

CONCEPT NOTE

High-Level Consultative Conference on the Next Steps to the Landmark United Nations Resolution on the Trafficking of Enslaved Africans

Date: Wednesday, 17th to Friday, 19th June 2026

Location: Accra, Ghana

Introduction

Further to the adoption on 25th March 2026 of the landmark United Nations Resolution (A/RES/80/250) declaring the trafficking of enslaved Africans and the racialised chattel enslavement of Africans as the gravest crime against humanity, the President of the Republic of Ghana, His Excellency John Dramani Mahama, the African Union Champion on Advancing the Cause of Justice and Reparations for Africans, will host a High-Level Consultative Conference on 18th and 19th June 2026 in Accra, Ghana. The Conference would be preceded by a meeting of Senior Officials and Technical Experts on 17th June 2026.

2. The High-Level Conference will reinforce the historic step taken by the international community to recognise the enduring legacy and global consequences of the enslavement of Africans and the racialised chattel enslavement of Africans. The Conference will also offer a platform to translate international intention into actionable commitments through a broad stakeholder dialogue on a global post-adoption framework to advance historical justice and reparations for Africans and People of African descent.

3. The event on 19th June has been symbolically scheduled to take place on Juneteenth and presents an opportunity to stand with advocates in the United States of America in commemorating a day that marks the final emancipation of enslaved African Americans. This alignment with the commemoration pays tribute to the meaning of Juneteenth while underscoring its enduring relevance beyond national borders. The Conference's extraterritorial observance of the first Juneteenth commemoration outside the United States will be a significant acknowledgement. It would strengthen a shared transatlantic commitment to historical accountability and renew efforts towards justice for Africans and People of African descent.

Background and Context

4. On 25th March 2026, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution A/RES/80/250, a historic resolution dedicated exclusively to slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. Resolution A/RES/80/250 marks the first time in the 80-year history of the United Nations that the General Assembly has passed a resolution mandating comprehensive action on the subject of slavery and its enduring legacies. The international community has, through

the resolution, affirmed the full moral, historical, and symbolic gravity of the trafficking of enslaved Africans and the racialised chattel enslavement of Africans.

5. Coming 25 years after the Durban Declaration, which stated that slavery and the slave trade are a crime against humanity and should always have been so, especially the transatlantic slave trade, the adoption of the resolution by a majority of 123 votes confirms the international community's acknowledgement of the world-breaking and world-redefining impact of the trafficking of enslaved Africans and racialised chattel enslavement of Africans. This represents a fundamental departure from the international community's response to the transatlantic slave trade, replacing commemorative gestures with the pursuit of historical truth and dialogue, aimed at reconciliation and justice.

6. The resolution breaks new ground by declaring the trafficking of enslaved Africans and the racialised chattel enslavement of Africans as the gravest crime against humanity by reason of its definitive break in world history, its unparalleled scale, duration, systemic brutality, and enduring consequences that continue to structure the lives of all people through racialised regimes of labour, property, and capital. It calls for the prompt and unhindered restitution of cultural properties, *objets d'art*, monuments, museum pieces, artefacts, manuscripts, documents, and national archives that hold spiritual, historical, cultural, or other value to countries of origin without charge.

7. The resolution's call for good faith dialogue on reparatory justice sets the tone for global discourse on a unified reparations framework aimed at advancing reparations and implementing systemic reforms to foster a more just and equitable world order.

Rationale

8. The global convergence of views on 25th March 2026 reinforced the need for meaningful multilateral action on historical justice and reparations for Africans and People of African descent. Building on this opportunity, the Conference will consolidate progress and deliberate on follow-up mechanisms to transform the potential of the resolution into actionable commitments.

9. Taking place at a moment of heightened global attention to historical justice and reparations, the Conference further aims to serve as a platform for in-depth discussion on the resolution's implications and to chart a coherent, structured global path forward. The Conference will discuss and agree on a strategy for achieving a common framework for advancing the resolution's objectives, while honouring the significance of Juneteenth as a symbol of emancipation and enduring struggle.

Objectives

10. The high-level conference will:

- Offer a platform for collective reflection and dialogue on the implications of the resolution for Africans and People of African descent;
- Address fragmentation by formulating a Global Post-Adoption Framework to advance the resolution's objectives;
- Generate a conference report, which would serve as additional input for the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of resolution A/RES/80/250 to be submitted at the 82nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly;
- Establish three (3) Global Panels:
 - Advisory Panel on Reparatory Justice;
 - Expert Panel on Restitution of Cultural Artefacts; and
 - Legal Panel for Reparatory Justice.
- Institutionalise a cross-regional high-level Consultative Forum on Reparations.

Expected Outcomes

11. The High-Level Conference is expected to achieve the following outcomes:
 - Consolidated and sustained political momentum among the coalition of States committed to advancing the resolution's objectives.
 - Shared political, legal and normative narrative of the resolution.
 - Global Post-Adoption Framework to address fragmentation.
 - An outcome document to contribute to the report of the United Nations Secretary-General to the 82nd Session of the General Assembly.
 - Establishment of the three (3) Global Panels with the appointed members and Terms of Reference.
 - Annual high-level Consultative Forum on Reparations institutionalised.

Date and Venue

12. The High-Level Conference will take place in Accra, Ghana and is expected to conclude with the consensus adoption of a global post-Adoption Framework.

Format and Programme

13. The High-Level Conference will be preceded by a meeting of Senior Officials and Technical Experts on 17th June 2026 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Drawing on a series of virtual consultations undertaken prior to the conference, the meeting is expected to build on those consultations to formulate a global post-Adoption Framework.

14. On 18th June 2026, the Heads of State and Government, Foreign Ministers and other invited dignitaries will gather for the second day of the high-level conference at the Kempinski Hotel in Accra. The programme will feature the establishment of the global panels during the opening ceremony, alongside themed messages, panel discussions, and an interactive session.

15. Subsequently, on 19th June 2026, participants will consider and endorse the conference outcome document at the Kempinski Hotel. Thereafter, the conference will convene in a traditional durbar format at Osu Castle. The durbar will be preceded by a tour of the Osu Castle, which remains central to understanding the transatlantic slave trade's scale, brutality, and lasting impact and honouring the memory of the millions who were forcibly transported across the Atlantic Ocean. The durbar will serve to honour the memory of the ancestors, to reaffirm their enduring bond with the people of Africa, to restore communal unity, and offer prayers for the land's abundance and the people's well-being. Thereafter, a virtual commemoration of Juneteenth will take place, in collaboration with advocates in the United States of America, to honour the day that marks the final emancipation of enslaved African Americans.

Participation

16. The High-Level Conference would be open to the participation of invited Heads of State, Ministers, representatives of the United Nations (UN), African Union (AU), Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), CARICOM Reparations Commission, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); and experts and representatives from the Congressional Black Caucus, the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP), academia, civil society organisations, researchers, legal experts, and activists in a unified call to action.

17. Additional information on the Conference would be made available upon confirmation of participation via <https://reparations.mfa.gov.gh>. General enquiries may be addressed to reparations@mfa.gov.gh.