

THE AFRICAN REPARATION CRY

Rationale, Estimate, Prospects, and Strategies

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THE OVERDUE REPARATION

Given that some societies of the human race have been granted reparation, payment of reparation to people of African descent (hereafter referred to as *Africans* or *Diaspora*) may be considered long overdue. Descendants of African slaves in the United States have raised their voices about reparation they are legally entitled to but have been denied for more than a century.¹ Under the guidance of Dr. Robert Block, African Americans have gone further to demand exemption from “U.S. taxes and racial discriminatory laws.”² The cry for reparation for continental Africans has been going on secretly among concerned members of the Diaspora for decades, but in recent years, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and concerned heads of states of Africa have raised their voices openly. In December 1990, an international conference on reparations in Nigeria succeeded in setting up an International Committee for Reparation (ICR). The ICR convinced the OAU to regard the reparation issue as one of the most important items on its agenda.

In February 1991, at a tripartite summit of the heads of state of Togo, Senegal, and Nigeria in Lome, the subject of reparation was discussed alongside the concern for the continent’s \$250 billion debt at that time. The three leaders jointly recommended that the debt “should be written off as part of the reparations due for 500 years of slavery of Africans in Western Europe and America” (“Ecowas Defence Commission,” 1991, p. 197). In 1993, that rec-

