



**CENTRE FOR GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT
MONA CAMPUS UNIT
THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES**

**TRIBUTE TO AMBASSADOR ANGELA KING CD: INTERNATIONAL
ADVOCATE FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND PEACE
FROM
THE CENTRE FOR GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES**

Ambassador Angela E. V. King's extraordinary life and leadership during her almost 40-year career with the United Nations has significantly contributed to the advancement of women, promoted gender equality, global peace and security and has also transformed the lives of millions of men and women worldwide.

While we deeply mourn the death of this passionate, patriotic Jamaican Diplomat at the relatively young age of 68 years on February 5 2007, we celebrate her life and work which has significantly impacted the field of gender and development globally.

Distinguished Advocate and Activist for Gender Equality and Peace

Ambassador King was an alumna of the University College of the West Indies, the University of London, and New York University. The University of the West Indies awarded her an Honorary Doctor of Laws Degree in November 1999 and she has also received the Commander of the Order of Distinction medal from the Government of Jamaica.

Ambassador King served the United Nations and Jamaica with distinction during her 40-year career as a diplomat, and served as United Nations Assistant Secretary General and Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women from 1997 until her retirement in April 2004. She was a pioneer woman diplomat who paved the way for the many Jamaican women who now represent the country as Ambassadors. As an activist

for the advancement of women in the UN Secretariat she established and chaired several strategic Committees which promoted gender equality and the status of women.

In this role she participated in the UN international conferences on women in 1975, 1980 and 1995 and also organized and directed the Beijing+5 Special Session of the General Assembly (2000).

From 1992 to 1994, Ambassador King served as Chief of Mission of the UN Observer Mission in South Africa (UNOMSA), and had the distinction of being one of the first two women to head a UN mission on preventive diplomacy and peace-building. Her diplomacy and advocacy with the Security Council, in cooperation with other UN entities and non-governmental organizations, led to the historic adoption of the Council's resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security. In her role as Chief of Mission of UNOMSA, she oversaw that country's first democratic, non-racial elections which helped to lay the groundwork for the strong ties that currently exist between the government and people of Jamaica and South Africa.

Her life is an inspiration to the Centre for Gender and Development Studies and demonstrates that women can and must break the invisible 'glass ceiling', become transformational leaders and positively impact decision-making in their families, communities, countries and indeed globally. Ambassador King's legacy also underscores the benefits of civil society-government partnerships to promote peace, gender equality and sustainable development. She represents a commitment to passionate, participatory, gender-sensitive policies. Her work serves as a reminder of the importance of motivating young male and female students to become both academics and activists who must use their knowledge and skills to address the emerging gender and development challenges within and outside of the Caribbean region.

The timing of her death during the period in which we are commemorating the Abolition of the Slave Trade, celebrating Black History Month, and preparing to celebrate International Women's Day celebrations on March 8 2007, reminds us of how powerful and resilient we are as Caribbean people and how far we have come.

We can honour Ambassador King's legacy by documenting and disseminating information on our modern-day heroines to remind our youth that like Angela King - the descendant of former slaves, they too can emancipate themselves from patriarchy, self-hate, and 'mental slavery' and use education for personal advancement and to contribute to nation building. We can also honour her life and legacy with a recommitment to implement the Beijing Platform and the Millennium Development Goals that promote gender equality and the empowerment of women. Her death from breast cancer is a reminder of the need to expand awareness and the reality that this disease disproportionately kills black women. We can honour Ambassador King by promoting the conditions for peace and security, as well as eliminating gender inequality and gender based violence that both contribute to HIV/AIDS. Our children will then have a better chance of succeeding Ambassador King as leaders of national, regional and international institutions.

We express condolences to her husband Mr. Wylton H. James, her son Mr. Richard A. James and the Vernon, King and James families and thank them for the sacrifices they made in allowing her to make such an extraordinary contribution to promoting global peace and gender equality.

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