

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 47

Acknowledging African descendants of the transatlantic slave trade in all of the Americas with an emphasis on those descendants in Latin America and the Caribbean, recognizing the injustices suffered by these African descendants, and recommending that the United States and the international community work to improve the situation of Afro-descendant communities in Latin America and the Caribbean.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 13, 2003

Mr. RANGEL (for himself, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. JEFFERSON, Ms. LEE, and Mr. MEEKS of New York) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Acknowledging African descendants of the transatlantic slave trade in all of the Americas with an emphasis on those descendants in Latin America and the Caribbean, recognizing the injustices suffered by these African descendants, and recommending that the United States and the international community work to improve the situation of Afro-descendant communities in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Whereas during Black History Month it is important that we not forget that African-Americans are not the only survivors of the transatlantic slave trade;

Whereas like the United States, many European nations benefited greatly from the colonization of Latin America and the Caribbean and their participation in the slave trade;

Whereas the story of African descendants in all of the Americas remains untold, leading them to be forgotten, made invisible, and allowed to suffer unjustly;

Whereas it is important to acknowledge that as a result of the slave trade and immigration, approximately 80,000,000 to 150,000,000 persons of African descent live in Latin America and the Caribbean, making them the largest population of persons of African descent outside of Africa;

Whereas Afro-descendants are present in most all Latin American countries, including Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela;

Whereas the size of Afro-descendant populations vary in range from less than 1 percent in some countries to as much as 30 percent in Colombia and 46 percent in Brazil and make up the majority in some Spanish speaking Caribbean nations, such as Cuba and the Dominican Republic;

Whereas Afro-descendant populations have made significant economic, social, and cultural contributions to their countries and the western hemisphere from their unfortunate involvement in the transatlantic slave trade to their recent contributions to trade, tourism, and other industries;

Whereas although persons of African descent have made significant achievements in education, employment, economic, political, and social spheres in some countries, the vast majority are marginalized—living in impoverished

communities where they are excluded from centers of education, government, and basic human rights based upon the color of their skin and ancestry;

Whereas Afro-descendants have shorter life expectancies, higher rates of infant mortality, higher incidences of HIV/AIDS, higher rates of illiteracy, and lower incomes than do other populations;

Whereas Afro-descendants encounter problems of access to healthcare, basic education, potable water, housing, land titles, credit, equal justice and representation under the law, political representation and other economic, political, health, and basic human rights; and

Whereas skin color and ancestry have lead African-Americans in the United States and African descendants in Latin America and the Caribbean to share similar injustices, leading to economic, social, health, and political inequalities: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring)*, That Congress—

3 (1) recognizes and honors African descendants
4 in the Americas for their contributions to the eco-
5 nomic, social, and cultural fabric of the countries in
6 the Americas, particularly in Latin American and
7 Caribbean societies;

8 (2) recognizes that as a result of their skin
9 color and ancestry, African descendants in the
10 Americas have wrongfully experienced economic, so-
11 cial, and political injustices;

1 (3) urges the President to take appropriate
2 measures to encourage the celebration and remem-
3 brance of the achievements of African descendants
4 in the Americas and a resolution of injustices suf-
5 fered by African descendants in the Americas;

6 (4) the United States and the international
7 community should work to ensure that extreme pov-
8 erty is eradicated, universal education is achieved,
9 quality healthcare is made available, sustainable en-
10 vironmental resources, including land where applica-
11 ble, is provided, and equal access to justice and rep-
12 resentation under the law is granted in Afro-de-
13 scendant communities in Latin America and the
14 Caribbean; and

15 (5) the United States and the international
16 community should achieve these goals in Latin
17 America and the Caribbean by—

18 (A) promoting research that focuses on
19 identifying and eradicating racial disparities in
20 economic, political, and social spheres;

21 (B) promoting, funding, and creating de-
22 velopment programs that focus on Afro-de-
23 scendant communities;

24 (C) providing technical support and train-
25 ing to Afro-descendant advocacy groups that

1 work to uphold basic human rights in the re-
2 gion;

3 (D) promoting the creation of an inter-
4 national working group that focuses on prob-
5 lems of communities of Afro-descendants in the
6 Americas; and

7 (E) promoting trade and other bilateral
8 and multilateral agreements that take into ac-
9 count the needs of Afro-descendant commu-
10 nities.

○