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Commemoration of the abolition of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade

Programme of educational outreach on the transatlantic slave trade and slavery

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution [70/7](#), in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report on continued action to implement the programme of educational outreach on the transatlantic slave trade and slavery, including actions taken by Member States, as well as the steps taken to enhance public awareness of the permanent memorial to honour the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade at United Nations Headquarters, known as the *Ark of Return*. The report covers the period from 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2021.

Since the previous report dated 4 June 2018 ([A/73/88](#)), the Department of Global Communications has organized three commemorations of the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade on the following themes: “The power of the arts for justice”, “Confronting slavery’s legacy of racism together” and “Ending slavery’s legacy of racism: a global imperative for justice”.

The commemorative ceremony was held in the General Assembly Hall at Headquarters in March 2019 and March 2021. The ceremony for 2020 was cancelled because of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. In response to the restrictions imposed as a result of the pandemic, the Department successfully moved the programme of educational outreach online. It mobilized the network of United Nations information centres, collaborated across the United Nations system, used social media platforms and strengthened partnerships with Member States and a broad range of civil society actors to raise awareness of the *Ark of Return* and of issues covered in the programme mandate.

* [A/76/50](#).



I. Introduction

1. In its resolution [62/122](#), the General Assembly designated 25 March as International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade.
2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to collaborate with, and build on the work of, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), including its Slave Route Project, to establish a programme of educational outreach to instil in future generations an understanding of the causes, consequences and lessons of the transatlantic slave trade and to communicate the dangers of racism and prejudice.
3. In its follow-up resolutions, including resolution [70/7](#), the General Assembly, at its seventy-third session, requested the Secretary-General to report on continued action to implement the programme and the steps taken to enhance public awareness of commemorative activities and of the permanent memorial to honour the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, known as the *Ark of Return*.
4. The present report is submitted pursuant to those requests.

II. Background

5. Education on the transatlantic slave trade and its lasting global impact must include the contributions of enslaved peoples and their descendants. The themes and activities of the programme of educational outreach are aligned with that of the International Decade for People of African Descent (2015–2024).

III. Programme of educational outreach on the transatlantic slave trade and slavery

6. The programme of educational outreach serves to honour the victims of the transatlantic slave trade and slavery, to develop an understanding and knowledge of the history of the transatlantic slave trade and slavery and to encourage action to combat racism and prejudice. Working closely with members of the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) and the African Union, the Department of Global Communications organized under the programme including the annual observance of the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade in the week of 25 March; worldwide commemorative and educational activities in cooperation with UNESCO and other United Nations entities; cultural events; student briefings; panel discussions; exhibitions; and film screenings.
7. Themes considered during the reporting period included “Remember slavery: the power of the arts for justice” (2019), “Confronting slavery’s legacy of racism together” (2020) and “Ending slavery’s legacy of racism: a global imperative for justice” (2021).

IV. Permanent memorial

8. From March to December 2019, through the programme of educational outreach, the Department of Global Communications conducted weekly briefings for students and the public about the *Ark of Return* at Headquarters to raise awareness of the history behind the transatlantic slave trade and slavery and of their legacy and to

encourage action to counter racism and prejudice. In 2020 and 2021, such briefings were conducted virtually. There is close cooperation under the programme with the Visitor Services Unit of the Department to increase the number of visitors to the *Ark of Return*. It is featured in the Slavery Remembrance Day section of the United Nations website and is included in the Black History tour offered year-round by the Unit. It is also featured in tours outside in the garden from May to September. In addition, the *Ark of Return* is promoted on the social media accounts of the programme and the Unit.

9. The programme also serves to promote the *Ark of Return* in its annual exhibitions on display in the Visitors' Lobby at Headquarters and at United Nations information centres.

10. Public tours were suspended when the Headquarters complex was closed in March 2020 owing to the pandemic and will resume when it reopens to the public.

11. Through the programme, the Department continued to promote the permanent memorial at its annual global student videoconference. The videoconference was cancelled in 2020 because of the pandemic. In 2021, an informational page about the permanent memorial was included in the student guide prepared for the videoconference.

12. The Department promoted the *Ark of Return* at a briefing under the programme entitled "Museums, memorials and memorialization after atrocity – communicating a form of ongoing justice" on 8 July 2020. The online event was viewed live by 400 people, including educators, students, and members of civil society. Some 88 per cent of survey respondents agreed that the discussion helped them to understand how museums and memorials could contribute to justice, while 93 per cent said they had a better understanding of how museums and memorials could build solidarity for human rights.

13. Under the programme, promotional materials continue to be produced to encourage visits to the *Ark of Return*. In 2020, a promotional video of the *Ark of Return* was produced that was promoted on YouTube. The video entails a reflection on the history and legacy of the transatlantic slave trade and has received more than 1,500 views.

14. Several high-level officials and celebrities visited the *Ark of Return* during the reporting period. In 2020, the Secretary-General recorded his message for the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade at the *Ark of Return*.

V. Annual commemorations

15. The Department of Global Communications collaborated with the Office of the President of the General Assembly and with member States of CARICOM and the African Union to organize a series of events annually around the week of 25 March in observance of the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

A. Solemn commemorative meetings of the General Assembly

16. In 2019, the International Day of Remembrance was observed at Headquarters on 25 March. The commemorative meeting of the General Assembly featured remarks by the President of the General Assembly, the Deputy Secretary-General and

representatives of Member States. The keynote address was delivered by Trinidadian artist Christopher Cozier.

17. In 2020, activities planned to commemorate the International Day of Remembrance were cancelled owing to the restrictions imposed because of the pandemic. Through the programme of educational outreach, attention was drawn to the International Day of Remembrance via social media, including to the message of the Secretary-General, which was also promoted on the programme website.

18. In 2021, the International Day of Remembrance was observed at Headquarters on 25 March. The commemorative meeting of the General Assembly featured remarks by the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General and representatives of Member States. The Senior Vice-President for Global Inclusion and Strategic Innovation and Chief Diversity Officer of New York University, Lisa Coleman, delivered the keynote address.

B. Cultural heritage

19. In 2019, a cultural and culinary event was organized under the programme of educational outreach, in partnership with the programme's steering committee, to coincide with the commemorative session held by the General Assembly. The purpose of the event was to celebrate the heritage and traditions that enslaved Africans brought to Europe and the Americas.

20. The event was cancelled in 2020 because of the pandemic.

21. In 2021, the Department of Global Communications organized an online cultural event in partnership with UNESCO and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The cultural event featured spoken-word and musical performances by a diverse range of young people of African descent and a discussion with Jean Augustine. Speakers included the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Deputy Director-General of UNESCO, the Executive Director of UNFPA, the Permanent Observers of the African Union and of CARICOM to the United Nations, and youth representatives from Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, Kenya, Nigeria and the United States. The event was viewed live by 22,000 people and live-streamed on United Nations Web TV.

C. Global videoconferences for students

22. On 10 May 2019, the eleventh annual global student videoconference was held at Headquarters under the theme "The power of the arts for justice". The videoconference brought students together from the New York metropolitan area, Kenya, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to discuss racism and the negative portrayal of people of African descent in the media. Speakers included the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations, the Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations, and the designer of the *Ark of Return*. Some 500 students attended and reported that they had gained knowledge of the transatlantic slave trade by participating in the event.

23. In 2020, the annual global student videoconference was cancelled because of the pandemic.

24. The twelfth annual global student videoconference was held online on 10 June 2021, under the theme "Ending slavery's legacy of racism: a global imperative for justice". Afua Hirsch delivered the keynote address, and presentations were made by high school students from Jamaica, Nigeria, Panama, the United Kingdom of Great

Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States. Approximately 2,400 students and 80 teachers attended, with the teachers reporting that their students had gained significant knowledge about the transatlantic slave trade. The organizing partners promoted the videoconference, which was also webcast on United Nations Web TV and garnered more than 1,000 views.

D. Briefings for non-governmental organizations

25. The Department of Global Communications harnesses the strength of civil society organizations to broaden its outreach, to expand and amplify knowledge about the history of the transatlantic slave trade and to encourage action to fight racism. Through the programme of educational outreach, briefings were organized for non-governmental organizations associated with the Department, and new partnerships were initiated with Lehigh University, Diving With A Purpose, the Universities Studying Slavery consortium, the Global Curatorial Project, and the Colonial Hangover project of the University of Warwick. On 28 March 2019, the programme organized a briefing on the role of memorials in preserving and managing memory. The panellists included the Director of the UNESCO Liaison Office in New York and UNESCO Representative to the United Nations; the designer of the *Ark of Return*; the President of Mémorial ACTe, in Guadeloupe; and the Cultural Administrator of the World Foundation for the Memorial and Safeguarding of Gorée, in Senegal.

26. On 18 May 2020, to mark the International Day of Living Together in Peace, the Department organized a virtual discussion entitled “Fighting stigma, xenophobia, hate speech and racial discrimination related to COVID-19”. Speakers included the Director of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in New York and the Director of Crisis Advocacy at Human Rights Watch.

VI. Other educational activities

A. Film screenings

27. Recognizing the power of film as an educational tool, the Department of Global Communications, through the programme of educational outreach, continued its multilingual film series related to the transatlantic slave trade and the legacy of slavery.

28. On 2 October 2019, the Department, in cooperation with the non-governmental organization Most Influential People of African Descent, held a screening and discussion of the film *Bigger Than Africa*. The film highlights the enduring significance of the Yoruba culture of West Africa in the Americas. Speakers included the director of the film; the President of the General Assembly at the seventy-fourth session; the Under-Secretary-General for Global Communications; the Chief Executive Officer of Most Influential People of African Descent; Harvard University Professor of African Religious Traditions at Harvard Divinity School and of African and African American Studies in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences; and the Director of Afrika House, in Trinidad and Tobago. The Department subtitled the film in all six official languages of the United Nations, as well as in Portuguese and Kiswahili, and made it available to United Nations information centres.

29. On 28 February 2020, the Department joined the World Foundation for the Memorial and Safeguarding of Gorée at a film screening and discussion hosted by the Permanent Mission of Senegal to the United Nations. In the film, *Gorée-Almadies: Recognizing Transatlanticity*, the planned memorial of Senegal to honour Africa, the

global African diaspora and the victims of the transatlantic slave trade was introduced. Speakers included the Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of Senegal to the United Nations and the Coordinator of the Gorée Memorial Project.

30. From March 2021, the Department of Global Communications, Fremantle and Associated Producers Ltd./Cornelia Street Productions held monthly online screenings of the six-part series, *Enslaved: The Lost History of the Transatlantic Slave Trade*. Through the programme, discussions were organized around each episode, which were attended by some 800 participants. The audience included students, teachers, academics, and representatives of non-governmental organizations. Ninety-eight percent of survey respondents reported that they had gained significant knowledge of the history of the transatlantic slave trade and its legacies after taking part in the screenings and discussions.

31. From 20 March to 2 April 2021, an online screening of a documentary, *Bill Traylor: Chasing Ghosts*, was held under the programme, together with an online discussion of the film on 31 March in which the relationship between art, justice, and the legacy of slavery was considered.

B. Virtual briefings

32. On 28 May 2020, an online discussion entitled “Inclusion in the time of COVID-19: confronting slavery’s legacy of racism together” was organized through the programme of educational outreach and UNESCO to address the systemic racism revealed by the COVID-19 pandemic towards people of African descent across the globe. Speakers included the Senior Vice-President for Global Inclusion, Diversity and Strategic Innovation and Chief Diversity Officer of New York University; the Project Manager in charge of Memory, Racism and Antisemitism of the city of Bordeaux; the former President of the International Scientific Committee for the Slave Route Project; a Canadian hip-hop artist and lecturer; and the Director of Policies and Programmes in the Social and Human Sciences Sector of UNESCO in Paris. Some 400 participants viewed the event live, including students, educators, representatives of non-governmental organizations and government officials. The event is archived on the United Nations Web TV site.

33. On 8 July 2020, the Department of Global Communications launched an online discussion series entitled “Beyond the Long Shadow: Engaging with Difficult Histories”, a joint initiative of the programme of educational outreach, the Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme, and the Outreach Programme on the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi in Rwanda and the United Nations. The collaborative series is aimed at developing a deeper understanding of the legacies of these painful histories and, by examining the past, at considering how best to build a world that is just, where all can live in dignity and peace. The first episode of the series was a panel discussion entitled “Museums, memorial and memorialization after atrocity – communicating a form of ongoing justice?” The panel included a historian and member of the International Scientific Committee for the Slave Route Project, the Director of the Kigali Genocide Memorial, the Director of the South African Holocaust and Genocide Foundation and the Executive Director of the Shoah Foundation of the University of Southern California. Some 400 participants viewed the event live, including students, educators, representatives of non-governmental organizations and government officials. The event is archived on the United Nations Web TV site.

34. On 19 November 2020, an online briefing entitled “Unveiling the past” was organized through the programme of educational outreach. The speakers considered the significance of the preservation of burial grounds of those who had been enslaved

and the ethical questions raised for historians. Speakers included the Director of the African Programme in Museum and Heritage Studies of the University of the Western Cape, South Africa, and a cultural projects consultant and Loeb Fellow of Harvard University. Some 200 people viewed the event live. Participants included students, educators, representatives of non-governmental organizations, and government officials. The event is archived on the United Nations Web TV site.

35. On 21 January 2021, under the programme of educational outreach, the Department participated in an online briefing co-organized by the Colonial Hangover Project of the University of Warwick in the United Kingdom entitled “The hidden legacies of colonialism”. The Project works with high school students to educate them about the legacies of the transatlantic slave trade and colonialism.

36. On 4 March 2021, an online discussion was organized through the programme of educational outreach and Lehigh University in the United States entitled “Return to the root: exploring racism through dance”. In the discussion, themes of systemic racism and the legacy of slavery throughout African diaspora populations were explored. The event is archived on YouTube and Facebook and received a total of more than 900 views across both platforms. Participants included university students, professors, academics and members of civil society.

37. On 22 March 2021, through the programme of educational outreach and the Global Curatorial Project, an online discussion entitled “In slavery’s wake” was held. The Project is a network of scholars, curators and community educators working to create new knowledge about the history of the transatlantic slave trade and slavery and about the contemporary legacies of racial slavery and colonialism. More than 250 people attended the discussion, including students, educators, academics, members of civil society and government officials. The event is archived on the United Nations Web TV site.

38. On 26 March 2021, through the programme of educational outreach and the Permanent Mission of Senegal to the United Nations, an online discussion entitled “Remember, acknowledge and educate: the Gorée memorial and museum” was held. The event was viewed live by more than 300 people, including students, educators, members of civil society and government officials, and is archived on the United Nations Web TV site.

VII. Educational and promotional materials

A. Guidance for resident coordinator offices, United Nations information centres and UNESCO field offices

39. The Department of Global Communications, together with UNESCO, developed a guide entitled “Educating about violent pasts”. Strictly for internal use, the guide provides support and examples of best pedagogical practices for resident coordinator offices, United Nations information centres and UNESCO field offices.

B. Exhibitions

40. In 2019, under the programme of educational outreach, the Department of Global Communications produced a version of an exhibition on the theme “Remember slavery: say it loud” in the six official languages of the United Nations as well as Kiswahili and Portuguese. It was made available to United Nations information centres.

41. From 21 March to 21 April 2019, under the programme of educational outreach and in partnership with the New York Historical Society, the Department staged an exhibition on the theme “From Africa to the new world: slavery in New York” at Headquarters in New York.

42. In 2020, through the programme of educational outreach, an exhibition on the theme “Us and them: from prejudice to racism” was held at Headquarters, from 21 February to 15 March. The exhibition served to examine the concept of race, to demonstrate how racism flourished during the transatlantic slave trade and is still dividing societies, and to sound a call to action.

43. Headquarters was closed to the public, beginning in March 2020, owing to COVID-19-related restrictions. The same exhibition will be mounted again in March 2022. Through the programme of educational outreach, the Department made travelling exhibitions in Arabic, French, Kiswahili, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish available to United Nations information centres and resident coordinator offices for their outreach activities.

C. Website

44. The website of the programme of educational outreach continues to be updated to complement its activities. During the reporting period, there was a 68.6 per cent increase in traffic to the website compared with the previous reporting period (from August 2015 to April 2018), with page views totalling 283,909.

D. Multimedia

45. Social media is an important channel of communication for the programme of educational outreach. From 2019 to 2021, the Facebook account for the programme gained a 14 per cent increase in the number of followers, from 5,614 to 6,393. From 2018 to 2021, its Twitter account experienced a 32 per cent increase in the number of followers, from 4,339 to 5,713.

46. The News and Media Division of the Department of Global Communications raised awareness of the transatlantic slave trade and its legacy of racism by publishing 12 related news stories in multiple languages from 2019 to 2021.

VIII. Activities of the United Nations information centres in 2019

A. Summary of activities of United Nations information centres in 2019

47. The reach of the programme of educational outreach was expanded through the global network of United Nations information centres and resident coordinator offices.

48. Outreach activities organized by information centres included exhibitions, film screenings, ceremonies, student briefings, panel discussions, and the translation of education materials into local languages. Owing to the pandemic, no activities were conducted in 2020 and 2021.

49. Information centres provided a range of educational and cultural activities focused largely on young people in 2019. Despite the limitations imposed by the pandemic in 2020 and 2021, many information centres promoted the programme themes virtually by publicizing the message of the Secretary-General for the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic

Slave Trade and posting related information on their websites; implementing digital campaigns; and supporting the programme's cultural event marking the International Day of Remembrance.

B. Africa

50. The United Nations information centre in Antananarivo worked with partners in the United Nations system and the National Independent Commission on Human Rights to organize a commemorative ceremony to mark the International Day of Remembrance in 2019. Participants included representatives from civil society and students from local universities. The information centre organized an exhibition on the *Ark of Return*, which was staged at schools and universities, and screened episode three of the four-part *Slavery Routes* series, *1620–1789: From Sugar to Rebellion*.

51. The United Nations information centre in Brazzaville organized an outreach event for 100 university students on the International Day of Remembrance in 2019.

52. The United Nations information centre in Bujumbura, Burundi, hosted and brought together 150 students from the Lycée du Centre Culturel Islamique de Bujumbura, who participated in an outreach programme to mark the International Day of Remembrance on 27 March 2019.

53. The United Nations information centre in Dakar, in cooperation with the Higher Institute of Management and the Lycée d'Excellence Privé Birago Diop, organized a commemorative event on 30 April 2019 at the Institute. More than 250 students of different nationalities participated in a discussion led by a professor of history on the transatlantic slave trade and the significance of the *Ark of Return*. The information centre produced a video of the commemorative event.

54. The United Nations information centre in Harare commemorated the International Day of Remembrance on 25 March 2019 with more than 100 students and lecturers at the Catholic University of Zimbabwe.

55. The United Nations information centre in Lagos, in collaboration with Lagos State Education District V, held a commemorative event to mark the International Day of Remembrance at Badagry Grammar School on 25 March 2019. More than 1,000 students participated. The event featured a visit to the Royal Palace of Mobee, the Mobee Royal Family Slave Relics Museum and the Badagry Heritage Museum, located along the Badagry slave route.

56. The United Nations information centre in Lomé organized several commemorative activities to mark the International Day of Remembrance in 2019, including a visit with 200 students to the Wood Home, owned by Scottish slave trader John Henry Wood. Partners included local schools and the Collège Protestant Lomé-Agbalépédogan.

57. The United Nations information centre in Lusaka marked the International Day of Remembrance in 2019 by organizing two outreach activities at two schools in Lusaka province, in partnership with the Ministry of General Education. More than 950 students participated. The activities included a screening and discussion of *1620–1789: From Sugar to Rebellion*. The information centre held a poster exhibition on the transatlantic slave trade and engaged in a social media campaign to promote the International Day of Remembrance on Facebook and Twitter and through mass SMS messaging to 40,000 mobile phone users.

58. The United Nations information centre in Nairobi marked the International Day of Remembrance in 2019 with several events, including a commemorative ceremony, the staging of the exhibition entitled "Remember slavery: say it loud" and a screening and discussion of *1620–1789: From Sugar to Rebellion*. More than 500 students from

12 universities attended the ceremony. On 10 May 2019, the information centre facilitated the participation of Kenyan students in the eleventh annual United Nations global student videoconference on remembering slavery.

59. The United Nations information centre in Yaoundé commemorated the International Day of Remembrance on 26 March 2019 with an educational event held at Holy Cross International College in Yaoundé. Representatives of UNESCO and the United Nations Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa participated in the discussion.

C. The Americas

60. The United Nations information centre in Bogotá screened part three of the *Slavery Routes* documentary series, *1620–1789: From Sugar to Rebellion*. Speakers included representatives of the World Food Programme and the Minister of the Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia.

61. The United Nations information centre in Panama City organized commemorative events throughout May in connection with Black Ethnicity Month in Panama. It staged an exhibition on the theme “A legacy of black achievement” at the University of Panama, and collaborated with UNESCO to launch the publication entitled *Legacies of Slavery: A Resource Book for Managers of Sites and Itineraries of Memory*.

62. The United Nations information centre in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, organized a screening and discussion of *1620–1789: From Sugar to Rebellion* on 7 May 2019. The presentations were focused on the legacy of the transatlantic slave trade in Brazil. Some 120 people participated in the event. The information centre organized an exhibition featuring diplomatic correspondence from the Itamaraty Palace dating back to the transatlantic slave trade period.

D. Asia and the Pacific

63. The United Nations information centre in Islamabad marked the International Day of Remembrance in 2019 by organizing a screening and discussion of the third episode in the *Slavery Routes* series, *1620–1789: From Sugar to Rebellion*. The screening was organized in cooperation with the Inter University Consortium for the Promotion of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities, and COMSATS University Islamabad.

64. The United Nations information centre in New Delhi organized activities with the India International Centre to mark the International Day of Remembrance in 2019 and staged the exhibition on the theme “Remember slavery: say it loud” from 25 to 31 March, which received more than 800 visitors. The information centre also screened *1620–1789: From Sugar to Rebellion* and created seven social media cards to promote the topic.

E. Europe

65. The United Nations Information Service in Geneva organized several events to mark the International Day of Remembrance in 2019. The exhibition entitled “Remember slavery: say it loud” was held at the Palais des Nations, from 25 March to 18 April 2019, and the Information Service organized a screening of the third episode in the *Slavery Routes* series, *1620–1789: From Sugar to Rebellion*.

66. The United Nations Office in Minsk organized several events in cooperation with the Faculty of International Relations at the Belarusian State University to mark the International Day of Remembrance. The events included a screening of *1620–1789: From Sugar to Rebellion*, which the Office had translated into Russian. The Office also staged the exhibition on the theme “Remember slavery: say it loud”.

67. The United Nations Office in Yerevan marked the International Day of Remembrance by organizing an event for 70 students from three schools from Yerevan and from Kotayk Province on 1 April 2019. The event helped to raise awareness of the human rights violations committed during the transatlantic slave trade. The Office also screened the documentary *Soul of Resistance* and part three of the *Slavery Routes* series, *1620–1789: From sugar to rebellion* in Russian, after which a discussion was held.

IX. Future activities

68. Through new strategic partnerships with Member States, CARICOM, the African Union, UNESCO, civil society organizations, educational institutions and youth groups, the programme of educational outreach has succeeded in meeting its mandate. Pivoting to an online platform in response to the pandemic helped to widen outreach to diverse and specialized audiences. The Department of Global Communications will continue to support the annual observance of the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, to promote the *Ark of Return* as a site of commemoration and education and to aid the global outreach of United Nations information centres and resident coordinator offices. It will also continue to build meaningful content and resources, to harness the reach of online education with a focus on young people and to nurture partnerships in order to commemorate and educate about the history of the transatlantic slave trade and slavery with a view to mobilizing action to address their legacy of racism.

Annex I

Activities of Member States

In its resolution 70/7, the General Assembly requested Member States to provide information about their national educational programmes designed to educate and inculcate in future generations an understanding of the lessons, history and consequences of slavery and the slave trade. The contributions received by the Secretariat covering the period from 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2021 are set out below.

Angola

[Original: English]

Between the end of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, Angola was a large reservoir of slave labour for the Americas. The impact of the slave trade is visible across Angola and illustrates the significance of the trade for maintaining the European colonial structure in Africa and in the world. The creation of the National Slavery Museum is significant among the policy measures that have defined the official position of the State in relation to the history of the slave trade and its impact on Angola and globally. The Museum, under the Ministry of Culture, develops partnerships with national and international institutions, including United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), through the Committee of Angola for the UNESCO Slave Route Project of UNESCO. The projects of the Museum disseminate knowledge about slavery and the slave trade. They cover such subjects as the identification of the places of memory of slavery and the slave trade in Angola, archaeological prospecting and excavation, and the collection of new artefacts throughout the country. The Museum places special emphasis on young people and has developed an educational plan that complements the national school syllabus. From 2018 to 2020, 58,599 people visited the Museum, demonstrating an increase in public awareness of the history. This trend was interrupted by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, and the successive decrees of states of emergency and disasters in the country. The slave trade and the enslavement of Africans left traces of racism and social divisions that remain evident in the contemporary world and in the ongoing, sometimes institutionalized discrimination against people of African descent. In this context, the recovery of the history of slavery and the slave trade is of paramount importance for understanding certain contemporary social problems and for the affirmation of our political identity.

Australia

[Original: English]

The Australian Government acknowledges the ugly chapter in our history related to slavery, the terrible conditions faced and the weight of this history still felt today by descendants. The Australian Curriculum presents opportunities to learn about the history of slavery in the school curriculum.

Brazil

[Original: English]

Brazil currently has the second-largest population of African descendants in the world, representing 56.8 per cent of the population. Slavery left social and economic consequences that demand attention and public policies, especially affirmative action in terms of compensation for people of African descent and the promotion of ethnic and racial equality. Law 9,394 of 1996 included a provision to make the study of Afro-Brazilian and indigenous history and culture compulsory in public and private elementary and high school establishments. There are number of initiatives under way

to support the implementation of the law, including a technical agreement between the Ministry of Women, Family and Human Rights, the Ministry of Education and the city of Afuá to implement a project on racial equality in schools; training for public managers on confronting institutional racism by the state secretariat of Mato Grosso for education, sport and leisure; training on racial equality for leaders, councillors for the promotion of racial equality, regional educators and young people of African descendant organized by the Plural Institute of Education and Citizenship of Vila Bela in the state of São Paulo; a project to confront institutional racism and violence against the black population organized by the City Hall administration of Aracajú in the state of Sergipe; a project on racial equality in schools, organized by the municipality of Santo André in the state of São Paulo; training to raise awareness of institutional racism organized by the state secretariat for social development in the state of Goiás. Since the Durban Declaration of 2001, Brazil has acted to combat racism, facilitated a greater role for black protagonists in the field of education and recognized the important contribution of the African background to Brazil. Legislation has been implemented to ensure the teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture in schools, and quotas are met at universities. The national education plan includes measures to fight racism and ethno-racial discrimination. The “common base” national curriculum is aimed at valuing the history of Africa and Afro-Brazilian and indigenous cultures. In this regard, the topic of slavery has come to the fore, and the history and the knowledge produced by these populations are considered in the curriculum over its lifetime.

Burkina Faso

[Original: French]

In Burkina Faso, topics relating to the slave trade and racism are included in the history and geography programmes of post-primary and secondary general education. In the fourth and second grades, students learn about the origins, evolution and causes, the triangular trade, the abolition of the slave trade and its consequences for Africa, Europe, America and Asia. Lessons in the fifth, third and twelfth grades focus on racism by studying the population of the United States (population dynamics and racial problems), fascism and Nazism, and the Second World War. These topics are not addressed purely for information purposes. They are handled in a holistic manner as a duty of remembrance, so that learners can understand them, analyse them and learn from them. The study of these topics is also aimed at shaping citizens who are tolerant, respectful of human rights and passionate about peace and justice.

Colombia

[Original: English]

In September 2020, the Ministry of the Interior, through the Directorate of Affairs for Black, Afro-Colombian, Raizal and Palenquero Communities, delivered to the Ministry of National Education the review of the implementation of the post of Chair of Afro-Colombian Studies from 1993 to 2019, in a document entitled “Experiences and perspectives in the respect for the ethnic and cultural diversity of the nation”. The review highlights the importance of the implementation of the post as a mechanism for the protection of the cultural identity of those communities, and for avoiding any act of intimidation, segregation, discrimination or racism, especially in the Colombian educational system. The Ministry of the Interior, through the Directorate, acted to prevent and combat all types of discrimination against those communities and developed public policy guidelines, commissioned reports and instituted projects to eradicate racism and discrimination against Colombia’s Afro-descendant population, and to promote awareness of its contribution to the country.

Costa Rica

[Original: Spanish]

The Ministry of Public Education of Costa Rica, the Directorate for Curriculum Development and other Ministry entities have been working to prevent and address trafficking in persons as a clear means of combating slavery. One of the highlights of the Ministry's activities is its promotion and coordination of the My Fantastic Story contest. Every year, thousands of primary school students participate in the contest, which is organized by the Friends of Learning Association and the Ministry. The contest has been held nine times to date and participation levels have been extremely high. The children have created stories on issues relating to human rights, coexistence and other areas crucial to the prevention of situations such as trafficking in persons. As underscored in the curriculum policy "Educating for a new citizenship" (2017), the aim of education must be to fully develop the human person and strengthen respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; it must promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all ethnic or religious groups, and further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace. One strategic line of the curriculum policy emphasizes the importance of promoting safe educational environments, in which teachers and students are equipped to prevent violence and discrimination and settle conflicts in an environment in which human rights are respected. All of the above is important for combating and eradicating all forms of slavery, exploitation and trafficking in persons arising from situations of vulnerability. In accordance with the aforementioned ministerial policies, which serve as a reference framework for the curricular transformation that is being fostered in all subjects, specifically in the subjects of social studies and civic education that were consulted, it may be observed that, in the programme for the first and second cycles of basic general education, in the fifth year (final year of secondary education), the importance of equality and freedom based on our colonial history is one of the topics covered in the second unit of social studies and civic education. While this is a historical issue that is analysed from the perspective of the colonial process, a present-day perspective is always sought. In other words, the discussion is aimed at understanding this knowledge and making it visible in the present. The individual and collective learning should concern the following areas:

- Appreciation for historical events that enable connections to be made between the past and the present, as a process of national identity recognition.
- Critical thinking regarding the social, economic and cultural characteristics of the conquest and colonization of Costa Rican territory, as a legacy for understanding a past that unites us. This implicitly reaffirms that the idea of these programmes is to heighten the visibility of this critical thinking, shedding light on the present day.
- Comprehension of the processes that enable us to understand history as collective memory that can be used to build a respectful, supportive, fair and inclusive society.

The civic education programme in lower secondary (third cycle) and upper secondary (diversified) education specifically covers non-tolerance of any form of discrimination, ill-treatment, subjugation or enslavement of persons, under the human rights and the guarantees established by the Political Constitution of Costa Rica. This reaffirms that democracy is a prevailing guarantee of the right to liberty and that no forms of slavery are tolerated.

Lastly, in the description of the content of the social studies programme that forms part of lower and upper secondary education, reference is made to related topics, which include the historical and geopolitical context of contemporary society

from the second half of the twentieth century onwards. As part of the expected learning, which constitutes the main general objectives that the teacher should meet, students reflect on the reasons why contemporary society has not eradicated the problems of racial segregation, ethnic cleansing and human rights violations in many parts of the world.

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]

Freed slaves and their descendants played a key role in our struggles for independence and self-determination. The Cuban nation, its culture, its idiosyncrasies and its popular religion, all of which are profoundly mestizo, cannot be accounted for without the contribution of Africa. On 2 December 2005, which was the thirtieth anniversary of the Cuban military mission in Angola and the forty-ninth anniversary of the disembarking of the *Granma*, the historic leader of the Cuban revolution, Fidel Castro Ruz, said: “The exploits in Angola and the struggle for the independence of Namibia and against the fascist apartheid gave our people much strength (...) The name of that operation is both a symbol and a tribute to the thousands of slaves that perished in combat and were executed during the first uprisings (...) Mambises, rebels, clandestine fighters, Girón combatants, the October Crisis and the struggle against bandits, internationalists, members of militias, members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces and the Ministry of the Interior, in short, the struggling people, are the result of the sturdy trunk that grew in this land, with African and Spanish roots.” This idea is evident in the premises of the Constitution of the Republic of Cuba, proclaimed on 10 April 2019, which establishes that the educational, scientific and cultural policy protects the Cuban identity and culture and safeguards the artistic, patrimonial and historical wealth of the nation. The Constitution recognizes that education should promote knowledge of history and develop high levels of ethical, moral, civic and patriotic values. In this regard, it has been a priority for students in the Cuban education system to study the contribution of the African slaves who arrived on the island, who numbered approximately 1.3 million. School in Cuba functions as a centre for the transformation of social agents, considers local problems and enables different actors to be taken into account, offering a flexible, interdisciplinary, participatory and comprehensive curriculum. The history and consequences of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade are addressed in the curricula of the various subjects, and the approach taken is primarily educational and preventive. These programmes are aimed at shaping well rounded, deeply caring and humane citizens, who have a sense of national and cultural identity and are able to reject all discriminatory practices. Cuba continues to participate, through the schools associated with UNESCO, in the international Slave Route Project, which aims to publicize the impact of the transatlantic slave trade, study its causes and promote the safekeeping of elements that bear witness to the African footprint in our lands. In educational, cultural, work and community forums, a stronger culture of tolerance and respect for the rights of others is fostered. Both public institutions and civil society organizations are involved in this effort. Activities are carried out in Cuba to underscore the African cultural legacy, the contributions of its indigenous peoples, Cuban cultural diversity and non-white leading figures or collective subjects in history and our culture. As a result of the progress made in over 60 years of struggle against all forms of discrimination and as part of the commitment made by the Government of Cuba, the national programme to combat racism and racial discrimination, coordinated by a governmental commission headed by the President of the Republic, was approved in November 2019. With the aim of strengthening education against racial discrimination, the programme has made it possible to update the research programmes of academic institutions and the design and implementation of specific subprogrammes by educational institutions attached to the ministries of education, higher education and public health and the National Institute of Sport, Physical Education and Recreation.

Georgia

[Original: English]

In Georgia, the history of slavery and the slave trade is taught in schools within the subject of history. The topic of trafficking is reflected in the national curriculum approved in 2018 and in the certified textbooks.

Italy

[Original: English]

Italy's efforts to educate about slavery and the transatlantic slave trade were focused on combatting human trafficking.

Portugal

[Original: English]

In Portugal, the Directorate-General for Education, under the Ministry of Education, addresses the history of the transatlantic slave trade and its legacy of racism at various levels of education. Student profiles are structured according to principles, vision, values and areas of competence. Rejecting all forms of discrimination and social exclusion and valuing cultural diversity are part of the expected vision for all students by the end of compulsory schooling. Demonstrating respect for human and cultural diversity is a key ideal expressed in the "citizenship and participation" value. In 2017, the Government launched a national strategy for citizenship education. Resources are being developed that are focused on the promotion of non-discrimination, tolerance, and respect for diversity. The fourth national plan on preventing trafficking in human beings, covering the period 2018-2021, is aimed at strengthening knowledge and at informing and raising awareness about trafficking in human beings. The history curriculum for primary and lower secondary education includes the themes of maritime expansion, colonization, slavery, ethnicity and migration. Topics covered include the main civilizations in Africa, America and Asia when the Europeans arrived; forms of economic occupation and exploitation implemented by Portugal in Africa, India and Brazil; the violent submission of diverse peoples as a reality of the expansion; and an examination of how the prosperity of imperial powers was linked to slavery, especially from Africa to the American plantations.

Spain

[Original: Spanish]

In Spain, the transatlantic slave trade and trafficking in persons are studied as part of compulsory secondary education and the baccalaureate. During compulsory secondary education, for example, understanding of the significance of the concepts of "democracy" and "colonization" in the classical world is assessed, as well as the causes and consequences of the conquest and colonization of America in the modern age, and of imperialism up to the First World War. For the baccalaureate, these areas are studied in more depth, in addition to others such as colonial expansion in America and the Pacific during the sixteenth century, and the policy towards America and its consequences for Spain, Europe and the American population. In 2021, the Ministry of Equality of the Government of Spain commemorated the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March 2021) and the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade (25 March 2021). Over the course of four days, various round tables were organized in which the following participated: representatives of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, former members of the United Nations, Amnesty International, representatives of the public prosecutor's office responsible for crimes involving hate

and discrimination, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry for Social Rights and the 2030 Agenda, and representatives of civil society and international and university experts. On 25 March 2021, a minute's silence was observed at the Ministry of Equality in remembrance of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. In addition, with the aim of combating prejudice and stereotypes, various videos were disseminated that week through social media to promote greater knowledge of and respect for the diversity of the heritage and culture of people of African descent and other population groups.

Annex II

Contribution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

[Original: French]

1. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is developing a new strategic framework that focuses on the contemporary consequences of slavery and is based on the recommendations made by the International Scientific Committee and strategic partners. It will propose innovative ways of combating structural racism and racial discrimination that involve creating multimedia educational tools, enhancing the tangible and intangible heritage linked to this memory and building the capacities of different stakeholders such as cities, young people, museums and local communities.
2. The Slave Route Project: Resistance, Liberty, Heritage is also preparing a groundbreaking study to assess the macroeconomic impact of racism and discrimination in the world.
3. In accordance with the statutes of the International Scientific Committee, the term of office of half of the members of the Committee has been renewed. Ten new leading figures were identified during the various webinars organized by the Social and Human Sciences Sector on anti-racism and thanks to recommendations received from our networks of experts.
4. Drawing on the publication *Legacies of slavery: a resource book for managers of sites and itineraries of memory*, the Slave Route Project continues to support major initiatives to preserve and promote memorial sites linked to the slave trade and slavery.
5. In the context of the next World Cup football competition, to be held in Qatar, UNESCO is working to establish a partnership with Msheireb Museums regarding an exhibition on racism.
6. An international webinar on the topic “Health and structural racism” in June 2020 demonstrated the influence of structural inequalities and discrimination on the exposure, distribution and impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.
7. A collective intelligence workshop aimed at providing food for thought on the complexity of the challenges linked to the multifaceted heritage of slavery in the contemporary world was organized in February 2020. It brought together researchers, artists, cultural actors and UNESCO experts around the fundamental and epistemological aim of questioning our uses and representations of the past, present and future around the “slavery, race and inequalities” triptych.
8. As part of the series of UNESCO master classes against racism and discrimination, the Slave Route Project organized a special edition of the master class on 29 January 2021 on the subject of slavery, in collaboration with the publisher of the *Lucky Luke* comic books.
9. Following a two-year collaboration between the Guerrand-Hermès Foundation for Peace Research Institute and the UNESCO Slave Route Project, supported by Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., an analytical summary of the issue of healing the psychological consequences of slavery has been prepared. The report, entitled *Healing the wounds of slave trade and slavery. Approaches and practices: A desk review*, provides information on the current situation and a mapping of new analyses and approaches to healing cross-generational traumas such as those associated with the transatlantic slave trade and slavery.

10. Following the international seminar entitled “New approaches to interpreting and representing slavery in museums and sites”, the draft book of resources relating to the representation of slavery in museums to promote capacity-building among cultural actors was finalized and will be launched next year.

11. The UNESCO Slave Route Project also took part in a number of important events, as follows:

(a) In October 2020, a message from the Director General of UNESCO was presented at the launch of the Intercontinental Slavery Museum in Mauritius, which was attended by the Prime Minister and the Minister for Arts and Cultural Heritage of Mauritius and the President of the International Scientific Committee.

(b) In November 2020, the Project participated in the twenty-seventh public session of the United Nations Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, at the invitation of its Chair, to present its work in the context of the International Decade for People of African Descent.

(c) In December 2020, the Assistant Director General for Social and Human Sciences participated in the inaugural commemoration of the European Day for the Abolition of the Slave Trade in the European Parliament. Leading figures such as United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, Vice-President of the European Parliament, Dimitrios Papadimoulis, and the Prime Minister of Barbados also participated in this event.

(d) In January 2020, following an invitation from the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, UNESCO presented its views on the issues of slavery and racism at a meeting organized by the University of Manitoba.
