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CARICOM
REPARATIONS COMMISSION

CRR Newsletter

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CRR
CENTRE FOR
REPARATION RESEARCH
Justice Repairs All Crimes

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CRR

Justice Repairs All Crimes

Message from the Director



The Centre for Reparation Research (CRR) has had an exciting nine months and we are delighted to share our news and activities with you – from the launch of the Centre in October 2017 to our dialogue with our church leaders in June 2018.

How did it all begin? The CRR was approved by the Technical Advisory Committee of The University of the West Indies (The UWI) in 2016, and the proposal for establishment was approved by The UWI's Finance and General Purposes Committee in February 2017.

The Centre, officially launched in October 2017, was created to promote research on the legacies of colonialism and help to bring justice and positive transformation to these legacies. Its establishment was as a result of a decision by the Heads of Government of CARICOM, after engagement with the Vice-Chancellor of The UWI, to join the long-standing movement for reparatory justice, pioneered by enslaved Africans and sustained by Rastafari, academics, and civil society. The UWI then created the CRR to support the research agenda of the movement.

The CRR will assist in the implementation of CARICOM's Reparatory Justice Programme, which broadly seeks to foster public awareness around the lasting and adverse consequences of European invasion of indigenous peoples' lands, African enslavement and colonialism in the Caribbean.

In working with national and regional reparation committees and commissions, the Centre seeks to promote education at The UWI and other educational institutions, including Caribbean high schools, on colonial legacies and the need for justice and repair.

The Centre promotes advocacy for reparatory justice by building capacity, providing consultancies to CARICOM and other institutions, raising public awareness, and supporting activism around the Reparatory Justice programme.

Our activities, locally, regionally, and internationally, demonstrate that reparation is everybody's business and we express sincere thanks to all our collaborators and supporters – especially our Vice-Chancellor whose foresight and passion inspire us to excel, despite the push-back from those not yet fully on board.

We have already started to plan for the next six months, so look out for our announcements and invitations and remember these words from Cuban icon José Martí: "*Rights are to be taken not requested; seized, not begged for.*"

Verene Shepherd

Centre Events

October 2017- June 2018

- **October 10, 2017** – Official Launch of the CRR at the Mona Visitors' Lodge and Conference Centre. The event was hosted by the Vice-Chancellor of The UWI, Prof Sir Hilary Beckles.



Prof Sir Hilary Beckles (left) and Prof Verene Shepherd (right) look on as the official plaque is unveiled by (l-r) Mutabaruka (member of the National Council on Reparation), Samia Nkrumah, noted Ghanaian, and Dr Julius Garvey, son of Jamaican National Hero, Marcus Garvey



The University Singers performing at the October 10 Official Launch of the Centre for Reparation Research

- **October 11, 2017** – All-day Symposium entitled “Post-Independence Cross-Roads: Economic Growth, Sustainable Societies and Reparatory Justice,” Mona Visitors' Lodge and Conference Centre.



Sections of the audience attending the October 11 Symposium



- **October 12, 2017** – Press Conference at the Mona Visitors' Lodge and Conference Centre.



Photo shows Minister Hon. Olivia Grange addressing the audience at the October 12 Press Conference.

Seated (L-R) are: Dr Eric Phillips, Chair, NCR, Guyana; Hon. Olivia Grange, Minister, Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport; Prof Sir Hilary Beckles, Vice-Chancellor, The UWI; Samia Nkrumah, daughter of Ghana's first President; Prof Verene Shepherd, Director, CRR; and Sen. Jomo Thomas, a Vice-Chair, CARICOM Reparations Commission.



- **February 21, 2018** – Press Conference in response to the February 9 tweet by the British Treasury, Regional Headquarters, The UWI



Picture tweeted by the British Treasury which states: “Did you know? In 1833, Britain used £20 million, 40% of its national budget, to buy freedom for all slaves in the Empire. The amount of money borrowed for the Slavery Abolition Act was so large that it wasn’t paid off until 2015. Which means that living British citizens helped pay to end the slave trade.”



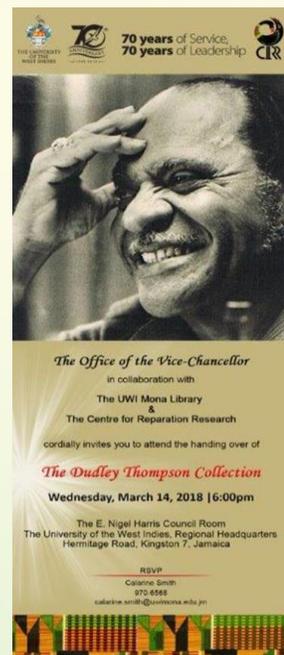
Vice-Chancellor of The UWI, Prof Sir Hilary Beckles addressing the February 21 Press Conference.

Seated also are (L-R): Prof Verene Shepherd, Min. Mike Henry and Lord Anthony Gifford.

- **March 14, 2018** – Handover to the CRR c/o The UWI Library of the *Dudley Thompson Collection*, in collaboration with the Office of the Vice Chancellor, The UWI
- **March 29, 2018** – Seminar entitled “*Reparation: The Case Against France*” at The UWI’s Regional Headquarters



Guest Speaker at seminar, Mireille Fanon-Mendès France, former member of the United Nations Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, and the daughter of acclaimed psychiatrist, philosopher, revolutionary and writer, Frantz Fanon.



Collaborations / Media Interventions

In addition to events organised and convened by the CRR, there has been representation at a number of collaborative events, including overseas lectures and appearances/interviews with media houses. A few to mention are:

- **February 22-24** – Presentation by the Director at Brown University, Connecticut USA



- **February 27** – Public Forum by the National Council on Reparation / Hugh Lawson Shearer Trade Union Education Institute entitled “*Back Pay Dispute: Reparation and the outstanding labour struggle with Britain and Spain*” at which the Director was a member of the Panel
- **March 8-11** – International Decade for People of African Descent (IDPAD) Summit, Guyana: The Director was Keynote Speaker
- **March 20** – Distinguished Lecture delivered by the Director at the Carol Bristol Distinguished Lecture series, Grenada



Opening Ceremony of the IDPAD Summit, Guyana



- **April 9** – Presentation by the Director at the inaugural Caribbean Conference of Mayors: “*Caribbean Cities: Honouring the Past, Embracing a Smart Future*”
- **April 11** – RJR News Forum: The Director and Research Assistant both made representation.



Prof Shepherd presenting at the Mayors Conference



Ms Jodi-Ann Quarrie, Mr Stephen Golding and Prof Shepherd on the RJR News Forum

The CRR’s Director and Research Assistant were continually sought out by media, both local and international, to make comments and answer questions on the April 2018 *Windrush Saga*. Some of these interviews are highlighted:

- **April 23** – Radio interview: NCU FM – Interview with Ms Quarrie
- **April 24** – Radio interview: Nationwide Radio – Interview with Ms Quarrie
- **April 30** – Radio interview: Sputnik Radio, Washington, DC – Interview with Ms Quarrie



- **May 14** – Panel Discussion: Institute of Jamaica, on “*Reparation and the Modern Labour Movement*” at which the Research Assistant was a member of the Panel
- **May 15** – The Director was a panellist on the Vice-Chancellor’s Forum “*Empire Windrush: Migration, Exclusion and Compensation*”



Ms Quarrie speaking at the IOJ Panel Discussion. Also in the photo are Mr Danny Roberts (centre), Head, Hugh Lawson Shearer Trade Union Education Institute, and Mr Stephen Golding of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA)



Vice-Chancellor’s Forum. “Seated (L-R) are: Amb. Richard Bernal, Amb. Derrick Heaven, Prof Verene Shepherd and Mr Stanley Archer, one of the original migrants on the Empire Windrush.

Public Education

- **February 20** – Presentation by the Director at the World Council of Churches Public Hearing on *Reparation & the Role of the Church*
- **February 28** – Director’s discussions at the 12 Tribes’ Repatriation/Reparation reasoning
- **March 2** – Presentation to Meadowbrook High School by the Director and Research Assistant
- **April 19** – Director’s delivery of the Jamaica Library Association’s Annual Chief Tacky Lecture
- **June 12** – Presentation by the Director at the Jamaica Baptist Union: “*The Reparatory Justice Movement in the Caribbean,*” with the participation of the CRR’s Visiting Professor, Dr Ahmed Reid



Prof Verene Shepherd (r) with Maxine Stowe, Hanna Fiskesjö and Prophet Greg at the 12 Tribes Repatriation/ Reparation



Prof Verene Shepherd delivers the annual Chief Tacky Lecture in St. Mary, Jamaica



Reparatory Justice Programme

The Centre for Reparation Research has contributed over the last six months to the CARICOM Reparations Commission's (CRC's) Reparatory Justice Programme.

The following is a summary of the CRC's *Ten Point Action Plan*. These are the ten (10) points to outline the path to truth, justice, and reconciliation and the basis for negotiations for reparation with Denmark, France, Spain, The Netherlands, the United Kingdom and other European States.

1. A Full and Formal Apology

The descendants of the indigenous peoples subjected to genocide, the loss of several cultures, and the erasure of numerous languages require a full and formal apology. A full apology accepts responsibility, commits to non-repetition, and pledges to repair the harm caused.

Governments from countries responsible for the destruction have refused to offer apologies and have instead issued Statements of Regret. These statements do not acknowledge that crimes have been committed and continue to represent a refusal to take responsibility.

2. Indigenous Peoples Development Programmes

As a result of European conquest and colonisation, the indigenous peoples of the Region were subjected to forced migration within countries and across the region; to brutal work conditions, and genocide.

Despite the efforts of the newly developing CARICOM Member States which have inherited the situation, the rebuilding of these communities cannot be done without former colonizing European States taking on the responsibility of correcting the damage and where possible, restoring the communities that still exist.

3. Funding for Repatriation to Africa

CARICOM has already been in contact with African States that are willing and able to allow for the return of their stolen people. The burden, however, of funding the resettlement of those who had been moved as a result of crimes by certain European States cannot be borne by the victims of the crimes.

A fully funded resettlement programme that allows for the repatriation of the displaced Africans in CARICOM Member States who wish to return while also addressing issues such as citizenship and re-integration are crucial steps to correcting the wrongs of enslavement and colonialism.

4. The Establishment of Cultural Institutions and the Return of Cultural Heritage

Part of the devastation of European colonisation was the deliberate attempt to destroy the cultures and languages of the indigenous peoples, enslaved Africans, and the indentured workers.

Though some private institutions have been established, CARICOM Member States have not been able, with their extremely limited resources, to build these institutions on their own.

The Caribbean Reparatory Justice Programme maintains that the destruction of historical memory is a crime for which reparation must be made.

5. Addressing and Remediating the Public Health Crisis

CARICOM Member States are committed to providing high standards of health care for their populations in accordance with their international obligations. They are however unable, on their own, to deal with the multiple diseases that are the legacy of enslavement and have the potential to affect the majority of their populations.

Dealing with this health crisis requires the injection of science, technology, and capital beyond the capacity of the Region. European countries that are responsible for the crisis have an obligation to participate in its alleviation and to restore good health through the provision of hospitals and health care.

6. Education Programmes

CARICOM governments inherited a flawed education system, inadequate schools, high illiteracy and a system based on structural discrimination. CARICOM countries have worked hard to correct the situation. However, widespread functional illiteracy and inequitable systems of education still exist and have subverted the development efforts of these States and represent a drag upon social and economic advancement.

European States which presided over this system of inequality have a responsibility to build on the laudable efforts of the CARICOM postcolonial regimes, build educational capacity, and provide scholarships because development requires a highly educated population.

7. The Enhancement of Historical and Cultural Knowledge Exchanges

CARICOM Member States have spent the last 50 years trying to reverse the impact of 600 years of disconnection. Part of reparatory justice therefore requires a programme of restoration of pride and one way of doing this is to intensify efforts to rebuild 'bridges of belonging'.

The Region cannot do it alone. The years of creating this represents an undue burden on newly developing States that must tackle other development challenges.

8. Psychological Rehabilitation as a Result of the Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma

The history of colonialism by certain European States has inflicted serious psychological trauma upon indigenous and African descendant populations. African and Indigenous peoples therefore need rehabilitation for their affected populations. Mental health issues need to be treated like other manifestations of illness.

Responsible European states have an obligation to repair the psychological trauma caused by colonialism and its evils in order to assist in rebuilding full and whole men, women and children.





9. The Right to Development through the Use of Technology

For 400 years the trade and production policies of Europe could be summed up in the British slogan: “not a nail is to be made in the colonies”.

This was a deliberate decision to retard the technology available for development within CARICOM Member States. Technology transfer and science sharing for development by responsible European States are important parts of repairing the deliberate harm to the development prospects of countries within CARICOM.

10. Debt Cancellation and Monetary Compensation

CARICOM governments that emerged from slavery and colonialism have inherited the massive crisis of community poverty and an inability to deal with the development of their countries because of the burdens of the legacy of colonialism. Since correcting the burden of colonialism has fallen on these new States, they are unable to deal with the challenges of development without taking on onerous levels of debt.

This debt cycle properly belongs to the governments from the responsible European countries who have made no sustained attempt to deal with debilitating colonial legacies.

Support for the payment of domestic debt, the cancellation of international debt, and direct monetary payments where appropriate, are necessary reparatory actions to correct the harm caused by colonialism.

Reparation Bytes

Did you know that Haiti was forced to pay reparation to France in exchange for its independence?



In 1825, France had demanded that Haiti pay 150 million francs, but later agreed to reduce the amount to 90 million francs.

This was to be paid over a period of 30 years.

It took until 1947 for Haiti to finally pay off all the associated interest on this demanded amount.



Staff at the Centre



Prof Shepherd flanked by Floyd and Jodi-Ann at a CRR event in The UWI Regional Headquarters

The CRR is directed by Social Historian and member of the United Nations Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), Prof. Verene A. Shepherd.

Prof Shepherd is also a Vice-Chair of the CARICOM Reparations Commission (CRC), and Co-Chair of the National Council on Reparation (NCR), Jamaica.

The CRR staff complement is completed by Research Assistant, Ms Jodi-Ann Quarrie, an international human rights attorney, and Administrative Assistant, Mr Floyd Williams.



Dr Ahmed Reid, Visiting Professor

Visiting Professor

The Centre's Visiting Professor is Dr Ahmed Reid. He is an Associate Professor of Caribbean History at the City University of New York. Dr Reid received his PhD in Social and Economic History from the University of Hull, England. He has published extensively in peer-reviewed academic journals such as *Slavery and Abolition*, as well as *Oxford Bibliographies in Atlantic History*, Oxford University Press. His work covers areas such as the Transatlantic Trade in Africans and its legacies, gender and reparatory justice.

Dr Reid is a member of the United Nations Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent.

About the Centre



The Regional Headquarters of The University of the West Indies located in Mona, Jamaica, home to the Centre for Reparation Research

The focus of the Centre for Reparation Research (CRR) at The University of the West Indies (The UWI) is threefold: to promote research on the legacies of colonialism, native genocide, enslavement and indentureship in the Caribbean, and how to bring justice and positive transformation to these legacies; to promote education at The UWI and across Caribbean school systems on the legacies of colonialism, enslavement and native genocide and the need for justice and repair; and to promote advocacy for reparatory justice by building a capacity for consultancy to CARICOM, Caribbean states, the

UN and other relevant institutions, public awareness raising, and supporting activism for reparatory and decolonial justice from grassroots to governments.