

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 175

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Acknowledging African descendants of the trans-atlantic slave trade in all of the Americas with an emphasis on descendants in Latin America and the Caribbean, recognizing the injustices suffered by these African descendants, and recommending that the United States and the international community work to improve the situation of Afro-descendant communities in Latin America and the Caribbean.

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Whereas during Black History Month it is important that we not forget that African-Americans are not the only survivors of the transatlantic slave trade;

Whereas like the United States, many European nations benefited greatly from the colonization of Latin America and the Caribbean and their participation in the slave trade;

Whereas the story of African descendants in all of the Americas remains untold, leading them to be forgotten, made invisible, and allowed to suffer unjustly;

Whereas it is important to acknowledge that as a result of the slave trade and immigration, approximately 80,000,000 to 150,000,000 persons of African descent live in Latin America and the Caribbean, making them the largest population of persons of African descent outside of Africa;

Whereas Afro-descendants are present in most all Latin American countries, including Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela;

Whereas the size of Afro-descendant populations vary in range from less than 1 percent in some countries to as much as 30 percent in Colombia and 46 percent in Brazil and make up the majority in some Spanish speaking Caribbean nations, such as Cuba and the Dominican Republic;

Whereas Afro-descendant populations have made significant economic, social, and cultural contributions to their countries and the Western Hemisphere from their unfortunate involvement in the transatlantic slave trade to their recent contributions to trade, tourism, and other industries;

Whereas although persons of African descent have made significant achievements in education, employment, economic, political, and social spheres in some countries, the vast majority are marginalized—living in impoverished communities where they are excluded from centers of education, government, and basic human rights based upon the color of their skin and ancestry;

Whereas Afro-descendants have shorter life expectancies, higher rates of infant mortality, higher incidences of HIV/AIDS, higher rates of illiteracy, and lower incomes than do other populations;

Whereas Afro-descendants encounter problems of access to healthcare, basic education, potable water, housing, land titles, credit, equal justice and representation under the law, political representation, and other economic, political, health, and basic human rights; and

Whereas skin color and ancestry have led African-Americans in the United States and African descendants in Latin America and the Caribbean to share similar injustices, leading to economic, social, health, and political inequalities: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
 2 *concurring), That Congress—*

3 (1) recognizes and honors African descendants
 4 in the Americas for their contributions to the eco-
 5 nomic, social, and cultural fabric of the countries in
 6 the Americas, particularly in Latin American and
 7 Caribbean societies;

8 (2) recognizes that as a result of their skin
 9 color and ancestry, African descendants in the
 10 Americas have wrongfully experienced economic, so-
 11 cial, and political injustices;

12 (3) urges the President to take appropriate
 13 measures to encourage the celebration and remem-
 14 brance of the achievements of African descendants

1 in the Americas and a resolution of injustices suf-
2 fered by African descendants in the Americas;

3 (4) encourages the United States and the inter-
4 national community to work to ensure that extreme
5 poverty is eradicated, universal education is
6 achieved, quality healthcare is made available, and
7 equal access to justice and representation under the
8 law is granted in Afro-descendant communities in
9 Latin America and the Caribbean; and

10 (5) encourages the United States and the inter-
11 national community to achieve these goals in Latin
12 America and the Caribbean by—

13 (A) promoting research that focuses on
14 identifying and eradicating racial disparities in
15 economic, political, and social spheres;

16 (B) promoting programs that focus on
17 Afro-descendant communities;

18 (C) providing technical support and train-
19 ing to Afro-descendant advocacy groups that
20 work to uphold basic human rights in the re-
21 gion;

22 (D) promoting the creation of an inter-
23 national working group that focuses on prob-
24 lems of communities of Afro-descendants in the
25 Americas; and

1 (E) promoting trade and other bilateral
2 and multilateral agreements that take into ac-
3 count the needs of Afro-descendant commu-
4 nities.

Passed the House of Representatives July 18, 2005.

Attest:

Clerk.