

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (BED)

Resolution **BED-24-20**

EMBRACING OUR SHARED CULTURE WITH AFRICA

WHEREAS, African Americans and the United States should return the embrace of Africa by building a constructive international relationship with each other;

WHEREAS, during October 2023, the Republic of Ghana in Africa will host an African Union-approved conference for people of African descent to reflect and push forward the demand for reparations for Africa for the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade;

WHEREAS, Ghanaian President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo stated it was important to resolve that the atrocities caused during the slave trade time period would not be allowed to happen again;

WHEREAS, the African Union became a permanent member of the G20 on September 20, 2023; the Group of 20 is an intergovernmental forum consisting of 19 countries, the European Union (EU), and the African Union (AU) and works to address major issues related to the global economy;

WHEREAS, in July 2023, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni officially apologized to the descendants of enslaved Africans for Uganda's role in the Transatlantic slave trade, President

Museveni said "If it were not for the parts that our African kings and chiefs played in the slave trade, this evil trade could not have survived. Therefore, on behalf of all the African leaders, past and present, all of them, I acknowledge that part we played in this tragedy. And today, we ask for forgiveness";

WHEREAS, leaders at the U.S.-Africa Business Summit held in Gaborone, Botswana in July 2023 have urged renewal of the long-standing Africa Growth Opportunities Act (AGOA);

WHEREAS, the trade deal gives some African countries preferential or even tax-free access for their exports to the U.S. market, and the agreement is due to expire in 2025, and African delegates at the summit want the deal renewed;

WHEREAS, 49 African countries and NBCSL leadership were active participants in the second-ever U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit held in Washington, D.C. from December 13-15, 2022;

WHEREAS, Africa has one of the world's fastest-growing populations, largest free trade areas, most diverse ecosystems, and one of the largest regional voting blocs in the United Nations;

WHEREAS, by 2050 Africa will be home to one quarter of the world's population with vast natural resources, including 30 percent of the critical minerals needed globally and the world's second-largest rainforest;

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WHEREAS, in May 2020, African Union Commission chairman Moussa Faki Mahamat stated that the AU "strongly condemns the murder of George Floyd that occurred in the United States of America at the hands of law enforcement officers, and wishes to extend his deepest condolences to his family and loved ones";

WHEREAS, the African countries of Ghana, Sierra Leone, Gabon, and Eritrea have extended the privilege of free citizenship to people of African descent based on their ancestral DNA;

WHEREAS, U.S. goods and services traded with Africa totaled \$83.6 billion in 2021;

WHEREAS, the NBCSL has an obligation through its mission to address policies that impact the "general welfare" of African Americans and that should include building a constructive and strong relationship with the continent of Africa; and

WHEREAS, Malcolm X said, "You can't hate the roots of the tree without ending up hating the tree. You can't hate your origin without ending up hating yourself. You can't hate the land, your motherland, the place that you come from, and we can't hate Africa without ending up hating ourselves."

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) supports recognizing and embracing the continent of Africa's connection to the United States and its invaluable contributions;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL should work to unite the nations of Africa and the United States in their common interests and values to the benefit of both entities;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL encourages the establishment of more sister cities between cities in Africa and cities in the United States and should work with the African American Mayors Association to develop this goal;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL seeks to foster more cultural exchanges between Africa and the United States;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL supports increased student and faculty academic exchanges and scientific research between Africa and the United States;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL promotes expanded trade relations between individual states and African Nations to boost our respective economies;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL supports increased tourism between African Nations and the United States to lead to better mutual understanding of our societies;

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL calls upon its Members to enact such policies in their respective states; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States, members of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate, and other federal and state government officials as appropriate.

Resolution ID: BED-24-20

Sponsored by: Sen. James Sanders, Jr (NY)

Policy Committee: Business and Economic Development (BED)