

Gloria Verdieu on African Liberation Day: A call for unity and global liberation

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Gloria Verdieu

Gloria Verdieu's African Liberation Day talk.

I am Gloria Verdieu, a San Diego Coalition to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal organizer.

Today, May 25, 2024, San Diego is joining cities across the United States and around the world to discuss, plan, organize, and increase our knowledge on the topic of our continuing struggle for African Liberation.

African Liberation Day, also known as African Freedom Day, is a time to reflect on our accomplishments, celebrate our victories, confirm our commitment to our struggle, and determine our next steps toward uniting African People throughout the diaspora.

We, as African People, must understand that none of us will be free until Black People in Africa and throughout the diaspora are free. Around the world, Black people are downtrodden. In the U.S., the richest nation on Earth, the belly of the beat, we are on the bottom-most unemployed, under-employed, most imprisoned, unhoused, poor health care, you name it. When Africa rises, the world will rise up; when Africans win justice and freedom from colonialism and neocolonialism, it opens the path for all oppressed people to win freedom.

The liberation of Africa will mean the liberation of oppressed people worldwide. "The world is waiting on us (Black People). Why? Because we are in the belly of the beast." Words spoken by Jalil Mutaqim, a former political prisoner released after nearly 50 years. "We are responsible for the freedom of the planet. ...The U.S. is an empire, and empires are destroyed from within. It is our responsibility, our duty, to liberate our minds."

All people of African descent are African, with one common history, destiny, and one rich and diverse culture.

Africa, like all other continents, developed based on her internal dynamics and the capacities of her people. Before colonialist and imperialist domination, African

People had, thanks to their creative genius, built brilliant civilizations and founded powerful states. This process of development of Africa's states, such as Carthage, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Congo, Egypt, etc., was brutally interrupted by capitalism. The European and U.S. bourgeoisie organized the despicable system of chattel slavery.

Chattel slavery ended with colonialism, consummated at the Berlin Conference, 1884-1885; throughout Africa, Europe, the Caribbean, the South Pacific Islands, and North, South, and Central America, African People continue to live and suffer under inhuman conditions created by capitalism and imperialism. The People of Africa never accepted foreign domination and put up a fierce and obstinate resistance.

In February 1900, the first Pan-African Conference was convened. From its organizational beginning, the Pan-Africanist movement united Africans in Africa and those abroad. Following the First Pan-African Conference, African People intensified the struggle to build Pan-Africanist and Nationalist organizations.

Marcus Garvey founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association, which organized six million African members worldwide. Organizations such as the National Congress of British West Africa and the West African Student Union were also formed.

W.E.B. Dubois, the "Father of Pan-Africanism," attended five Pan-African Congresses between 1919 and 1945 and introduced the theory of scientific socialism into the Pan-Africanist movement.

The Fifth Pan-African Congress in 1945 in Manchester, England, was co-chaired by Pan-Africanists George Padmore, Kwame Nkrumah, and W.E.B. Dubois. A call was made for Africans to form Nationalist and Pan-Africanist mass political parties and mass movements to guide the African Masses toward one unified socialist Africa. Within 10 years, mass parties and movements spread like wildfire throughout Africa, the Caribbean, Britain, and the United States. By the 1950s, Africa had begun the

period of decolonization.

Pan-Africanists, correctly assessing the situation, moved their base to Africa.

The Convention People's Party and Pan-Africanist Kwame Nkrumah led Ghana to independence in 1957 and made it "the fountainhead of Pan-Africanism," according to Malcolm X.

On Sept. 28, 1958, the People's Revolutionary Republic of Guinea, led by the Democratic Party of Guinea and Pan-Africanist Ahmed Sekou Ture, voted "no" to neocolonialism and "yes" for independence and Pan-Africanism.

April 15, 1958, the first Conference of Independent African States established Africa Freedom Day and laid the foundation for the consolidation of the Pan-Africanist movement and the creation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU)

African Freedom Day was reconstituted as African Liberation Day on May 25, 1963, when the OAU was founded.

Since 1958, the Pan-Africanist movement and ALD have continued to play their proper roles in the struggle against imperialism. The need for Pan-Africanism is more evident than ever before. Africans are clear: Our liberation lies in unification.

Let me be clear about the definition of Pan-Africanism, the total liberation and unification of Africa under scientific socialism. Our goal must be a unified and socialist Africa that will unite with the worldwide fight for a unified and socialist world.

