

Statement by Mr. Kambale Musavuli

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Africa Dialogue Series 2025

Sub-theme 3: Healing and Reparations towards Socio-Economic Justice

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Your Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Representatives of Member States, the African Union, and Civil Society,
Brothers and Sisters, Friends and Comrades,

I speak to you today not only as a son of Africa, of the Congo, but as a witness to the generational crimes that continue to shape our lives. I speak on behalf of communities who carry the weight of centuries of violence, displacement, and systemic theft.

The African Union's 2025 theme, "Justice for Africans and People of African Descent through Reparations", must be more than a slogan. It must be a commitment to uproot the structures of domination that continue to exploit us. It must be an unflinching confrontation with the reality that the systems which gave birth to the transatlantic slave trade have not been dismantled. They have been digitized, militarized, and globalized.

Let us be clear: reparations are not only a matter of race, they are a matter of class.

Throughout history, it has been African elites, then and now, who have collaborated with imperial forces to sell out their own people. The transatlantic slave trade was not imposed by Europe alone, it was made possible by African aristocrats who traded human lives for weapons and wealth. Today, the same class, dressed in suits instead of robes, collaborates with foreign powers, multinational corporations, and financial institutions to maintain the extractive order. They sign contracts, approve loans, suppress resistance, and then speak of justice in global forums while their hands remain tied to the very forces we seek to liberate ourselves from.

This is why we must insist that reparations cannot be implemented by elites who are enemies to the process. If the reparations agenda is left in their hands, it will be derailed, diluted, and domesticated. This work must be led by the people, owned by the people, and built through the political power of the working class and the oppressed. Only then can it ensure transparency, longevity, and transformation, not just transactions.

We see this contradiction vividly in Sudan, where imperial competition for gold and territory fuels a brutal war, enabled by local collaborators and global profiteers. The people of Sudan

do not need more humanitarian statements. They need the international system to stop sponsoring destruction. Reparations for Sudan begin with ending foreign interference, holding war profiteers accountable, and supporting Sudanese people's sovereignty, not elite deals or extractive pacts.

The same applies to the Democratic Republic of Congo, where despite the horrors of the past three decades, the United Nations Mapping Report, which documents over 600 violations of human rights and international humanitarian law from 1993 to 2003, remains shelved. These crimes, many of which may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, cannot be erased through silence. The implementation of recommendations from this report is not a request, it is a demand.

And what of the global financial system? We live under a regime of economic apartheid, where African nations are punished by credit rating agencies, strangled by debt, and looted by illicit financial flows. The same countries that once trafficked our bodies now traffic our futures through extraction and surveillance.

In the face of this, Panafricanism, as defined by the 1945 Fifth Pan-African Congress in Manchester, must guide us. That Congress declared: *"We are determined to be free. We want the right to govern ourselves in our own way."* Today, our freedom demands that we govern our resources, our technologies, our histories, and our reparations process, in our own way.

This includes:

1. Reparatory development, not conditional aid.
2. Debt cancellation and dismantling of the global financial chokehold.
3. Restitution of stolen cultural heritage and psychological healing through truth-telling and cultural reconnection.
4. Digital sovereignty, where Africans control their data, platforms, and stories.

Let us also remember that we are not starting from scratch. The Caribbean's CARICOM Ten-Point Plan, the AU Accra Declaration, the IDPAD, and the youth movements across the continent all provide direction. But implementation must come from below, not managed by comprador elites, but shaped by those most impacted.

As we mark the centenary of Patrice Lumumba, Malcolm X, and Frantz Fanon, we are reminded that our freedom must be fought for, deliberately, boldly, and together. These visionaries, children of Africa, called us to self-determination and internationalism. Their revolutionary spirits still resonate from the Sahel to the Caribbean, from Kinshasa to Oakland, from Accra to Port-au-Prince.

Let their memory fuel our fire.

Let us declare with clarity:
Justice delayed is genocide denied!
Justice managed by elites is justice betrayed!
But justice built by the people, that is Pan-Africanism made real!

I thank you.

Biography

Kambale Musavuli is a leading human rights activist, political analyst, and Pan-Africanist dedicated to advancing justice, sovereignty, and reparations for Africans and people of African descent. He is the Founder and Managing Director of Aether Strategies, a strategic consulting and innovation firm focused on governance, digital transformation, and social impact across Africa. Originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Musavuli has been a tireless advocate against the systemic exploitation of Africa's resources and peoples for over two decades.

He also serves as the spokesperson for the Center for Research on the Congo-Kinshasa, an independent research and advocacy organization that documents political, economic, and social developments in the DRC. Through this work, Musavuli has helped expose the global networks of extraction, militarization, and impunity that sustain instability in the Congo and has championed efforts toward decolonized development, peace, and reparative justice.

Across his career, he has led public education campaigns, policy dialogues, and solidarity actions in Africa, Europe, and the Americas, with a particular focus on digital sovereignty, the cost of extraction, and South-South cooperation. His contributions have included collaborations with institutions like UCLA, advocacy at the United Nations, and grassroots mobilization across the diaspora.

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