. The Caribbean Community and the African Union play a primary role in guiding the Committee’s work. An international competition was carried out to select a design for the Permanent Memorial. The Ark of Return, the design submitted by architect Rodney Leon, was chosen in 2013.

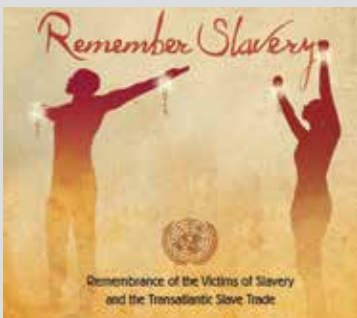
The Ark of Return is a permanent memorial to acknowledge the tragedy of the transatlantic slave trade, honour the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade and preserve their legacy.

Visitors can pass through The Ark of Return to intimately experience three primary elements. The first element, *Acknowledge the Tragedy*, is a three-dimensional map that depicts the global scale of the triangular slave trade.

The second element, *Consider the Legacy*, is a full scale human figure lying in front of a wall inscribed with images of the interior of a slave ship. This element illustrates the extreme conditions under which millions of African people were transported during the Middle Passage.

The third element, *Lest We Forget*, is a triangular reflecting pool where visitors can honour the memory of the millions of souls who were lost.

The Permanent Memorial will serve as a vehicle through which the United Nations Remember Slavery Programme will convey to visitors, the general public and students the lessons and legacy of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade.



The Remember Slavery Programme, managed by the United Nations Department of Public Information, was established by the General Assembly in 2007 to honour the memory of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. It also aims to raise awareness of the dangers of racism and prejudice today.

For more information: [rememberslavery.un.org](http://rememberslavery.un.org)

Twitter: [@rememberslavery](https://twitter.com/rememberslavery)

[www.facebook.com/rememberslavery](http://www.facebook.com/rememberslavery)