



Bell Global Justice Institute
Parallel Event, NGO/CSW69 Forum
Title: “*Beijing +30 & Women and Girls of African Descent*”

Wednesday, March 18, 2025
2:30pm-4:30pm EST (Via Zoom)
Register Here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUtfuorjktG9EbhRkQJdwA5nGI78IF5o5Q>

Our Mission: We inspire, empower, build, and mobilize strong voices and impactful actions to advance and preserve the human rights and human dignity of women and girls globally.

Our Vision: As an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 2022, we work to ensure issues that disproportionately impact women and girls are addressed through an intersectional gender equity lens via human rights awareness campaigns, training, advocacy, and partnerships - particularly locally. We support the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and center our work around the international human rights framework and its mechanisms.

Our Statement of Work: Named in honor of SSGT. Vincent J. Bell, United States Marine Corps. (1983-2011), our work is guided and informed by our commitment to and respect for human rights, human dignity, inclusiveness, equality, and social justice.

Our Parallel Event will offer a critical review and analysis on the impact of the Beijing Declaration + Platform for Action on Women and Girls of African Descent. Our panelists will contemplate the ways in which its implementation has advanced the intersectional human rights of women & girls of African Descent, as well as the challenges and barriers due to gaps of implementation of this historic international policy. We will offer best practices on ways global stakeholders can be more inclusive of women & girls of African Descent in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Agenda 2030.

The Critical Areas of Concern we will focus on are: Human Rights, Women and the Media, and Women and Armed Conflict

Meet our Panelists:



Dr. Barbara G. Reynolds

Member, United Nations Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent

Ms. Reynolds is the Vice-President for Administration, Advancement and Planning at the University of the Southern Caribbean in Trinidad and Tobago. She served as Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the University of Guyana from August 2014 to September 2019. Prior to this, Ms Reynolds was Head of Education for Save the Children UK, after having spent the previous two decades with UNICEF in programme, management and representational roles at Headquarters and country offices.

Ms. Reynolds began her professional career as a teacher and continues to be involved in education. She Co-Chairs the CARICOM Digital Skills Task Force and is a Member of the Independent Technical Advisor Panel for the Global Partnership for Education. She is an active human rights professional, and an experienced human rights and gender mainstreaming facilitator. She holds a BA Education (Caribbean Union College), MA in Curriculum and Teaching (Howard University), the Post-Graduate Diploma in Distance Education (University of London) EdD in International Education Development/Curriculum and Instruction (Columbia University) and the MSt in International Human Rights Law (University of Oxford).

Ms Reynolds' second working language is Portuguese.



Ikram Warsame

Human Rights Lawyer

United Nations OHCHR African Descent Fellow

Founding Member, Global Black Collective Institute

Ikram Warsame is a human rights lawyer, litigator and senior UN Fellow. Her practice focuses on complex litigation of human rights cases dealing with disability, sexual harassment, pay equity, intersectional systemic discrimination, racial profiling in the financial industries, anti-black discrimination, prisoners' rights and women's rights. In this capacity, she has successfully negotiated multi-million-dollar settlements and litigated before all levels of court including the Supreme Court of Canada, the Federal Court of Appeal, the Federal Court and administrative tribunals.

Ms. Warsame is also the co-founder and current treasurer of the Global Black Collective institute, an international non-governmental organization founded by several UN Fellows.

A Magna cum laude graduate, Ms. Warsame holds a Bachelor of Social Science in Criminology and Sociology and received her Juris Doctor degree in 2000 from the University of Ottawa (Canada). She has been a member of the bar (Law Society of Ontario) since 2002 and is fluent in French, English and Somali.



Brenda Smith Lezama

Actress, Host, Speaker

United Nations OHCHR African Descent Fellow

Founding Member, Global Black Collective Institute

Brenda Smith Lezama has as diverse of a career as she does an identity, and both are equally in the spotlight.

As a speaker and on-air talent, she combines her work in the media with her advocacy for the rights and equitable representation of people of African descent. During her career as a television host and personality she has focused conversations and storytelling of the lack of Afro-Latino representation and intersectionality, particularly in Spanish-language media.

Her multinational background led to her spending her formative years living between Panama, the United States, and Mexico, where she is now based.

As a United Nations Fellow for People of African Descent, she uses her platform to share mechanisms and strategies to denounce systemic racism and to work towards the recognition, justice and development of Black people and communities worldwide. She is also a founding member of The Global Black Collective Institute, which works alongside the UN's International Decade for People of African Descent.

During the wake of the death of Mike Brown and the Ferguson demonstrations, she served as the first Black woman to hold the position of Student Body Vice President and was part of initiating a campaign against systematic racism at the University of Missouri, which became an international movement that captured global headlines. She continues to reflect on stepping up, speaking out and the power of using a young voice to make a difference through her work in experiential education. With an extensive background in worldwide community-building, she works with students and young adults from Costa Rica to Tanzania to effectively integrate global initiatives rooted in leadership,

community organizing and servitude.



Dr. Maleeka Glover

Women of Color Advancing Peace, Security, and Conflict Transformation (WCAPS)

For the past 20 years, Dr. Maleeka Glover has worked across many areas of public health and emergency management and is a Social Epidemiologist by training. She has held positions with CDC, WHO, in addition to several academic institutions. She provides training on strategic leadership and works to develop and implement science-based approaches, program coordination, training, and global health security leadership. Dr. Glover has supported a number of high visibility and national special security events. She has extensive training and experience in social epidemiology, risk communication policy, planning and implementation and a demonstrated record of accomplishment of community engagement. Dr. Glover is trained to examine how cultural, economic, and demographic factors, biopsychosocial interactions, societal influences, and various levels of social organization (ranging from small groups to complex cultural systems) influences public health and its delivery and understands the influence on peace and security.

Dr. Glover holds a Doctorate from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, a Master of Public Health from the University of Michigan School of Public Health and a Bachelor of Science degree from Clark Atlanta University.

Maleeka is currently the Executive Director of WCAPS; an organization whose vision is to advance the leadership and professional development of women of color in the fields of international peace, security, and conflict transformation. WCAPS is a platform devoted to women of color that cultivates a strong voice and network for its members while encouraging dialogue and strategies for engaging in policy discussions on an international scale.



MODERATOR

London J. Bell, Esq., LL.M.

Founder & President, Bell Global Justice Institute
United Nations OHCHR African Descent Fellow

London is a 2020 African Descent Fellow for the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), a fellowship program within the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent. She is also a Founding Member and the current President of the Global Black Collective Institute, an organization of the 2020 OHCHR Fellows of African Descent dedicated to the realization of equity and human rights for People of African Descent around the world.

She is the Founder and President of Bell Global Justice Institute, a non-governmental organization (NGO) in Special Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) focused on promoting gender equity and advancing and protecting the human rights of women and girls.

London also currently serves as the President of the Macomb County Branch of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) in Macomb County, Michigan.

London is an at-large member of the United Nations Association of the United States of America (UNA-USA) and has served in several leadership roles. She currently represents UNA USA as a member of the U.S. Civil Society Working Group on Women, Peace, and Security (U.S. CSWG). In June 2023, London was awarded UNA-USA's Advocate of the Year Award in recognition of her advocacy for the U.N. and a strong U.S.-U.N. partnership.

In addition, London's work includes hosting human rights workshops and consultations in metro Detroit, and co-drafting civil society reports to the United Nations Committee to

Eliminate Racism (CERD), the United Nations Committee to Eliminate Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). She often participates in civil society consultations with U.S. government agencies and the United Nations on a variety of human rights issues, including racial justice & equality, disability rights, gender equality, and LGBTQ+ rights.

London earned her B.A. Degree in English at the University of Michigan. She went on to earn her Juris Doctor and Master of Laws (LL.M.) in International Law at DePaul University College of Law in Chicago, Illinois. She focused her Master of Law studies in International Human Rights Law & Policy & Criminal Justice. Her global studies and work has taken her to Spain, Peru, South Africa, and Switzerland.