



6th January, 2020

COMMUNIQUE OF THE UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT IRELAND [UNIDPADI] FOLLOWING THE SHOOTING TO DEATH OF YOUNG PERSON, GEORGE NKENCHO

We as the Steering Committee for people of African descent in Ireland are in shock and disbelief over the fatal shooting of a young African man who had been known to have a history of mental health by the members of the Garda Siochana on the 30th of December 2020. In recalling this tragic and devastating incident we are:

Mindful of the fact that justice is the cornerstone of peace as espoused in the Human Rights Declarations of the United Nations, the European Union, and domestic law. We take cognisance that Justice is specifically stipulated in the United Nations Declaration of the Decade for the people of African descent declared by the UN general assembly in 2013. We therefore call upon the Minister of Justice to set up an independent commission of inquiry into all the factual circumstances that led to this tragic loss of life to prevent similar occurrence in the future. In this regard, we call upon the envisaged independent commission to engage IDPADI in its investigations and deliberations.

Further, we are concerned that racial profiling may have led to this tragic incident if it is juxtaposed with past incidences of the Garda Siochana involving young people of African descent in Ireland. We believe in equality and due process before the law.

We take note that capital punishment has been expunged in Irish law, and we are concerned that not all methods to avert lethal force were exhausted in the above fatal incident. We find it unsettling and are left with doubt whether the ultimate force used to take away the life of George Nkencho was proportionate to the threat at hand, considering that more than a dozen Gardai were involved. We are disturbed by the fact that George Nkencho was not only shot at within the precinct of his home but that lethal shots were fired.

Whilst we *recognise* that authorities are seized with the investigations of the matter, we are left with disquiet that the Garda /Gardai responsible for the fatal shooting have not been suspended to enable uncompromised investigations.

The UNDPADI remains *seized* with this matter for the purposes of preventing such traumatic incidences among youths of African descent in Ireland, and for ensuring that due process of the law takes its course in maintaining peace in the community and the restoration of mutual trust between the Garda Siochana and people of African descent.

*****End of UNDPADI¹ Communique*****

The United Nations International Decade of People of African Descent Ireland is a representative platform of the people of African Descent and their community that promotes and advocates for the implementation of directives on the themes of Justice, Recognition, and Development for the People of African Descent as declared by the United Nations General Assembly in 2013 following the UN Durban conference of 2001 and subsequent declaration of the International Decade for People of African Descent 2015-2024. The Steering Committee of UNDPADI has been working with the Department of Justice, and the African Descent Community in the implementation of the decade.



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