ALGIERS DECLARATION ON THE CRIMES OF COLONIALISM IN AFRICA: "TOWARDS REDRESSING THE HISTORICAL INJUSTICES THROUGH THE CRIMINALIZATION OF COLONIALISM" (ALGIERS, NOVEMBER 30TH - DECEMBER 1ST, 2025)

We, Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the participating Member States of the African Union (AU), Heads of Delegations, Representatives of the AU Commission including the Pan-African Parliament, Representative of CARICOM region, academics, experts, jurists, and historians, meeting in Algiers on 30 November and December I, 2025, within the framework of the International Conference on the Crimes of Colonialism in Africa (hereinafter "the Algiers Conference"), at the invitation of the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, in collaboration with the AU Commission, and in accordance with the relevant decision Assembly/AU/Dec.903(XXXVIII) of February 2025;

Emphasizing that the Algiers Conference represents a major political step in the Pan-African quest for justice, historical recognition, reparations, and memorial sovereignty in the face of the multidimensional crimes of colonialism, fully aligned with the African Union's theme for 2025 dedicated to access to justice and reparations for Africans and people of African descent, and affirming that this theme should be extended to a ten-year framework covering the period 20262035;

Recalling all relevant AU decisions, including decision Assembly/AU/Dec.884(XXXVII) of February 2025, proclaiming theme of the year 2025 to be "Justice for Africans and People of African Descent through Reparations"; decision Assembly/AU/Dec.934(XXXVIII) of February 2025, on the classification of slavery, deportation, and colonization as crimes against humanity and genocide against African peoples; as well as the Addis Ababa Declaration on Transcontinental Partnership for Reparatory Justice (7 September 2025) adopted by the 2nd Africa-Caribbean Summit on 7 September 2025; the Abuja Declaration of 1993; the Durban Declaration and Program of Action (2001); and the Accra Proclamation of November 2023 on the establishment of a united front for justice and reparations for Africans;

Recalling and saluting the sacrifices of all African peoples who have fought in solidarity to regain the independence and sovereignty of African countries and to restore truth and justice;

Considering that no reparation can fully heal the suffering inflicted, nor restore the interrupted human, political, economic and cultural trajectories; but that this process stems from an imperative of justice, remembrance, and dignity, inseparable from the sovereign affirmation of the peoples of the continent;

Reaffirming our shared commitment to the principles of African unity, justice, equality, freedom, self-determination which arose directly from the struggle against colonial domination and the restoration of sovereignty over Africa's economic, cultural, and natural

resources;, and dignity for Africans and people of African descent, and to the promotion of human rights, peace, and respect for the sanctity of life, the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of member states as well as unity, solidarity cohesion and cooperation among African countries and peoples in accordance with the Constitutive Act of the African Union, and the Charter of the United Nations; and Emphasizing that these principles continue to guide the continent's defense of sovereignty against all forms of interference, intervention, and external pressure;

Recognizing the heroic struggles of African peoples, liberation movements, intellectuals, women and youth, and the global African diaspora, who transformed collective suffering into solidarity and resistance, and whose sacrifices remain fundamental to the quest for freedom, dignity, and justice on the continent;

Recognizing the historic and decisive role of African women in the liberation struggles of the continent, whose commitment, courage and sacrifices contributed decisively to the rise of nationalist movements and the conquest of independence.

Noting with concern that several territories around the world remain under colonial domination, in contradiction with the fundamental principles of international law, and reaffirming our unwavering solidarity with the peoples who continue to fight for their freedorn and self-determination, including the Palestinian people who suffer the daily horrors of occupation.

Recognizing that redressing the historical injustices is essential to achieving the aspirations of Agenda 2063, "The Africa We Want," notably inclusive development, shared prosperity, and a peaceful and united continent,

We hereby adopt the "Algiers Declaration" as a collective expression of the African will to restore historical truth, promote justice, and advance the cause of reparations:

<u>On memory, shared history. truth. and the moral imperative:</u>

We acknowledge, with profound sorrow, that all African peoples suffered, under colonial rule, the violation of their fundamental rights, the erasure of their cultures, languages, identities, and the plundering of their tangible and intangible heritage.

This shared experience constitutes a unifying legacy that brings Africans together in their collective quest for truth, justice, reparations, and the total eradication of all vestiges of the past colonial domination.

We emphasize that all African peoples remain deeply committed to the preservation their national memory, to honoring their martyrs and the sacrifices made to achieve their independence, which constitutes a sovereign and absolute right, that of constructing and transmitting their own historical narratives, in accordance with their lived experience, their dignity and their aspirations.

We call upon the former colonial powers to fully assume their historical responsibilities through the public and explicit recognition of the injustices committed.

We agree to strengthen efforts in research, archives, and intergenerational transmission to ensure the integrity of collective memory.

We recommend the creation of Pan-African digital archives, the revision of educational curricula, and the creation of memorials, museums, and commemorative days.

We agree to work towards the restitution of cultural property, archives, and human remains illegitimately held by colonizing countries.

On the Codification of Colonial Crimes:

We reaffirm that colonialism, transatlantic slavery, deportation, and apartheid constitute crimes against humanity and forms of genocide, which have inflicted systemic harm on African peoples. These acts represent the most serious violations recognized under international law and international humanitarian law and remain imprescriptible.

We are committed to advancing the international recognition of colonial crimes and working towards their codification as explicit crimes within international legal instruments and mechanisms.

We call upon African, regional, and international courts, as well as relevant international law bodies, including the United Nations General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Court, and African regional bodies such as the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights to undertake an in-depth legal analysis of systemic violence linked to colonialism, with a view to establishing its direct connection to recognized categories of crimes against humanity and to the elements constituting the crime of genocide.

We support the establishment and strengthening of legal mechanisms at the national, regional, continental, and international levels aimed at institutionalizing criminalization of colonialism in international law through the documentation, access, and full restitution of archives, and to guarantee both legal accountability for colonial crimes and their lasting consequences.

We call upon academic institutions of AU Member States to develop model laws, draft conventions, and jurisprudential analyses that advance the recognition, criminalization, and prosecution of colonial crimes.

We welcome the establishment of the newly created AU mechanisms on reparations the African Union Committee of Experts on Reparations (AUCER) and the African Union Legal Expert Reference Group on Reparations (AULER)and call for their strengthening.

We support the creation of a Pan-African Committee on Memory and Historical Truth, which will be mandated to harmonize historical approaches, oversee the collection of archives, coordinate African research centers, and produce analyses and recommendations for the continent.

On the Human Impact and Generational Justice:

We condemn all forms of colonialism, which constituted a structured system of domination, exploitation, and identity erasure, characterized by military occupation, mass violence, forced displacement, land dispossession, settler colonialism, resource plundering, nuclear and environmental testing, and the erasure of cultural, linguistic, identity-based, and spiritual heritage, as well as the production of falsified narratives aimed at denying the existence, dignity, and resistance of African peoples.

We demand the recognition of these dramatic human impacts, which have caused lasting psychological consequences on African societies and populations and which continue to manifest today through new forms of discrimination, systemic racism, and hate speech.

We call for the expansion of continental and national commemorative initiatives, including museums, monuments, memorial sites, commemorative days, and educational reforms.

On the environmental impact:

We recall that colonialism caused serious environmental damage, linked to the rampant exploitation of natural resources, resulting in long-term ecological and health consequences.

We condemn the nuclear tests conducted on the African continent, which caused severe health, environmental, and socio-economic devastation that continues to harm African populations.

We affirm the need to establish a continental assessment of the ecological and climatic impact of colonialism and the rehabilitation needs of territories affected by nuclear, chemical, and industrial testing.

We support the establishment of an African Platform for Environmental Justice, tasked with identifying affected areas, assessing the damage, supporting the States concerned, and formulating continental recommendations for rehabilitation and compensation.

We urge the states historically responsible for the environmental damage that has caused climate change, particularly the former colonial powers, to assume their moral and political responsibility, calling on them to provide financial, technological, and institutional support for the continent's adaptation and mitigation efforts.

We call for increased mobilization of international partners to support African initiatives, in the spirit of equity, reparation, and the right to sustainable development.

On Education. Knowledge Production. African Languages. and the Preservation of Memory:

We emphasize the urgent need to reform African education systems to fully integrate pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial history, and to equip younger generations with an informed historical consciousness

We emphasize the urgent need to enhance educational curricula to reflect historical truth, honor African resistance, and promote Pan-African consciousness.

We support the creation of an African Program for the Transmission of Memory, the promotion of African languages, the advancement of cultural and artistic productions centered on African memory and history, and the development of educational and media content that celebrates African resistance.

We encourage African universities and academies to create training programs and degrees Higher National Diploma (HND), Bachelor's, and Master's degrees whose curricula are based on historical memory, truth, justice, and the right to reparations.

We call for the creation and implementation of a continental platform for African researchers and students in the history of colonialism, providing access to books, documentary sources, and scholarships.

We advocate for public awareness campaigns and national school curricula that highlight the realities and enduring consequences of colonial crimes.

On Cultural Reparations and Restitution of African Heritage:

We recall that colonial subjugation was accompanied by the systematic plundering and destruction ofAfrican cultural, intellectual, and spiritual heritage.

We reaffirm the right of African peoples to the unconditional restitution of cultural resources, including artifacts, manuscripts, archives, sacred objects, and ancestral remains, taken during the colonial rule.

We demand the restitution of all African cultural property in accordance with the African Common Position (ACP) on the restitution of heritage resources and the African Union Model Law on the Protection of Cultural Property and Heritage.

We call upon former colonial powers to cooperate fully and unconditionally in the restitution of these resources to their countries of origin;

We urge upon the African Union Commission and international partners to strengthen the legal and institutional frameworks for restitution and to support sustainable mechanisms for the recovery of heritage.

We call on the African Union to accelerate the commissioning of the Grand Museum of Africa as a continental institution mandated to preserving African heritage and documenting the legacy of colonialism.

On the Socio-Economic Dimensions:

We recognize that colonial domination generated enduring economic distortions through the exploitation of African labor, land, and resources, creating systemic underdevelopment and deeply entrenched structural inequalities that persist to this day. We note that the economic impacts of colonialism continue to manifest in other forms, notably through certain neo-colonial policies such as the control of strategic resources and financial systems, inequitable trade agreements, technological dependence, indebtedness, conditional development aid, and interference in economic policies that limit the sovereignty of African countries.

We emphasize the importance of undertaking a continental audit of the economic impacts of colonialism with a view to developing a justice-based reparations strategy, including, among other things, compensation for plundered wealth, debt cancellation, and equitable development financing.

We emphasize the need to reform global economic governance in order to dismantle the colonial legacy embedded within international financial institutions and trade regimes.

We encourage the implementation of coordinated legal, diplomatic, and economic strategies to advance reparations and promote Africa's economic sovereignty and industrialization.

On International Advocacy and the Africa-CARICOM Partnership

We reaffirm that Africans in the diaspora have also been victims of colonial crimes and continue to suffer discrimination rooted in colonial racial practices;

We reaffirm our solidarity with CARICOM countries in their pursuit of reparations and call for the full implementation of the Addis Ababa Declaration on the Transcontinental Partnership for Restorative Justice (September 7, 2025);

We encourage African Union Member States, Caribbean countries, and the diaspora to undertake unified and coordinated advocacy and legal strategies to achieve restorative justice;

We condemn the glorification or valorization of those responsible for colonial crimes, slavery, and racial violence.

We unequivocally condemn all forms of neocolonialism, including political interference, economic exploitation, and the illegal presence of foreign forces or mercenaries on African soil.

On Structural Reparations in Global Governance:

We deplore the structures of global governance that continue to reflect the power imbalances inherited from the colonial era and call for the rectification of these structural inequalities to achieving genuine restorative justice;

Final Provisions:

Recommend that the matter of selecting a date for the African Day of Remembrance for the Martyrs and Victims of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, Colonialism, and Apartheid be referred to the Group of African Ambassadors in Addis Ababa, in order for them to reach a consensual proposal. The agreed date shall then be submitted to the Executive Council for endorsement, and subsequently to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government for final adoption.

Convey our profound appreciation to the African Union Commission for its support, its leadership in conceptualizing, coordinating and advancing the continental agenda on reparatory justice, as mandated by the AU Assembly, and for establishing dedicated mechanisms in implementing the 2025 AU Theme of the Year.

Adopt this Algiers Declaration on the Crimes of Colonialism in Africa, and submit for approval by Heads of States at the upcoming 39th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government in February 2026, as a first continental step towards the criminalization of colonialism in all its forms and the pursuit of restorative justice;

Express our profound gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Abdelmadjid Tebboune, President of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, for his initiative in convening the Algiers Conference on the Crimes of Colonialism in Africa, and warmly thanking the Government and people of Algeria for their fraternal welcome and the resources deployed to ensure the success of this major event.

The Algiers Declaration is a vital step towards the recognition of the crimes of colonialism and constitutes a practical means of providing Africa with lasting instruments of remembrance, truth, justice, and reparation for a just, prosperous, and dignified future for generations to come.

Adopted in Algiers, Algeria, on December 1st, 2025