

**Framework for a Declaration on the Promotion & Full Respect of
Human Rights of People of African Descent**

IHRAAM/CPG-OHBCUD, INC INTERVENTION

22nd Session of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent (UN/WGEPAD)

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It is with deep appreciation and urgency that the ***International Association of American Minorities (IHRAAM)***, an international NGO in Consultative Status with the UN Economic & Social Council (ECOSOC); and our affiliate organization the ***Core Planning Group for Historically Black Colleges & University Development (CPG-OHBCUD, Inc)*** --- submit this requested intervention for due consideration during the **22nd Session** of the **WGEPAD**. Recognizing the Human Rights Council Resolution 35/30 and the UN General Assembly Resolution 69/16, regarding the *Programme of Activities for the Implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent*, we remain fully appreciative of the **WGEPAD's** ongoing efforts to further prepare for the timely promotion and full respect of Human Rights of People of African Descent. It is particularly important that this much needed promotion be methodically and broadly extended throughout the USA. As an international NGO, and well engaged community stakeholders, we remain fully committed to work in continued collaboration with the **WGEPAD** to help ensure the implementation of its UN mandate.

Consistent with our participation in the UN Regional Meeting (Geneva, Switzerland) 22 – 24 November, 2017, we raise our voices once again to reconfirm and draw attention to and decry the increasingly precarious conditions of People of African Descent in the Americas. Unfortunately, a generation of both special UN and domestic research have repeatedly noted the same socio-historically ingrained and troubling disproportionate disparities suffered by the masses of People of African Descent in the USA, as evidenced by every major indicator of well-being. Via our engagement, inter alia, in the UN Regional Meeting of November, 2017, IHRAAM has a well established track record of addressing these complex issues within an international Human Rights framework. Along with a delegation of 41 persons of African Descent from the USA and Canada, we attended the UN World Conference Against Racism (UNWCAR) in Durban, South Africa (2001). Along with many others from varied sectors of the world community, we continue to fully affirm and help implement the core principles noted in the resulting *Durban Declaration and Program of Action*.

In 2014, IHRAAM filed an Alternative Report (AR) with the Human Rights Council for consideration during the **US UPR of May, 2015**. Many other interventions/submissions have been made as well which were subsequently submitted to varied venues within the current Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the US Department of State – US/UPR Team (2015).

[IHRAAM - Alternative Report \(AR\), USA-UPR May 2015 \(Geneva\)](#)

[IHRAAM - Statement to U.S. State Department US-UPR Team](#)

[IHRAAM - WGEPAD Intervention USA Jan 2016](#)

The above documents provide a framework which may help contextualize the recommendations we have put forward below for consideration by the WGEPAD as possible ways and means forward toward its goal of promoting full respect of the Human Rights of People of African Descent with special regard to the USA. They reflect our efforts to preserve Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCUs) and other Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs) of higher education in the United States.

Why Must We Preserve Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCUs) and other Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs) of Higher Education in the United States of America?

HBCUs and PBIs produce the largest percentage of African-American teachers, health professionals, federal/state/local judges, engineers, government officials and related workers. As such, they collectively impact the well-being of US society and African Americans in particular at every conceivable level. In today's troubled environment, exacerbated by negative governmental policies and cutbacks, the survival of these institutions, their historic legacy, and their capacity to serve as a channel for community enablement is severely endangered.

IHRAAM's concerns were personally presented to the US Department of State Inter-Agency UPR Team in Washington, DC in July, 2015. In both our Alternative Report (AR) to the HRC and declaration to the US – UPR Inter-Agency Team, IHRAAM called for the creation of an independent, fully representative and collaboratively structured organization which would address the collective needs of the HBCU/PBI community as providing a systematic framework for promoting the socio-economic growth and development of African-American Communities in the USA.

This led to the formation of the ***Core Planning Group for Historically Black Colleges & University Development (CPG-OHBCUD, Inc)*** which was registered as a non-profit/tax-exempt organization in 2016. The CPG's core vision and mission (cpghbcu.org), consistent with that of the ***WGEPAD***, afford a strategic and practical framework for Declaring the Promotion and Full Respect of Human Rights of People of African Descent in the United States of America (USA).

The ***Core Planning Group, Inc*** is presently engaged in the following activities which might further supplement and implement the ***WGEPAD's*** current UN mandate. In collaboration with IHRAAM, as a NGO in Consultative Status with ECOSOC, the CPG, Inc:

- Is conducting a national series of informational Human Rights Workshops at various HBCUs/PBIs throughout the USA. These Human Rights Workshops currently provide a strategic and effective framework and venues for Declaring the Promotion and Full Respect of Human Rights for People of African Descent;
- Promotes the institutionalization of local/regional/national coordinating committees, comprised of duly elected/representative stakeholders, tasked with the responsibility to develop policy initiatives which advocate for the collective socio-economic empowerment, historic legacy

entitlement and human rights of HBCUs/PBIs and the marginalized African Descendant Communities of which they are an integral part;

- Engages in full and ongoing cooperation with the US Department of State, US Department of Education, and cognate US Interagency groups to help ensure collaborative harmonization and compliance with all domestic and international laws and practices impacting the socioeducational development, well-being and human rights of US national/ethnic minorities, principally citizens of African Descent, and indirectly others throughout the African Diaspora; and
- Ensures that a collaboratively identified HBCU or PBI Institution of Higher Learning shall be available to serve as the venue for an **Annual Review** of all progress made toward the implementation of the UN General Assembly's "*Programme of Activities for the Implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent*" (UN/RES/69/16); as well as the recommendations of the UN Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent (**WGEPAD**) on its Mission to the USA (A/HRC/33/61 – 2016)

IHRAAM and the CPG, Inc remain supportive of the core principles of social justice, development and recognition of the inherent right to equal status/partnership for national/ethnic/linguistic and religious minorities living in multi-national states. We take special note of the aforesaid UN General Assembly's Resolution 69/16, wherein it specifically -- "*Requests States and encourages relevant human rights bodies, organs and mechanisms of the United Nations, specialized agencies, funds and programmes, international, regional, subregional and non-governmental organizations, including organizations of People of African Descent, national human rights institutions and other stakeholders to develop and implement specific action-oriented activities in their areas of competence*".

Similarly, the UN endorsed "**Programme**" (Resolution 69/16), regarding People of African Descent, further recognizes the following: (a) Right to Equality and Non-Discrimination; (b) Education on Equality and Awareness-Raising; (c) Information-Gathering; (d) Participation and Inclusion; (e) Justice; (f) Special Measures; (g) Right to Development and Measures Against Poverty; (h) Education; (i) Employment; (j) Health, and (k) Housing. As is well noted by many, these are among the assorted issues, steps and measures to be addressed by the General Assembly, as it encourages all States and governmental and non-governmental entities to fully support the current "*Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination*".

Therefore, in conclusion, we trust that the **UN-WGEPAD**, in ways/means it might deem appropriate, will see fit to engage in further collaboration with us as it continues with its commendable efforts toward finalizing a Declaration on the Promotion and Full Respect of Human Rights of People of African Descent. Needless to say, we would heartily welcome the **WGEPAD's** collaboration and engagement in the **Annual HBCU/PBI Review** of the implementation of **UN General Assembly Resolution 69/16**.

We thank you !!!

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