

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Report to the UN Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent (UNWGEPAD)

Visit on January 24-25, 2016
at Chicago State University

Cultural Genocide Against African Descendants

1/25/16 Testimony by Vickie Casanova Willis, USHRN, NCBL and Multicultural Arts Educator

The genocidal impact of systemic anti-black racism is perpetuated across US institutions from the privatized prison industrial complex and mis-education systems, directly linking to joblessness, homelessness, and the lack of adequate physical and mental health care. *We are on a trajectory to extermination if the World does not intervene.*

These systems are interdependent and mutually reinforce the dehumanization of African descendants in Chicago, Illinois, and the nation. The historical and current attempts to erase the rich cultural heritage of African descendants is a tactic which devalues a people and their contributions to the entire world and society, while supporting White supremacy. African American history, though mandated, is not taught in the Chicago Public schools. The origins of civilization are misappropriated and misattributed to European culture, as opposed to teaching about the genius of ancient and current African cultures. This is directly connected to the social outcomes we see today.

The deficit view of African culture is entrenched in schooling and the racist media. It feeds hatred, self-hatred and discrimination, and the hopelessness a marginalized population may display as community violence amid crushing poverty, state violence, and relentless de-humanization. The resulting systemic racial discrimination allows the ruling class to deny that African descendants have rich cultural roots, while punishing our expressions of those very deep cultural memories. White domination of the education system omits the contributions, scholarship, and accomplishments of Black people from history books, the performing arts, and the mainstream media, promoting European norms which distorts and miseducates, criminalizes us, and perpetuates fear and racism. This dehumanizes African descendants as inferior, and supports the status quo.

Recommendations

- 1) We urge the UN to recommend this city, state, and nation -- fully respect the unique and valuable historic heritage and contributions of People of African descent by supporting an increase in funding more Black Educators, Artists, African Centered Curriculum, African American History (before enslavement) for all Students, and Community Control of Schools, Museums, and Cultural Centers.
- 2) 60 yrs ago *Brown vs. Board of Education* cost black teachers jobs, yet our schools are just as segregated today. We demand reparations of funding and protection for African Centered Schools from pre-K-12 all the way through Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Black

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Studies Departments. When Chicago closed 50-100 Black schools, a who's who of African Heroes and Sheroes' names, artwork, and images were deleted. These are our cultural centers and the community's heartbeat. To close them is criminal, and genocidal.

- 3) Stop Pimping the culture - and poisoning our children's minds. White corporate-owned media *governed by the Federal Communications Commission* such as Clear Channel and national radio station Co. Crawford Broadcasting are waging an audio war on Afrikan Youth. The main themes of the music are: materialism, misogyny, alcohol abuse, drug abuse and peddling, strip clubs, violence and murder. Nearly 80% of the songs broadcast on these monopoly networks to Black teen targeted audiences refer to our women as ho*s and bi*ches! Research found the Clear Channel Radio programming to a predominately European audience will play one song referencing violence for every 50 songs with violent lyrics for the Afrikan Youth targeted station. A **50/1 ratio of violence** on Clear Channels station targeting Afrikan Youth in the Chicago market! Equally disparaging data showed broadcasts promoting sexually aggressive behavior had a **25/1 ratio of obscene sexual references** on Clear Channels stations targeting Afrikan Youth as compared to European Youth. Several movements have been organizing and mobilizing throughout the country to combat this audio attack on the Afrikan community including the "Just Do Better" Campaign, Rage Against The Ratchet in Philadelphia, and the Clear The Airwaves Project in Chicago.

We believe the content and frequency of the violent, obscene music that is being played on these stations has a direct psychological impact on the amount of negativity and violence occurring in the Afrikan Community of the Chicagoland area and nation, promoting self-hatred, murder, disrespect, sexual assaults, and abuse of our women. An investigation on an international level is necessary to properly address this lethal attack on African descendants' human rights and very lives in the U.S.

We Charge Cultural Genocide

U.S. African descendants are facing extermination if the UN and World do not join us quickly in intervening to affirm our humanity by protecting and ensuring our economic, social and cultural rights.
