



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Office of the Spokesperson

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For Immediate Release

STATEMENT BY SECRETARY ANTONY J. BLINKEN

August 31, 2021

Inaugural International Day for People of African Descent

The United States joins others around the world in commemorating the first International Day for People of African Descent. This day was created to promote the extraordinary contributions of Africans and members of the African diaspora around the world and is an opportunity to focus on eliminating all forms of discrimination against people of African descent. The United States continues to support the International Decade for People of African Descent through shared goals of recognition, justice, and development.

This Administration has elevated racial justice and equity as an immediate priority, promoting it across federal government agencies, policies, and programs, including our engagement at the United Nations. The United States strongly supports the creation of the UN Permanent Forum for People of African Descent. We must get at the root of the challenges and address structural racism while acknowledging the intersections of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, religion, and national origin.

As we celebrate the contributions of people of African descent across the world and in the United States, we also take solemn note of the International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition on August 23. It is only by facing the painful truth of our past, and not shrinking from our current responsibilities to address systemic racism, that we will forge a better future. Today, the Department of State honors the dignity, equality, and contributions of all people of African descent in the United States and in communities around the world.

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