

## **Africans Unite formed in Las Vegas to bridge the gap among the African Diaspora**

Katherine Duncan

March 26, 2018



*Photo: Left to Right Katherine Duncan, Leslee Ricardson, Jamila Flowers, Kinesha McDaniel, Joy Jones, Tara Sheahan, Andia Lancaster and Jerushia McDonald-Hylton.*

On March 26, 2018 at Las Vegas City Hall, a group was convened to commemorate the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of the North Atlantic Slave Trade as proclaimed by the United Nations.

Katherine Duncan with Harrison House and Ward 5 Chamber of Commerce joined with Jerushia McDonald Hylton whose organizations are Women With A Vision International and African's Cry.

Standing on the foundation that was established by Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, we came together to establish the "Africans Unite Las Vegas".

"Our mutual goal is to bridge the divide among the African diaspora for recognition, justice and development in keeping with the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent. It is difficult for us to develop our community or to prosper until there is dialogue and atonement", McDonald said.

"I was encouraged to reach out to Africans in the Unification movement who already understand peace building and conflict resolution. This is a way for Las Vegas to take the leadership role in bringing about an end to the crisis faced by African Americans in the United States " Duncan said.

Duncan and Hylton were both encouraged by the United Nations document and agreed to utilize the agenda as way to begin dialogue and education.

The UN documents cite white supremacy and racism passed down through the generations as the root cause of mass incarceration and police violence experienced today and include more than 30 recommendations for action.

In attendance but not pictured were Stanton Wilkerson, Alan Glover and Johnny Bell (who brought along a homeless African American young girl to demonstrate seriousness of our children's plight.)

Alan Glover attended the event because it fell on the day of the Moulin Agreement ending segregation in Las Vegas. He continues to be involved in the Moulin Rouge's development. He was impacted by statues depicting slavery and lynchings in shopping malls in the South.

Kinesha McDaniel was surprised at how little her teachers knew about our history and through school she has to continually enlighten them about our true history.

The group took turns telling about what we were taught as children, what we learned about race as children and what we now believe to be the truth. Our belief system that was taught and how it affected us today.

The main challenge was of not knowing identity or what to be called.

Mrs. Joy Jones, owner of Diamond Gems from Kenya, pointed to each of the attendees and suggested from which tribe of people they would have come.

Johnny Bell of Rap International Project delivered a very special piece called "40 Acres And A Mule". His organization responds to crisis involving our youth.

Tara Sheahan expressed that she lacked an education about our history until she attended Middlebury College in Vermont. Her main question growing up was, "How did we get to this place of hatred that we are in?"

The group enjoyed an African Tea and tea cakes provided by Joy Jones.

The group definitely expressed interest in monthly forums with upcoming topics to include DNA testing, investing in Africa, reconciliation and healing, forgiveness and repentance, post-traumatic stress syndrome, etc.

The group plans to meet monthly on the 25th day of each month, unless otherwise noticed. The next meeting will be on April 25th, 2018 at the North Las Vegas City Hall, 9th floor.