

1804 AND 1945: HISTORY OF AFRICAN REVOLT AS A MEDIUM OF UNDERSTANDING THE CURRENT CONJUNCTURE.

“History is not just the past. It is the present” – James Baldwin

We recognize Haiti as a historical pivot of the African revolution, and affirm the struggle of the Haitian people in its current and historical dimensions. In the 18th Century, Haiti was the richest colony in the world, with its plantation economy anchored on a brutal system of enslavement.

On 22nd August 1791, the enslaved in Haiti revolted against the slave-masters and the capitalist system that subjugated them in the plantations - a protracted struggle that culminated in Haiti's declaration of independence in 1804.

Haiti was isolated by the West before independence and soon after France demanded a ransom of 90 million Francs which Haiti only finished paying 122 years later. Besides having to pay France for the recognition of its independence and territorial sovereignty, Haiti faced international interference in the form of coups orchestrated by the U.S. and England in the 19th century, endured the World Bank Structural Adjustment Programmes that liberalised and deregulated its economy from the 1980's, and was again confronted by military occupations like MINUSTAH and the humanitarian response following recent earthquakes. Systems have as of today collapsed in Haiti, with gangs taking charge of most territories and ports including in the capital, an illumination of the economic, political and humanitarian crisis that is a hallmark of the neo-colonial states - both home and abroad.

Haiti's struggle for reparations is at the centre of her struggle for decolonization, just as the African struggle for reparations is at the heart of the struggle for decolonization in the 21st Century. We affirm Haiti's demand for reparations, which includes France repaying erroneous reparations paid to it by Haiti.

In 1945, the 5th Pan-African Congress was held in Manchester, England. This Congress is significant in that it was able to identify the enemy of our people – the colonial state and the system behind it. It was also able to identify the oppressed - the masses of our people – and situate the anti-colonial struggle in their midst through mass-based parties as instruments for national liberation. In 1958, with only two African countries independent, the liberation movements gathered in Accra, Ghana for the All-African People's Conference to again strategise and chart a common path forward. Roughly 5 years later, In 1963, the heads of 33 independent African states met in Addis Ababa to form the Organisation of African Unity(OAU). This feat was only possible because of the courage and clarity around what had to be done in that era.

We have interrogated the gestation, ascendancy and decline of the left in Africa. The assault on the African left, especially from the 1960's, and its subsequent decline, is of special significance to us for it is marked by the historical repression of the left by forces both internal and external to

Africa. Drawing learnings from this, we affirm the left as the only political location capable of enabling us to imagine a better and dignified society. We commit to reversing the deliberate cutting of intergenerational links and connections, and take delight in the resurgence of worlds as the new vanguard and their formations figure their way out of the abyss that birthed their struggles.