

Ghana Delegation

Tufts Inquiry

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## **Ghana Briefing Paper**

### **Introduction**

Reparations for slavery are an imperative topic to discuss, especially considering the prevalence of racial discrimination in society today. Ghana has a unique role in addressing these reparations, as its people were both victims of the Transatlantic slave trade and beneficiaries of it. Ghana has been a civilized society for centuries, as it was first settled in 300 AD by the Soninke people. Since then, Ghana has been a center of both national and international trade. European interest in Ghanaian trade began in the 15th century when Portuguese traders noticed gold there. In 1957, Ghana became the first African country south of the Sahara desert to gain independence from imperial rule. Today, Ghana is a republic in which power is shared between a president, parliament, and a judiciary body. Similar to that of many European nations, Ghana has a constitution which includes a system of checks and balances.

Although Ghana was eventually able to obtain a reliant system of government and a relatively stable economy, the impacts of the Transatlantic Slave Trade have greatly and adversely affected Ghana. When slavery was abolished in the United States and Great Britain during the mid 19th century, illegal slavery continued to exist, especially through ports in Ghana. The Transatlantic Slave Trade continued throughout the 19th century, impacting over 15 million Africans. The effects of the slave trade are displayed throughout Africa, as imperial powers left African countries without adequate resources to create stable governments. This induced

European economic superiority and prevented African countries from obtaining stability.

The Ghanaian population today is made up of a myriad of ethnic groups, some of which include Akan (47.5%), Mole-Dagbon (16.6%), Ewe (13.9%), and Ga-Dangme (7.4%). Most Ghanaians are Christian, Muslim, or observe a traditional indigenous religion. Ghana's diversity has allowed for a rich culture and a belief in the importance of tradition. However, Ghana has been partially unable to appreciate its history because of the lack of reparations for the greatest atrocity committed in the African continent. Western powers must provide restitution for the disadvantage that they have put on Ghana and Ghanaian people all over the world.

## **Identity**

The Republic of Ghana is a country on the west coast of Africa, bordered by Burkina Faso in the north, Togo to the east, the Ivory Coast to the west, and the gulf of Guinea in the Atlantic Ocean to the south. People have lived there for thousands of years, from ancient empires to the modern Ghanaian republic. Ghana has nearly 30 million citizens, with millions more around the globe, including over a hundred thousand in both the US and the UK. Many indigenous languages are spoken in Ghana, but English is its official language. Ghana was the first black African country south of the Sahara to gain its independence, and its independence spurred various other African countries to follow suit. Before its independence, Ghana was under British rule as the Gold Coast, as the area was rich in gold, although the primary trade under British rule was the slave trade. After being introduced to the cacao bean, however, it became an important export of Ghana. After their independence, corruption in the government limited their growth and expansion, but in the 1990s, Ghana managed to successfully improve their political and economic systems. Most people that live in Ghana, but there are a multitude of indigenous

groups in Ghana, probably just over 70, but most of them are very small and don't hold much importance. The government has, over the years, tried to minimize ethnic differences among different groups of people, although there has been ethnic violence in the north of Ghana before.

## **Key Points**

1. Formal apologies from Portugal, the United States, and England
2. Financial reparations amounting to no less than \$1.1 billion from England, the United States, and Portugal collectively to build infrastructure and industry, and the opening of free trade agreements with the Republic of Ghana
3. The return of stolen cultural artifacts to Ghana
4. Repatriation of Ghanaian descendants paid for in entirety by Portugal, the United States, and England
5. Government-funded educational museums and memorialization in Portugal, the United States, and England

## **History of Slavery**

The Transatlantic Slave Trade was part of the Triangular Trade between Europe, Africa, and the Americas in which captured Africans were forcibly brought to the Americas by Europeans to await enslavement in Caribbean, North American, and South American colonies. Estimates suggest that between 10 million and 12 million Africans crossed the Middle Passage to the Americas, though extreme, inhumane conditions dispatched between 15 and 25 percent of captives over the course of several weeks, or sometimes several months. Enslaved peoples that survived the journey were subject to the brutality of forced labor, treated as commodities and tools for economic gain as opposed to people.

Ghana's agency in the slave trade is one subject to debate today due to the contrast between the staggering number of Ghanaians who fell victim to the atrocities of the slave trade and the cooperation of many Ghanaians who willingly captured others. However, this cooperation with the slave trade was largely influenced by the necessity to turn to slave trading for survival when ordinary farmers and gold diggers were forced to uproot their lives to avoid being captured. Ghana is also home to the "Door of No Return," a term coined to describe the exit point from the castles in Ghana where slaves were loaded onto boats, as this was essentially the last view slaves had of their home continent. Castles such as Elmina Castle and Cape Coast Castle were built and operated by various European nations, including Portugal and England, as two of over 40 castles in Ghana that were major departure points for slaves across Africa. Today, they serve as a reminder of the unforgettable cruelty and barbarity of the slave trade in Ghana.

Effects of the slave trade on Western African countries, such as Ghana, were devastating. The economic incentives for African cooperation and aid with the slave trade caused violence and disorder. Families were split up as primarily young, able-bodied men and women were taken, leaving behind the elderly and disabled, who were not appealing to money-hungry Europeans. This left behind a culture of multi-generational trauma for those that lost family and loved ones to the trade. Those left behind were also among the groups of people who least contributed to the economic development of their societies, leaving countries such as Ghana with a legacy of debilitating poverty that continues to this day. The reasonably healthy economy of Ghana that depended on agriculture and the gold trade had been broken down.

While forms of slavery did exist in Africa prior to European intervention, the development of the Transatlantic Slave Trade for the purpose of industry and profit introduced a

scale to slavery that had never been seen before, leaving lasting impacts that have shaped countless lives across the modern world.

## **Issues and Committees**

### **Politics of Reparations - Ayaan Kazmi**

In the Republic of Ghana, the concept of reparations invokes a sense of both pride and hope. While Ghana is among the most stable and democratic nations in Africa, it is still plagued by a lack of economic development caused by the global slave trade. Many Ghanaian citizens view reparations as a solution to neo-colonialism and worsening economic problems. It is the Republic of Ghana's official position that the obligation for financial reparations lies within a coalition of Portugal, England, and the United States, who collectively owe Ghana a sum of \$1.1 billion.

To combat neo-colonialism, a critical point of Ghana's demands is that reparations must be paid directly to the Ghanaian state instead of being issued in the form of foreign investment. The root cause of Ghana's lack of economic development is colonialism, and the people of Ghana refuse to be held subservient to Western interests any longer, hence the necessity of reparations in the first place. In exchange for complete financial independence, the Republic of Ghana seeks to engage in dialogue with the West to open free trade for the mutual benefit of our nations, allowing Ghana to be economically elevated to the level of the first world. It is in the interests of Ghanaian descendants to return to the homeland that was taken from them, but due to generational poverty stemming from systemic racism in the West, it is simply not a possibility for many. Therefore it is the obligation of the West to pay for the repatriation of the Ghanaians whose ancestors they abducted. In addition to people, the West stole cultural artifacts of great

significance to Ghanaians that must be returned to their place of origin. These actions will solidify a sense of national identity that Ghanaians across the globe lack due to the diaspora caused by the slave trade. The West has attempted to gloss over, or in some cases entirely censor the history of the atrocities they committed in their public education systems, which is why it is necessary for the West to fund the construction of educational museums and memorials pertaining to the history of the global slave trade within their own borders. The content of these educational sites must be curated by a committee of experts and advocates from both Ghana and the West. Each of these key points will directly benefit the development of Ghana, paving the way for a more equal future built on inter-continental cooperation.

### **Legal Concerns of Reparations - Audrey Capone**

Ghana was horrifically affected by the Transatlantic Slave trade and still feels the consequences of it today. Ghana's president recently publicly announced that reparations for slavery were long overdue for Ghana, as well as other affected African nations. Providing these reparations would be the countries that most directly benefited from the slave trade or inflicted the most damage to the country, notably the United States, the UK, and Portugal. The British and the Portuguese introduced the concept of enslavement and shipment of Ghanaian citizens and therefore should bear the brunt of the reparation demands. The United States as well played a major role as a key destination for sold Ghanians, as well as many other enslaved Africans, although some enslaved people went to Europe as well. In America, however, there was the added cruelty of the hereditary aspect of slavery. For these reasons, specifically the USA, the UK, and Portugal must provide the majority of reparations for the economic, cultural, and widespread damage caused to the country of Ghana.

Obviously, at the time of slavery beginning there was no precedent for the legality of it

anywhere. As it became an increasingly large, widespread, and common practice, it was technically legal and authorized by the leaders who were trading enslaved people. Although many now consider the slave trade a crime against humanity, it is difficult to pinpoint a lawsuit or solution that would come close to legally compensating for the destruction of enslaved people and their culture from years ago. Any talks of prohibiting slavery or inhumane treatment of slaves during its prime was of no legal ground at the time and had no lasting impact until the slave trade was actually banned. As for a legal precedent for reparations of slavery, Ghana has none. The discussion about slavery reparations, while not a new idea, has been of frenzied interest only in recent years. There are groups within Ghana both made up of Ghanaian citizens and African Americans formed to deal with the issue of reparations. More awareness is needed, however, before major progress within the country. While parts of the world have seen reparations, both for slavery and other reasons, Ghana has yet to see large-scale, organized reparations granted to them. (It is worth noting that Ghana has asked for the return of cultural objects as well, which has not been granted).

There are multiple complications to tackling the legality of slave reparations. For one, Ghana as a nation doesn't have the mass awareness or understanding in its people to fight for their own reparations. While African-Americans and other, non-specifically Ghanaian organizations might have more experience or knowledge, that alone complicates the matter as it is coming from foreign countries and not within Ghana itself. Since there are so many Ghanians around the world, if reparations were to take the form of a specific sort of payment to ancestors of enslaved people, it would be complex and tedious to locate and provide every descendent with the appropriate compensation when so many reside in different countries with different laws, histories, and legal systems. Then there is the issue of money: if reparations take a mostly

financial track, the economic strain on the many countries involved to be displacing that much money would be great. Furthermore, Ghana specifically has both been drastically damaged from the slave trade while simultaneously providing and willingly participating in the capture and selling of people. Even considering that, the laws surrounding slavery at the time were similar to those surrounding any traded goods, with perhaps more constraints such as hereditary enslavement involved. Therefore, until slavery was officially outlawed there were no violations of laws. Perhaps the biggest legal problem, however, is simply finding out who exactly to blame. Usually, having a legal claim requires a connection between current victims and perpetrators and past ones. It is difficult for modern court systems to find a solid basis to formulate a lawsuit or legal complaint, since this is such a widespread problem both geographically and chronologically.

### **Symbolic Reparations - Serena Baranello**

Symbolic reparations are of great importance to Ghana. While Ghana has not received nor delivered reparations, Ghana supports reparations given not only to them, but to every country that suffered under the oppressive reign of European colonialism and the Transatlantic slave trade. Symbolic reparations, including apologies, commemorations, and memorials, are an important step towards healing the hurts that have been caused by slavery these past few centuries. While nothing can completely heal the damage that slavery caused to the entire continent of Africa and the African diaspora that now lives across the globe, it can at least make an attempt. Ghana is of the opinion that Africans and the African diaspora cannot begin to recover from the long-lasting legacy of slavery until the wrongs of slavery are, at the very least, recognized. That is why Ghana acknowledges that during the Transatlantic slave, it was used as a major point of exit for millions of slaves brought from the west coast and the interior onto slave



ships, and, not only have they publicly apologized for their role in the slave trade, they also want to encourage their diaspora to travel or move back to Ghana in the Year of Return. Allowing this opportunity of rejoining these two long-separated groups while acknowledging Ghana's role in the slave trade is another step towards repairing the damage dealt by the slave trade, a thing which lasted for centuries and the effects of which are still felt to this day by black people across the world.

Of course, Ghana cannot singlehandedly repair the wounds dealt by the slavery of Africans; the acknowledgment by the European nations of the harm they caused by their brutal colonization of Africa and the subsequent slavery they subjected its people to for generations is something that this endeavor cannot succeed without; a crucial part of symbolic reparations is the apologies of European nations to their former colonies, the people of which they enslaved for generations, who are still harmed by the enslavement of their ancestors today. Apologies by the powerful colonial European powers that spearheaded the Transatlantic slave trade to the African nations that were irrevocably harmed by their brutal reign is the most important and vital of all symbolic reparations that could be offered. In a summit on reparations and racial healing in Accra, Ghana, Ghana's President, Nana Akufo-Addo, has called for retribution for slavery and other colonial crimes committed by Europeans.

However, other forms of symbolic reparations are also important in the process of repairing the damage of the transatlantic slave trade, other forms of symbolic reparations can be used, such as the return of stolen and unrightfully seized cultural materials. A 22-member committee in Ghana, led by Professor Kodzo Gavua from the Department of Archaeology and Heritage Studies is seeking to have their cultural materials unrightfully seized by their colonial oppressors returned and wants to find data to support their claims. Ghana wants all of these

things not only for themselves, but for all of the African and Caribbean nations whose people's ancestors were enslaved by European colonial powers and still suffer from slavery's legacy. The wounds dealt by European colonial crimes and the Transatlantic slave trade, the most horrible and impactful slave trade in history, which left a "devastating ongoing impact... on the 'population, psyche, image & character of the African the world over', to quote Akufo-Addo" (Matiluko), cannot be healed until every country that was harmed from it is given some matter of retribution, and thus, it is our duty to keep talking about reparations until they are given, because, without them, we are ignoring the impact slavery had and still has on black people across the world, all of whom were, in one way or another, harmed by the Transatlantic slave trade, whether that be because their ancestors were enslaved and stolen from their homeland, or because the economy of their country was destroyed due to Europeans taking advantage of the continent of Africa, or because their ancestors were never able to accrue wealth, and they have spent their life at constant disadvantage- for any of those things alone, Ghana, and all of Africa and the Caribbean, deserves acknowledgment and formal apology from the nations that caused this harm in the first place.

### **Financial and Material Reparations - Anika Gupta**

Reparations for slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade are under constant debate today, partially due to the inherent expectation that they require transactions of vast amounts of money between different countries and peoples. While this is true of some forms of reparations, reparations come in many forms apart from straightforward payments of money.

Financially speaking, these alternative forms can include financial assistance for descendants of enslaved peoples, possibly in a manner akin to welfare but for a broader range of people. There is also the possibility of debt forgiveness, both on a small-scale for descendants

and on a larger-scale for countries who were adversely affected by slavery. This would namely be targeted towards African countries and countries in the Caribbean. Further, there is a new concept of “baby bonds,” which represent a cheaper form of reparations that are essentially government-funded savings accounts opened at birth for Black children. These accounts could be extremely beneficial to reduce the economic disparity between Black citizens and citizens of other backgrounds, especially in countries like the United States where Black families experience the highest poverty rates by race.

Reparations can also be grouped into material reparations, which could provide similar benefits to direct financial aid without requiring direct transactions of money. This can include restitution of civil or political rights, which would allow people of all backgrounds to vote, while also providing easy access to polls for all voters. Between countries, this could also mean giving temporary members of the UN Security Council longer terms or making certain countries permanent members, as the only current permanent members are China, France, the USA, the UK, and Russia. Rehabilitation is another option to provide support to individual people who suffer physically and mentally from the legacies of slavery, specifically in relation to inherited ailments caused by the physical burden of slave labor, as well as the effects of multi-generational trauma. Access to land, housing, health care, and education is another broad area of focus, as many people descended from slaves are disproportionately disadvantaged in these areas. Finally, repatriation is an initiative that brings descendants of enslaved peoples back to the homeland of their ancestors, to allow them to connect with the culture that was robbed of them when their ancestors were stolen from their land.

Ghana specifically would benefit most from financial reparations modeled after the precedent of reparations made for atrocities similar in manner or impact to the Transatlantic

Slave Trade. This could include Germany's payment of \$822 million to the Israeli government for the heinous crimes committed by their government and people during the Holocaust. Similarly, another pertinent example is Austria's \$25 million reparations to Holocaust survivors for their role in the pain inflicted on Jewish people during World War II. \$1.2 billion was further awarded to Japanese-Americans by the American government as part of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 to compensate civilians who were forced into internment camps during this time as well. Germany also paid a total of \$1.3 billion to the Namibian government for its genocide of the Namibian people from 1904 to 1908. These past reparations all serve as suitable paradigms off which reparations to Ghana and victims of the slave trade should be made.

Further, it is important to recognize financial reparations that have been historically made to countries and groups of people that were actually the beneficiaries of the slave trade, rather than the victims. One such case was the British government's £300 million payment to slave owners as compensation for the emancipation of slaves, or what was in their eyes, the robbery of their property. This sum was only paid in full by the UK in 2015, a staggering 181 years after the initial emancipation proclamation was made. Comparatively, in 1825 Haiti, French warships were sent to the island country by order of King Charles X with demands of reparations to slave owners that were to be paid by emancipated slaves. Haiti's consequent payment amounted to \$20 to \$30 billion dollars with respect to the burdensome interest rates placed on the loans they had to take out. These loans left Haiti in profound debt that took over a century to fully pay off, though the country remains among the most impoverished countries in the world.

With these positions and precedents in mind, the most suitable reparations for Ghana would include a combination of both financial and material reparations to help stabilize the country economically and emotionally from the influences of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. This

would include a minimum collective sum of \$1.1 billion paid by the United States, United Kingdom, and countries in the EU, a total derived from the examples of previously made reparations. Debt forgiveness from any countries that were instrumental in the slave trade would also be a plausible idea to consider in the debate over reparations. In terms of material reparations, Ghana would also benefit from revisions made to the roles of non-permanent members in the UN Security Council, as Ghana is currently serving a term that is set to expire at the end of 2023. Longer terms or room for additional permanent members on the Council would give Ghana, as well as other less represented countries, a chance to have a larger role on the global stage. A final notable form of reparations for Ghana would be funding for repatriation to help the Ghanaian diaspora reunite to heal from the wounds inflicted by the slave trade. This should be paid in full by the countries of origin from which descendants depart to return to their homeland.

### **Descendants and Population - Lilah Surman**

There are many ideas about who should be given reparations and about what form they should take. In the broadest sense, anyone involved indirectly in the legacy of slavery could be a recipient. For example, President Akufo-Addo of Ghana believes that “even before these discussions on reparations conclude, the entire continent of Africa deserves a formal apology from the European nations involved in the slave trade for the crimes and damage it has caused to the population, psyche, image and character of the African the world over”. More specifically, the president highlighted that twenty million people have suffered the injustice of slavery and reparations could attempt to respond to damage done to these people and their legacy.

There are examples that reparations for Ghana could be modeled after. President Akufo-Addo

argues that similarly to how British, French and American slaveholders were financially compensated to end the slave trade, Africans should be compensated. However, reparations could also include apologies, financial compensation, or efforts that might end inhumane conditions of living and cultural relations. It has been argued that to truly undo the legacy of slavery would take education and psychological efforts that impact beliefs and attitudes of people. In recent years it has been evident that education about differential treatment of groups within society and training on implicit bias could help decrease racism, one of the worst legacies of slavery. When it is determined what sources of reparations are possible, the potential recipients could include descendants of enslaved people, but it is necessary that there are other recipients of transformative efforts in society in order to heal a traumatized country.

Society in Ghana is greatly impacted by the generational legacy of slavery. Slavery may account for up to 47 percent of the income disparity between West and Central African nations and the rest of the world. The President states that it has tampered with “Africa’s economic, cultural and psychological progress”. Ghana suffers from worse political stability, civil rights, health, and greater corruption than Western countries, like the United States. The average income in Ghana is thirty times lower than it is in the United States. Countries have been able to build their economies and infrastructure through colonialism and slavery at the expense of Ghana.

It is notable that in recent years there have been political and touristic efforts that convey openness to reconciliation with the descendants of the people who were enslaved from Ghana. Specifically, 2019 was publicly declared as a year of return. As recently as two months ago, the chairman of the US federal reserve visited the “door of no return” of the Ghanaian castle from which enslaved people departed from Ghana. This is one of many stories that has positioned Ghana to have played a central role in the slave trade. As a result of slavery in Ghana, people in

the country think of themselves as separate groups based off of their ancestor's countries of origin and involvement in the slave trade

It would take on ground investigative studies to fully understand the opinions of Ghanaians. However, diverse perspectives are apparent from the media. Ghana's president may not be speaking for everyone when he says that all Africans deserve reparations. There is tension about whether Ghanians whose ancestors were slave traders deserve to be reparated. Ghanaians have been blamed for slavery because some groups were a part of the capturing and selling of enslaved people. There is a diaspora tourism company that brings Black Americans to tribal groups in Ghana to receive apologies. Tourism industries are centered around the legacy of slavery and the presence of a diaspora to whom Ghana is a homeland. At the same time, people living in Ghana could be aware of the perspective that their country as a whole deserves an apology from former participants in the slave trade similar to Denmark's official apology in 2018.

There was a distribution from the previous way of life when colonial powers transformed life in Ghana. There were different impacts on different regions in Ghana. Desire for European goods in the middle belt which had been paid for items such as gold and elephant tusks shifted to exchange of human beings. These human slaves came from the north as captives or as tribute to the Asante. There was civil war in the North and captives became enslaved. Many people lost their families to slavery. There is disagreement amongst historians about the impact of slavery because of a lack of records and communication. Although Ghana has been a host to conferences related to reparations, and has become a site for education about slavery, there is evidence that at least in some schools at the junior high level, students are not learning about slavery's contribution to the history of Ghana. There are academics who argue that healing the

legacy of slavery in Ghana might require education methods that allow individuals to understand the complex factors that shape inequity in Ghana today. It is unclear what the path of citizenship would be for the descendants of slaves but descendants may be eligible for special visas.

### **Education and Awareness - Janie Hyde**

Ghana's long history of slavery is not yet something of the past because of the modern day child slavery that continues to persist. Modern day slavery in Ghana has made it difficult to address the Transatlantic Slave Trade and past slavery. Despite this challenge, Ghana has begun to expand its public awareness and education on both past and present slavery. Historical sites have been preserved and turned into museums to educate Ghanaians and tourists. There have also been efforts by Ghanaians, mainly teachers, to expand the curriculum about slavery in schools as they believe it is vitally important to educate Ghanaian youth on slavery so they can understand how it shaped the past and continues to shape the present and future.

There is currently little education on the issues of slavery in the Ghanaian school systems due, in large part, to a lack of acknowledgement and lack of public awareness by the government as well as the modern day slavery that exists in Ghana.

Slavery is first mentioned in the school curriculum once students reach junior high school or seventh grade. The curriculum covering slavery is a brief summary that does not give the whole picture of the horrors of slavery. Students are taught that the British, who colonized Ghana, only wanted control of their resources such as gold and cocoa, and it is not mentioned that they wanted control of the country. They are educated about the positive and negative effects of slavery on Ghana, a view which is highly influenced by the remaining European influence from colonization as European nations benefited rather than Ghana. Despite a lack of education



of slavery, there are hopes to change education from the western view of slavery as this is not a fair or accurate representation of slavery. Students visit monuments and historical sites relating to the slave trade, another step forward in furthering their education.

As the government has begun to change its past ways of acknowledging slavery, including apologizing for its role in the Transatlantic Slave Trade and calling for reparations, there has been hope among teachers for more education on the issue of slavery. Many teachers have been frustrated with a lack of slavery education. They believe it is important to educate students about slavery to see how it changed the past and to understand the lasting effects slavery continues to have and will continue to have.

In recent years, there has been a push for preservation of historical sites and for the creation of memorials. Besides this, there is little education for the public about slavery, partially because modern day slavery continues to exist in Ghana today.

In 2007, the Ussher Fort Museum, a former European stronghold used as a trading post and a dungeon, was opened. The museum aims to educate Ghanaians and tourists about its history and the history of the slave trade in Ghana with wall paintings and artifacts. Funding for long needed repairs to the museum was recently provided by the Netherlands to help face the past together and begin to face the future. More funding could help preserve historical sites and turn them into museums to further educate the community.

Elmina Castle Museum, also known as St. George's Castle Museum, is a fortress on the coast of Ghana that was turned into a museum in 1996. Originally built by the Portuguese in the 1400s, the castle was used by the Dutch for a majority of the transatlantic slave trade. Captives would be held in the dungeons for up to three months with no idea what their future held. Once it was time for them to board ships to travel to the Americas, they would go through "the Door of

No Return”, gaining its name because no enslaved African ever came back through it. Visitors can tour the castle and surrounding historical sites. The museum’s current purpose is to educate and spread awareness of slavery and the horrors of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

Despite recent memorialization of historical sites, Ghanaians believe it is important to continue to spread public awareness and education to Ghanaians, specifically youth, as many lack complete knowledge and awareness of Ghana’s role in slavery.

### **Building the Future - Dylan Sobol**

Although the transatlantic slave trade is a thing of the past and the enslavement of people is now illegal in most countries, the institution of slavery continues to raise humanitarian issues today. Today, around 50 million people are enslaved worldwide. This staggering statistic is a result of the increase in enslaved people in the last five years (an increase of 10 million people from 2016-2021). This statistic includes 22 million people in forced marriage and 28 million people in forced labor. Women and children are disproportionately susceptible to slavery. Slavery is still found in almost every country in the world, regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic class. Migrants are especially vulnerable to forced labor, and are three times more likely to be enslaved than non-migrant workers. This is largely due to migrants' typically vulnerable position in the workforce, which results in unethical recruitments of workers. Slavery is especially prevalent in Ghana today, and includes the enslavement of children. These children are often sold into labor or trafficked and forced into slavery.

#### Legacies of slavery in Ghana:

Ghanaian descendants of enslaved people are still being subjected to limitation on their individual rights. Ghanaians who are identified as having ancestral slaves are discriminated against. Ghanaians from the North are largely discriminated against, as stereotypes suggest that

enslaved Ghanaians were all from the North (although research suggests that this is untrue).

A cycle of generational trauma is apparent in Ghana in the descendants of slaves. This trauma has induced servility and patriarchal clientage in descendants of enslaved people.

Ghana's involvement in the transatlantic slave trade was unique in that certain Ghanaian tribal leaders were involved in the slave trade. This has induced a feeling of superiority in certain Ghanaians, while descendants of enslaved people are left with a socioeconomic and emotional disadvantage.

Intergenerational poverty has also been a major legacy of slavery in Ghana. Ghanaians who were able to avoid slavery were awarded a socioeconomic advantage, as they were able to retain their land, farms, and families. However, those who were prisoners of war and were sold into slavery were rendered unable to retain these things. This has resulted in a socioeconomic unbalance of wealth and poverty within Ghana, and has further separated descendants of enslaved people from the rest of the Ghanaian population.

#### Lessons Learned:

The consequences of the unfair treatment and discrimination of people are apparent for generations. Therefore, every time an atrocity is committed, it has results that stretch far beyond what can be seen at the time. Intergenerational poverty and discrimination has resulted from slavery. Although there aren't any enslaved people still alive today, their descendants are still being adversely affected by the institution of slavery.

We must learn from the mistakes of our past in order to move forward. Although slavery is no longer legal, African countries are still often discriminated against and thought of as less civilized than Western nations. Westerners are still more willing to accept atrocities committed in Africa and against Africans than they are those in the West. We must be able to treat these

atrocities with the same skepticism that we would treat those in the West, because if we allow genocide (like that in Rwanda), discrimination, and racial profiling in Africa, then it is more than likely to spread to other parts of the world. This is apparent in Hitlerism, which could be a direct result of the theory of ethnic cleansing that was originally found in imperial Africa.

When certain people of a nation turn on others, believing that they are above them, intergenerational trauma and discrimination results, which results in national devastation. Today, Ghana is still being adversely affected by its division in and discrimination between different tribes.

#### Slavery in Ghana Today:

In Ghana, slavery is not an institution of the past, and although it is no longer prevalent in society, there are many places where human trafficking and child slaves are displayed freely. On Lake Volta, children as young as 5 years old are forced into slavery, working in harsh conditions, and being at risk of drowning every day, as most of them are never taught to swim. Children are brought to Lake Volta from throughout Ghana, meaning that although child labor is not displayed in most of Ghana, it remains a national dilemma. This trafficking and child labor is largely a result of the Ghanaian people's poverty, which in some cases renders parents unable to feed their children. Children are promised food and an education if they come with the traffickers to help on fishing boats. However, once they arrive in Lake Volta, this is never the case. Children are immediately sold into labor. Sometimes, traffickers buy children directly from their impoverished parents. Girls who are sold into slavery are often sexually exploited. Boys who are sold into slavery are forced to do the most dangerous job in the lake; they must jump into the parasite-infested waters to free fishing nets, which often get stuck in tree roots. This job is so dangerous because none of these children know how to swim. It is estimated that around 20,000

children are enslaved in Lake Volta and the surrounding fishing villages. This unacceptable statistic shows how unequal access to education, healthcare, and housing has adversely affected previously-colonized nations after they were left with inadequate resources.

#### Eradicating this Issue in the Future:

New laws must be made which directly prohibit the enslavement of people, especially children. In addition, these laws must be strictly enforced by all law enforcement officials. Labor inspection must be more frequent and thorough. There must be increased support for children, women, and migrants. Their access to education, housing, and healthcare must be made less elusive. Western powers could put economic pressures on other countries (especially those in Africa) to end modern slavery. This pressure could include cutting off economic relations with countries that allow slavery through marriage and child labor. In order to sufficiently and permanently eradicate slavery in Ghana, Ghanaian people must obtain increased support. Slavery has been able to remain in Ghana for centuries because the socioeconomic status of many Ghanaians has not changed through generations. Intergenerational poverty in Ghana has caused a general desperation. Reparations from Western powers (specifically the United States and Britain) could allow for this cycle of poverty to end. Families would not be forced to sell their children into slavery and could discourage child marriage if they had more resources. Western Imperialism left Ghanaians with insufficient resources and is still adversely affecting Ghana's inhabitants today.

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