

## Forum on Race, Justice and Reparations held at Queen's University Belfast

29 June 2016

**Belfast, NORTHERN IRELAND:** A two day forum with workshops bringing academics, historians, international law experts and distinguished guest speakers from across the UK and Ireland was held at Queen's University Belfast (QUB), hosted by QUB's School of Law Human Rights Centre & African Caribbean Support Organisation Northern Ireland (ACSONI).

Internationally and domestically, issues of intergenerational justice and repair are increasingly being brought to the fore, reflecting a deeper, ongoing struggle of people of African descent and the Diaspora for reparations related to the genocide of their indigenous peoples, the *Maangamizi* – the holocaust of chattel, colonial and neo-colonial enslavement perpetrated by Europeans and their prodigy, and the remaining social and economic issues from the transatlantic slave trade.

The increasingly visible movement for reparative justice raises fundamental, philosophical, moral and financial questions about repair: for what, for and by whom, how and when. In light of the recognition by the United Nations (UN) that “slavery and the slave trade are a crime against humanity and should always have been so” and 2015-2024 the UN's International Decade for People of African Descent”, the call for reparations for genocide, historic enslavement and its aftermath is well overdue.

Guest speakers included internationally acclaimed reparationist, advocate and radio broadcaster Esther Stanford-Xosei, Dr Nathaniel Tobias Coleman, Dr Kwesi Tsri, Dr Christopher Stange – Hon. Consul for St. Vincent and the Grenadines to Northern Ireland, Minister of Finance Mairtin O'Muilleor MLA, Prof Jean Allain, Michael McEachrane and Joseph Ricketts.



Professor Jean Allain of QUB School of law welcomed the opportunity to engage the public of Northern Ireland and “how little is known about the four hundred year long transatlantic slave trade and its lasting consequences.” The forum will focus on empowering local communities, raising awareness and building capacity through participation.

Dr Christopher Stange said: “This civil society forum and resulting dialogue to advance the agenda of reparations is warmly welcomed to openly discuss the historical atrocities, genocide,

enslavement and resultant social and economic issues that still exist today in the Caribbean and Africa, which need to be addressed.”

This event takes place in the wider AHRC funded Anti-Slavery Usable Past Project, which seeks to use anti-slavery lessons from the past with current injustices.

**ENDS**