AFRICAN COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

Remarks for the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent Theme: United for Reparatory Justice in the Age of AI

Distinguished delegates, fellow advocates, and Honorable Chair,

My name is Dauda Sesay and I am the National Network Director at African Communities Together (ACT). I lead the African Immigrant Leadership Forum (AILEF), a collaborative of over 210 leaders/members representing 110 African-led and African-focused organizations in the United States.

I bring warm greetings on behalf of African leaders working at the intersection of migration, justice, and liberation. Today, we gather under the theme *"United for Reparatory Justice in the Age of AI,"* a call for collective action in the face of increased surveillance and targeting through artificial intelligence. We've gathered here today because we all share the same concern—AI is becoming more embedded into our lives, and the data that informs its systems are reinforcing harmful stereotypes and deepening racial disparities towards those of African descent.

Today, we must boldly name the truth: that the anti-immigrant rhetoric sweeping across the globe is not just xenophobic—it is racist. Black people are continuing to be criminalized, have our stories erased, and have our rights to move, belong, and lead, undermined. And technology is being weaponized to continue colonial control. After all, modern borders are the walls that slavery built.

As we build over the next few days, we must remember that we are not just survivors of a broken system. We are the architects of a freer one. As Kwame

Nkrumah said, *"Freedom is not something that one people can bestow on another as a gift. They claim it as their own and none can keep it from them."*

So how do we do the work to decolonize from within?

1. **We must center the lived experience and wisdom of people of African descent**.
2. **We must build our own digital resistance tools**, ensuring AI does not reproduce anti-Black bias, but becomes a vehicle for visibility and justice.
3. **We must invest in the healing and leadership of our communities** because reparations are not just about money—they are about memory, dignity, and power.
4. We must put people **at the center of every decision** and commit to **peace across the world.**.

Let us leave this forum not only united in purpose—but organized in action. Because our ancestors did not survive the Middle Passage for us to merely endure—they endured so we could rise. May we move forward together, not in fear, but in collective power and hope.

Thank you.

Dauda Sesay

National Network Director ACT

Founder and Executive
Louisiana Organization for Refugees and Immigrants (LORI)