



UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT

2015 ► 2024

RECOGNITION • JUSTICE • DEVELOPMENT

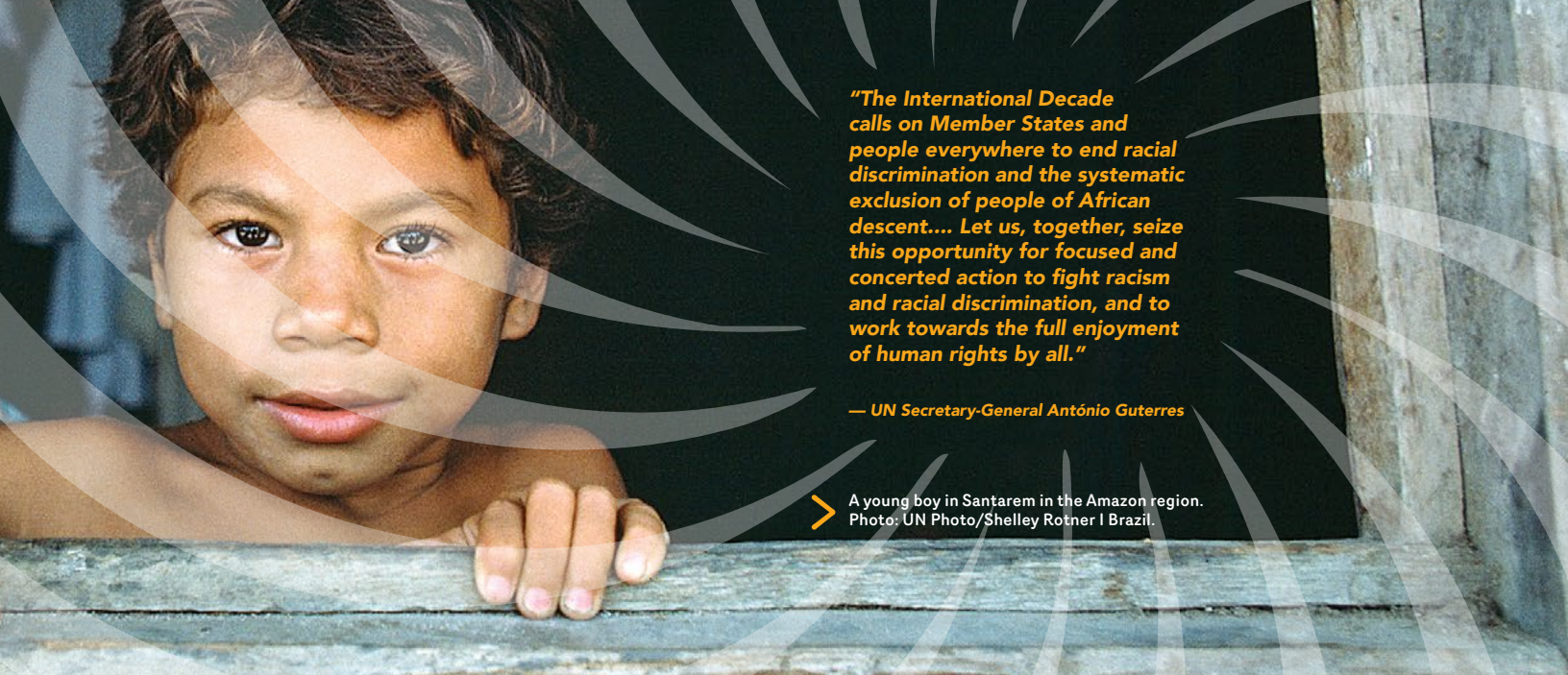


#AFRICAN DESCENT

[UN.ORG/EN/EVENTS/AFRICANDESCENTDECADE](https://un.org/en/events/africandescentdecade)

CONTACT: [DECADE.AFRICANDESCENT@OHCHR.ORG](mailto:decade.africandescent@ohchr.org)

Produced by the UN Department of Public Information in collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.



"The International Decade calls on Member States and people everywhere to end racial discrimination and the systematic exclusion of people of African descent.... Let us, together, seize this opportunity for focused and concerted action to fight racism and racial discrimination, and to work towards the full enjoyment of human rights by all."

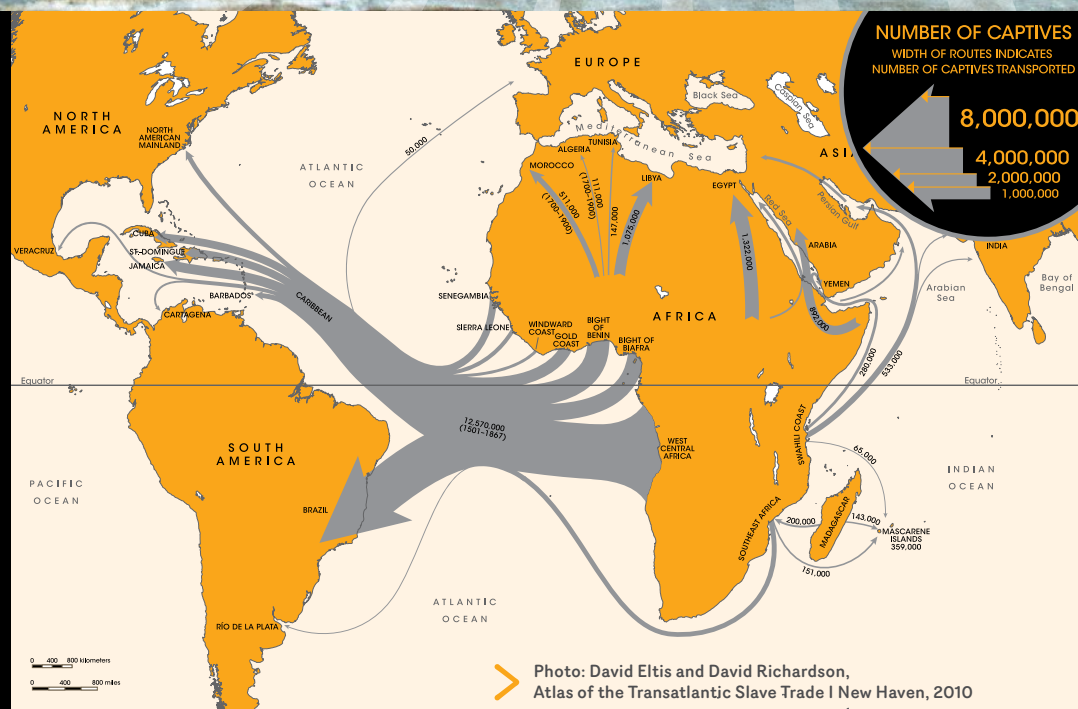
— UN Secretary-General António Guterres

> A young boy in Santarem in the Amazon region.
Photo: UN Photo/Shelley Rotner | Brazil.

THE SLAVE TRADE OUT OF AFRICA

1501-1900

Captive Africans were taken by many routes from their homeland to other parts of the world. After 1500, the route across the Atlantic was taken by far the largest number.



"This Decade is a historic opportunity. It is my hope that it will inspire all of us to grasp the deep harm that is done by discrimination, and to work tirelessly to put an end to this injustice."

— High Commissioner for Human Rights
Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein

> Children in a camp for internally displaced people (IDPs).
Photo: UN Photo/Logan Abassi | Haiti.



1. WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE DECADE?

The overall objective of the Decade is to **promote respect, protection and fulfilment of ALL human rights and fundamental freedoms** by people of African descent, as recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

(IN PARTICULAR)

STRENGTHENING

national, regional and international action for the full enjoyment of all their rights;

PROMOTING

greater **knowledge** of and respect for their diverse heritage, culture and contribution to the development of societies;

ADOPTING

and strengthening national, regional and international **legal frameworks**.

2. WHY A DECADE FOR PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT?

There are around **200 million** people of African descent living in the Americas. Many millions more live in other parts of the world, outside of the African continent.

Across the globe, Africans and the African diaspora continue to suffer inequality and disadvantage because of the legacy of slavery and colonialism. People of African descent are amongst the poorest and most marginalized. They may experience discrimination in their access to justice, and face high rates of police violence and racial profiling.

The International Decade paves the way for cooperation among States, international and regional organizations, and civil society to improve the human rights situation and well-being of people of African descent.

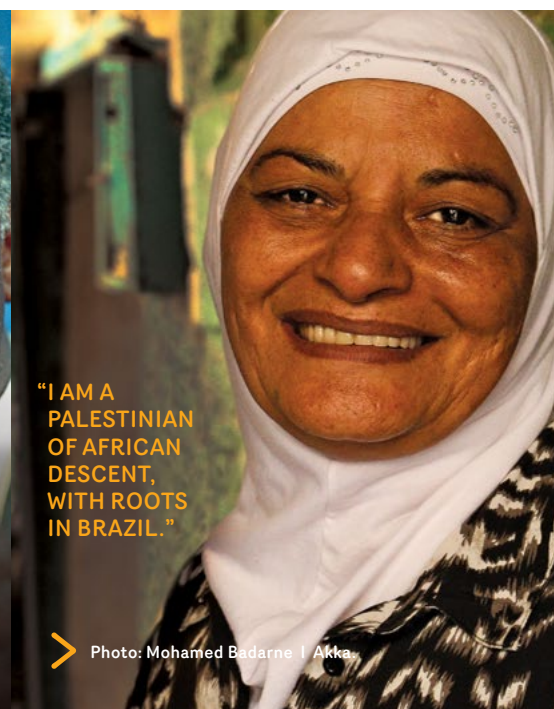
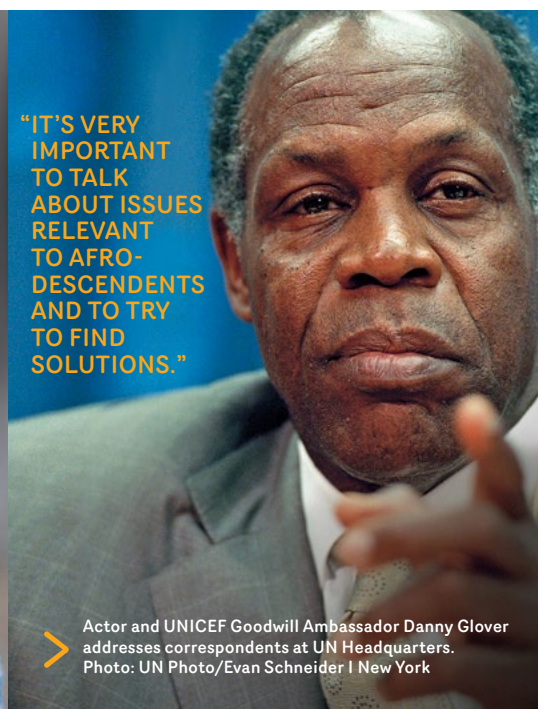
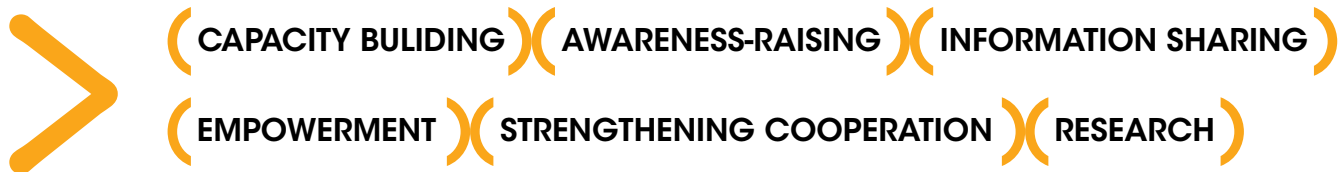
3. WHAT IS THE PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE INTERNATIONAL DECADE?

The Programme of Activities for the International Decade, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2014, in resolution 69/16, outlines specific actions to be taken in the three thematic areas of: **recognition, justice and development**.

The Programme lists concrete, practical **actions to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance** faced by people of African descent which should be taken by States at the national level and by the international community, international and regional organizations at the international and regional levels. The **High Commissioner for Human Rights** was designated by the General Assembly as coordinator of the Decade, tasked with following up on the implementation of the activities for the International Decade.

4. WHAT IS THE UNITED NATIONS DOING?

- The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (**OHCHR**),
- the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (**UNESCO**),
- the United Nations Department of Public Information (**DPI**)
- and other UN departments, agencies, funds and programmes are leading a broad range of **activities in support of the Decade** in the following respective areas:



RELATED UN BODIES, OBSERVANCES AND PROGRAMMES:

The **WORKING GROUP OF EXPERTS** on People of African Descent

The **COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION**

The **SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR** on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

The **FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME** for People of African Descent (OHCHR)

The **FORUM FOR PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT** (OHCHR)

The **DATABASE ON PRACTICAL MEANS TO COMBAT RACISM**, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance (OHCHR)

The **DURBAN DECLARATION AND PROGRAMME OF ACTION**

The International Day for the **ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION** (21 March)

The International Day of **REMEMBRANCE OF THE VICTIMS OF SLAVERY AND THE TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE** (25 March)

The International Day for the **REMEMBRANCE OF THE SLAVE TRADE AND ITS ABOLITION** (23 August)

The **ARK OF RETURN** memorial at UN Headquarters for the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade

The **SLAVE ROUTE PROJECT: Resistance, Liberty, Heritage** (UNESCO)

The **GENERAL HISTORY OF AFRICA** (UNESCO)

The International **COALITION OF CITIES** against Racism (UNESCO)