

## **GET THE POINT**

### **UN Human Rights Commissioner to Probe Racist Violence in the United States**

By: Fritz Pointer

This is a BIG Deal! With so many Global issues to bring before the United Nations' concerning Human Rights such as: trafficking in weapons, drugs, sex, even babies and body parts as well as problems: of refugees, hunger, poverty, universal healthcare, abuse of women and children: for the United Nations Human Rights Council to task the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet with preparing a report by June 2021 on "systemic racism, violations of international human rights law against Africans and people of African descent" by racist law enforcement agencies across the United States is both long-awaited, noteworthy and necessary.

An International Commission of Inquiry made up of twelve commissioners, including prominent judges, lawyers, professors, advocates and UN special rapporteurs from Pakistan, South Africa, Japan, India, Nigeria, France, Costa Rica, the United Kingdom and the West Indies will hold public hearings from January 18 to February 6 (Marjorie Cohn, *Consortium News*).

This Commission will look at 50 Killings that occurred throughout the United States from 2010-2020 including George Floyd, Michael Brown, Eric Garner, Oscar Grant, Trevon Martin, Breonna Taylor and Tamir Rice, in order to "expose the racist and systemic nature of police violence against people of African descent in the United States and to hold the U.S. government accountable before the international community" (Cohn).

During the 1960s, there was deliberate recruitment of racist from the South to terrorize their fellow Black citizens in northern cities. The habitual brutalizing and murdering of Black American men and women gave rise to the simple yet

profound question: Who do you call when the police are beating, shooting and killing you? The answer – The Black Panther Party for Self-Defense. Malcolm X says this: *The American black man is the world's most shameful case of minority oppression.... How is a black man going to get "civil rights" before he first wins his **human rights**? If the American black man will start thinking about his **human rights**, and then start thinking of himself as part of one of the world's greatest people, he will see he has a case for the United Nations.*

This attention by the UNHRC is "long awaited" because on June 6, 1946, "the National Negro Congress presented its concise petition on the plight of black Americans to the UN secretary general's office...after exhausting all constitutional avenues in the United States, they were 'forced' to appeal their case to 'the highest court of mankind – the United Nations" (Carol Anderson *Eyes Off the Prize*, 81).

Then, UN officials made it clear to the Black American representatives that according to the Charter, the United Nations had little, if any, authority to receive petitions from nongovernmental organizations and no power to 'intervene in domestic affairs' and investigate human rights abuses" (Anderson, 82).

Again, in 1951 William L. Patterson and Paul Robeson presented to the United Nations the "Petition" *We Charge Genocide*. Their historic "Petition" was to support the charge that the **racism** of the United States Government and its agencies, including the criminal justice system, courts and police departments nation-wide, is **a crime** punishable under the UN Genocide Convention. The "Petition" presented specific, documented evidence of inhuman and racist practices in the United States and declared that the racism of government is a criminal policy, a flagrant violation of the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and more specifically the UN Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide and the Constitution of the United States of America.

We must not forget the words of Justice Robert H. Jackson in the trial of Nazi war criminals in Nuremberg, Germany – words that apply directly to the African American experience: *How a government treats its own inhabitants generally is thought to be no concern of other governments or of international society. Certainly, few oppressions or cruelties would warrant the intervention of foreign powers. But the German (the American) mistreatment of Germans (Americans) is now known to surpass in magnitude and savagery any limits of what is tolerable by modern civilization. Other nations by silence would take a consenting part in such crimes. These Nazi persecutions, moreover, take on character as international crimes because of the purpose for which they were undertaken....*

This applies to racism and the racists in the United States. There is no question that the treatment of Africans in America violates all provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The *Constitution for the Federation of Earth* Article 10 has a provision for “World Police.” Originally written in English but now translated into 22 other languages it “is a work of surpassing brilliance and wisdom, owing not only to the dedication, legal erudition, and vision of its primary authors, but also to the thousands of world citizens who participated in its shaping and winnowing into the final document we have today. This final document was last amended at the Fourth Constituent Assembly in Troia, Portugal, in 1991” (*Earth Constitution*, vi).

Important to our discussion here, Article 10. 4 advocates the development of “Non-military means of enforcement of world law and world legislation” (65). While Article 12.15 stipulates “Prohibition against private armies and paramilitary organizations as being threats to the common peace and safety” (70). So, under *The Earth Constitution*, “The Proud Boys” and “The Boogaloo Boys” would be illegal. And not some twisted idea of freedom of speech.

Of course violent, militarized policing is not just an American problem but a global one: just ask anyone from Brazil, South Africa, or Nigeria. As Prof. Angela Davis has remarked, “We know that the role of the police is to protect white supremacy” – even in Blackface or Brownface. Paul T. Clarke, a Harvard researcher in his article “Abolition Across the Atlantic” writes: “While [South African] security forces have killed at least 12 people since the beginning of the pandemic lockdown, there is little outrage over police violence in South Africa. This is shocking, not only because South African police kill **three times** as many people per capita than their American counterparts, but also because South Africa, unlike the US, has a rich history of broad militancy against the police and security forces. Why then are South Africans not also in the streets?” Like other burning issues of today, the issue of Police Violence transcends borders and demands a Global Solution.

<https://consortiumnews.com/2020/12/28/un-human-rights-commissioner-probing-racist-violence-in-us-as-part-of-worldwide-study-after-trump-administration-blocked-un-human-rights-council-us-inquiry/>