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US African Representatives Attend White House Briefing, Demand Full Integration in America

Washington, DC. – Following decades of political and economic marginalization of the African population in the United States, over 100 African leaders and representatives from across the United States attended a White House briefing facilitated by Dr. Sylvester Okere, President of the United People for African Congress on Monday Feb. 22nd. On behalf of the US African population, Dr. Sylvester Okere, President of the United People for African Congress delivered a [proclamation](#) to the White House detailing immediate concerns of US African populations.

The historic briefing by members of President Obama’s policy team focused on US-Africa policy and included a subsequent strategic planning session at the Democratic National Committee (DNC) on Monday Feb. 22nd. Despite being among the most educated groups in the US, African populations continue to experience racial discrimination and bureaucratic barriers that have prevented the full integration of Africans into American life and economy.

“For far too long Africans have not been allowed to make their full contributions to this great nation,” **said Dr. Sylvester Okere, President of the United People for African Congress.** “We are very grateful that President Barack Obama has allowed us to make our case for full African integration in this country during Black History Month. As Americans, we have resolved to break through the artificial barriers that prevent us from full participation and contributions to the United States of America.”

“Politics is the vehicle by which all Africans must participate in ensuring our communities develop in vibrant and economically-sustainable ways,” **said Deputy Mayor of the City of Newark, Hon. Ugochukwu Nwaokoro.** “The status quo in African marginalization in this country is costly and unacceptable. As Africans in America, we have so much to offer and we must continue to agitate and organize for full participation in this nation’s politics. America rises as we overcome.”

“The issue of political under-representation is limiting the socio-economic development of all Africans in the US,” **said Rosemary Segero, President, Segeros Int Group, Inc.** “We are serious in calling for a proper count of Africans in the coming 2020 Census so that local governments can adequately service the language and social needs of our growing

populations. We can't wait for the 2030 Census to finally get a proper sense of where Africans are clustered in order to reach them effectively."

"This gathering is just the beginning of the necessary and forceful political organizing we must continue to undertake for the most vulnerable in our communities," **said Amaha Kassa Esq., Executive Director, of African Communities Together.** "The fate of thousands of Guineans, Liberians and Sierra Leoneans previously protected under Temporary Protected Status now hangs in the balance. We have come together to ask President Barack Obama to renew TPS and keep our families whole till Congress is able to pass the necessary comprehensive immigration reform."

"I am heartened President Barack Obama is paying attention to the African community because Africans are best positioned in guiding this nation's engagement with Africa," **said Rashida Bright, Executive Director, RISP America.** "We are now Americans just as much as we are Africans. Why should America continue to lose out in trade with Africa when you have us here with our connections and inputs? We can help inform better policy development with Africa this very moment."

"American policy and relations with Africa must reflect current realities and seize valuable opportunities in both places," **said Nii Akuetteh, Executive Director, African Immigrant Caucus.** "This means President Obama deserves commendation for this outreach and briefing of which more are needed. It also means American leaders in every sphere, especially the next president, must grow and expand Mr. Obama's numerous Africa initiatives. Above all, it means this: We the African immigrants must first and foremost put aside ethnic, national, sectarian and language differences; instead, we must unite and organize ourselves into a powerful voice that American decision makers are forced to heed and respect."

"Africans in the US have already resolved to help change the Washington gridlock and to continue using our voice in service of justice, peace and the pursuit of the efforts to perfect the union," **said Dr. Hashim El-Tinay, Secretary General, United People for African Congress.** "Our representatives aspire to bringing about a societal awakening that can transform the prevailing, dominant culture of racism and fear to one of solidarity, social, and economic justice. Our contributions are timely to facilitate the emergence of a new 21st century culture of trust that inspires the nation to build bridges rather than walls."

"The previous census undercounted Africans due to the usual reason of cost savings for American taxpayers," **said Lansana Koroma, Chairman, International Forum for the Rights of Black People.** "There could be millions of Africans here even though the government says 1 million. The Black youth population has ballooned just like in Africa. We are going to continue working with President Obama and My Brother's Keeper because we must plan for the future of more than one generation."