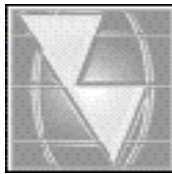


Race and Poverty:
Interagency Consultation on Afro–Latin Americans

Proceedings of the roundtable
held June 19, 2000 in Washington, D.C.

(Preliminary Edition)



November 2000

Inter-American Dialogue
Inter-American Development Bank
World Bank

The findings interpretations and conclusions in this document are attributable to the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position or official policy of the World Bank, Inter-American Dialogue, or Inter-American Development Bank.

This working paper series is produced by the Sector Management Unit (SMU) for Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development (John Redwood, Director) of the World Bank's Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office.

Additional copies may be obtained from LCSES Program Assistant Peter Brandriss (pbrandriss@worldbank.org or by phone at 202-473-9379).

Cover photos (from left to right):

Sao Paulo, Brazil —Francis Dobbs
Ecuador —Martien Van Nieuwkoop

Contents

Preface	v
Executive Summary	vii

Session 1: Afro–Latin Americans: National and International Law Perspectives

Colombian Legislation: Regulations Governing Afro-Colombian Communities <i>Julio E. Gallardo Archbold (Colombia)</i>	3
Discrimination Against Afro-Peruvian Groups (Legal Framework) <i>Dr. Jorge Ramirez Reyna (Peru)</i>	14

Session 2: Civil Society Organizations that Promote Afro–Latin American Interests

Brief Summary of the Policymaking Process of Afro-American Organizations <i>Romero J. Rodríguez (Uruguay)</i>	19
Civil Organizations that Promote the Interests of Afro–Latin Americans: Voices to Break the Silence <i>Celeo Alvarez Casildo (Honduras)</i>	27
Incivility that Makes for Exclusion and Participation that Aims for Inclusion: An Afro-Venezuelan Perspective <i>Jesús Chucho García (Venezuela)</i>	33

Session 3: Politics and Race in Latin America

Development, Conflict, and Territory <i>Piedad Córdoba Ruiz (Colombia)</i>	39
Politics and Race in Latin America <i>Francisco Campbell (Nicaragua)</i>	42

Session 4: Race and Poverty in Latin America

The Causes of Black Poverty in Brazil: A Few Reflections <i>Antonio Sérgio Alfredo Guimarães (Brazil)</i>	47
Race and Poverty in Latin America: Conceptual Difficulties <i>Melissa Nobles (United States)</i>	55
The Comparative Human Relations Initiative <i>Lynn Walker Huntley (United States)</i>	62

Preface

The papers in this volume were prepared for a conference sponsored by the World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and Inter-American Dialogue. The one-day meeting, held at the World Bank on June 19, 2000, brought together prominent leaders and analysts of Afro-Latin American communities to discuss the legal, political, and socioeconomic issues confronting these populations, and review various national and local experiences in addressing those issues.

Although disagreements emerged on many specific questions, there was consensus among the conference participants and sponsors on the importance of the meeting. They considered it particularly significant that the discussions underscored the long-standing neglect by governments and international institutions regarding issues related to race in Latin America. There was special emphasis on the way these issues are related to widespread poverty, social exclusion, and income inequality in various countries. Participants agreed that these questions demanded substantially greater attention for reasons of equity and fairness, political and social stability, and long-term economic, social, and civil progress. The conference was part of a growing range of efforts by the World Bank, IDB, and the Dialogue to increase awareness inside and outside their organizations on the relationship between race and social, economic, and political exclusion.

At the conclusion of the meeting the sponsoring institutions—joined by the Ford Foundation—decided to establish the Inter-Agency Consultation on Race and Poverty in Latin America (IAC). This entity will serve as a continuing mechanism to help the four institutions better understand and more effectively address the special problems of the approximately 150 million Latin Americans of African descent—including issues of pervasive racial discrimination, extremely high rates of poverty and illiteracy, and limited access to education, health, and other public services. The IAC will help the participating institutions to share information and analysis on the situation of Afro-Latin Americans, stay well informed about each others' programs and plans, conduct joint activities, and maintain a continuing dialogue with Afro-Latin American leaders, institutions, and communities.

An executive-director will be appointed to coordinate the IAC with the support of an advisory committee of about a dozen members. Members of the committee will include leaders from the Afro-Latin American community, African-American leaders from the United States, and prominent analysts of race-related issues in Latin America. The group will be politically diverse and will comprise a range of nationalities.

Peter Hakim
President
Inter-American Dialogue

November 2000

Executive Summary

The Interagency Consultation on Afro-Latin Americans was created to generate discussion and increase awareness within the international policy and development communities on issues and challenges facing Afro-Latin populations—including existing linkages among social and institutional systems, race and ethnicity, and poverty. Representatives of the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Inter-American Dialogue (IAD), international foundations and governments, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and community-based Afro-Latin American organizations attended the first meeting, held at the World Bank's headquarters in Washington, D.C on June 19, 2000. The central topic of discussion was the impact of race on poverty and development in Latin America.

The following themes guided the day-long discourse: (a) laws as they affect the rights of Afro-Latin Americans in selected countries, (b) the role of civil society and advocacy organizations that work on Afro-Latin American issues, (c) race and ethnicity as factors in the politics of Latin America, and (d) key research questions regarding poverty and race. In their opening addresses the principal representatives of the sponsoring institutions—Peter Hakim (President, Inter-American Dialogue), David de Ferranti (Vice President, Latin America and the Caribbean Region, the World Bank), and Antonio Vives (Acting Manager, Sustainable Development Department, Inter-American Development Bank)—stressed two other concerns that emerged as major themes of the consultation: (a) the lack of reliable information and statistics on race in Latin America and the resulting “invisibility” of Afro-Latin populations, and (b) the need for donor agencies to recognize race as an important variable in shaping inequality, and to design policies and programs for poverty alleviation and social development accordingly.

At the beginning of the discussions Julio Gallardo, a Colombian lawyer and Vice President of the House of Representatives Committee for Constitutional Affairs, made a strong plea to support implementation of existing legislation. He argued that although the Colombian Constitution declares Colombia to be a multicultural and pluri-ethnic country, and national laws forbid racial discrimination, guarantee collective ownership of land, and recognize ethnic rights to a different culture and language, these laws often are not enforced.

Other discussants agreed that there is a lack of will when it comes to enforcing laws affecting the rights of Afro-Latins. This discrepancy between law and enforcement is apparent in cases such as discriminatory hiring practices and the failure to recognize property titles. The panelists called for strengthening of legal institutions that could effectively address race issues and provide mechanisms for equality in the treatment of all citizens. They suggested that such a process would include training community members about their rights and legal options, and strengthening civil society organizations to educate communities on legal issues. It was noted that the United Nations and various international treaty obligations provide mechanisms for compliance monitoring by outside institutions. There was also an appeal to Caribbean governments, many of which have black leadership, to support Afro-Latin American organizations in negotiations with their own governments and provide international solidarity against discrimination.

Romero Rodriguez from Uruguay, representing Mundo Afro, pointed out that relatively few Latin American countries formally recognize discrimination as a problem. However, Afro-Latin communities

and their organizations describe the problematic situations they face in terms of discrimination and exclusion. As the session on civil society organizations emphasized, discrimination is strikingly visible in the disparity between the level of government services, such as health and education, that are provided to Afro-Latin populations as opposed to other citizens.

In response, Afro-Latin community organizations and other NGOs have sprung up in both rural and urban areas and have developed strong interinstitutional connections and networks. The panelists stressed that the Afro-Latin community and other civil society groups must counter discrimination not only within their own countries, but through international institutions as well. There was general consensus that local communities can begin to bring about change through participation in and pressure on their governments to at least recognize and comply with existing laws.

Dulce Maria Pereira, from the Fundação Palmares of the Ministry of Culture in Brazil, discussed the effect of government policies in reinforcing or challenging discriminatory practices. She provided a historic review of state policies toward black populations in Brazil. She also defined the course of state policy as having replaced slavery with poverty and social exclusion. Supporting Pereira's argument, Antonio Sergio Guimarães, professor at the University of São Paulo, argued that "to see the current income disparity between Afro-Brazilians and white Brazilians as just a product of a history of slavery is to excuse present generations from any responsibility for the structural positioning of Afro-Brazilians as poor."

In Brazil, these policy exclusions form a kind of crystallized or concentrated poverty that demonstrates that growth per se does not guarantee a more equal distribution of income. Not only does racism allow for the exclusion of certain groups, but it also causes mistrust of state policy and state organizations by local communities. The discussants argued that to minimize exclusion and mistrust, local participation must be incorporated into the formulation as well as implementation of state policies and programs. These policies and programs need to be made relevant to affected communities and guarantee long-term viability.

Addressing a theme of particular interest to international lending organizations, Melissa Nobles of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology pointed out that the exclusion of information on race in national censuses is a powerful tool for manipulating political claims. She argued that the virtual absence of such data causes official information to be unreliable and biased, thus underestimating the scope of the problem. Nevertheless, participants argued that international agencies should not wait for precise data to act, because the absence of data can be used as an excuse to delay action or do nothing.

The Afro-Latin population's disproportionate representation among the poor and marginalized requires state actions and policies that emphasize poverty reduction and antidiscrimination and that direct resources to the specific needs of Afro-Latin populations. Research and policy development is needed to demonstrate the cost of exclusion and to identify best practices. The consultation determined that changing the paradigm from generalized antipoverty measures to a joint antidiscrimination and antipoverty strategy would be more effective in combating poverty in Latin America. The impact of discrimination and poverty on Afro-Latin women was also highlighted, and representatives of development agencies were urged to simultaneously address gender and racial equality issues for Afro-Latin women.

The discussions concluded with a panel presentation by representatives of private foundations, the Inter-American Dialogue, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Inter-American Foundation, and the World Bank. This final panel was important in providing relevant information on the operations of

the institutions represented. While the international organizations and foundations highlighted that they were still in the process of learning, they expressed enthusiasm and willingness toward systematically including race as a factor in their approach to poverty alleviation.

In the discussion that followed, it was mentioned that Afro-Latin Americans are underrepresented in the staff of the international agencies and that more should be hired. International lending institutions and other donor agencies should also support compliance with antidiscrimination laws and the conduct of racial or cultural impact assessment studies. Finally, these agencies should focus more attention on promoting partnerships between Afro-Latin organizations, communities, and the private sector to both include information on race and ethnicity in poverty assessments and to invest in and strengthen the social and cultural capital of Afro-Latin populations.

Session 1

Afro–Latin Americans: National and International Law Perspectives

Colombian Legislation: Regulations Governing Afro-Colombian Communities <i>Julio E. Gallardo Archbold (Colombia)</i>	3
Discrimination Against Afro-Peruvian Groups (Legal Framework) <i>Dr. Jorge Ramirez Reyna (Peru)</i>	14

Colombian Legislation: Regulations Governing Afro-Colombian Communities

Julio E. Gallardo Archbold (Colombia)

Preface

Afro-Colombian communities (or black communities as they are called in the Colombian Constitution) are located throughout the Republic of Colombia. As a minority ethnic group they are protected by the constitution's general laws. In addition, the constitution specifically refers to Afro-Colombian communities on the Pacific coast and in the southwest Caribbean archipelago of San Andrés, Providencia, and Santa Catalina.

There is no precise data on the size of the Afro-Colombian population. The government tends to minimize their number, putting it at about 3 percent of the total population, or approximately 1 million individuals. More realistic indicators set the population of African descent at 26 percent of the population, or approximately 10.5 million individuals.

The *Third Report on the Human Rights Situation in Colombia*, issued by the OAS Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in February 1999, states:

There has been in recent years a most welcome recognition by the State at all levels, and by and large, by society as a whole that afro-Colombians have suffered racial discrimination and that such discrimination persists to the present. In fairness, however it should be pointed out that such discrimination does not constitute a conscious policy of the State.

During its on-site visit to Colombia in December, 1997 the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights . . . heard numerous testimonies evidencing active and passive discrimination by State and private actors alike. It is important to point out that complaints made by black Colombian citizens and corroborated in various sociological studies in recent years, refer to both a pattern of official as well as unofficial, discrimination. With respect to the latter, offensive stereotypes in the media, the arts and popular culture tend to perpetuate negative attitudes towards blacks and these often unconscious views are commonly reflected in public policy when governments at all levels distribute limited State resources.

Hence, the Commission has received ample documentation demonstrating that black Colombians have, perhaps with the exception of the Colombian indigenous population, the lowest per capita income, extremely high rates of illiteracy in both urban and rural areas, very high indices of infant mortality and serious diseases . . .

In contrast with this reality, there is a marked dearth of black Colombians in middle and high level government and private sector positions. Blacks are rarely commissioned as officers in the military forces, and aside from some cities and towns where they enjoy an electoral majority they are underrepresented in elected and appointed positions in government. A similar generalization can be

made regarding the paucity of blacks in other branches of government as well as the civil and diplomatic services. . . . White collar jobs in the liberal professions of medicine, dentistry, law, the natural and social sciences and education at all levels, have historically been closed to blacks except the lucky and persistent few.

Not surprisingly, government investment in infrastructure, health, education, housing and general welfare have been very low in areas inhabited primarily by afro-Colombians.

Document 2909 (1997) of the National Council on Economic and Social Policy, through which the Colombian government guides national policy planning, describes policies aimed at improving the standard of living of black communities and strengthening them as an ethnic group. The document states that:

The Afro-Colombian and native communities (natives of the San Andrés archipelago and Providencia) have made significant contributions toward the development of Colombia through their culture, characterized by its richness and diversity, their contribution to national production, and their protection of the environment. . . . However, within the context of Colombian ethnocultural diversity, the black communities have not been given sufficient recognition and, therefore, fail to participate effectively in the country's decisions. . . . In the national context, it is observed that the majority of population centers to which the black communities belong have higher rates of unmet basic needs than the national average. . . . With regard to human rights in the country, there is insufficient information available on the situation of the black communities. However, discrimination, prejudice, and racial segregation do occur. The black communities constitute one of the sectors that have a high risk of violations of their human rights.

Regulatory Provisions

The following is a brief description of the regulatory provisions governing Afro-Colombian communities.

National Constitution

Article 7. The state recognizes and protects the ethnic and cultural diversity of the Colombian nation.

Article 10. Spanish is the official language of Colombia. The languages and dialects of the ethnic groups are also official in their territories. Education in communities with their own linguistic traditions shall be bilingual.

Article 13. All persons are born free and equal before the law. . . . The state shall foster conditions to make equality real and meaningful, and shall take necessary steps to favor groups that suffer from discrimination or marginalization.

Article 68. Members of ethnic groups have the right to an education that respects and develops their cultural identity.

Article 70. Culture in its various forms is an essential element of nationality. The state recognizes the equality and dignity of all who share the country.

Article 176. A special electoral constituency may be established to ensure the participation of ethnic groups in the House of Representatives.

Article 310. Laws approved by a majority of the members of both houses may limit the rights of movement and residence, set limits on population density, regulate soil use, and make special provisions governing confiscation of real estate in order to protect the cultural identity of native communities and preserve the environment and natural resources of the archipelago of San Andrés, Providencia, and Santa Catalina.

Transitional Article 55. Within two years from the date of entry into force of this Constitution, and following a study made by a special commission appointed for that purpose by the government, the Congress shall pass a law granting to the black communities that have been occupying undeveloped lands in rural areas along the rivers of the Pacific basin in accordance with their traditional farming and gathering methods, collective property rights in areas to be defined in the law.

The same law shall establish mechanisms for protection of the cultural identity and rights of these communities, and for the promotion of their economic and social development.

Paragraph 1. The provisions of this article shall be applied to other zones of the country where similar conditions exist, by the same procedure, following study and a favorable finding by the special commission provided for herein.

Laws

Decree-Law 2762 of 1991 establishes measures to control the entrance of people into the archipelago of San Andrés and Providencia in order to protect the native inhabitants and the environment.

Law 47 of 1993 establishes special measures for the archipelago of San Andrés, Providencia, and Santa Catalina. It provides that:

- Spanish and Creole English are the official languages of the archipelago.
- Education must be bilingual, in Spanish and English.
- Government employees must speak Spanish and English.
- The community is accorded broad participation in the management of environmental and fishing resources.
- There is special protection for the archipelago's cultural heritage.
- Regulations are established for economic and social development.

Law 70 of 1993, on black communities:

- Recognizes the right of black communities to collective ownership of vacant lands they have been occupying.
- Directs all educational institutions to offer an Afro-Colombian studies curriculum.
- Directs the government to earmark funding to give members of black communities greater access to higher education.
- Orders the creation of a scholarship fund for needy students from black communities.
- Orders that members of black communities shall have access to technical, technological, and professional education to put them on equal footing with the rest of the population.

- Directs the state to punish and prevent any act of intimidation, segregation, discrimination, or racism against black communities in all areas of society, in decisionmaking levels of public administration, and especially in the mass media and the educational system. The state is to ensure that the principles of equality and respect for ethnic and cultural diversity are observed.
- Establishes a special constituency composed of black communities to elect two members to the House of Representatives.

Law 199 of 1995 assigns the Ministry of Interior responsibility for preparing and adopting policies to protect black communities, guarantee their rights, and ensure promotion of their economic and social development.

Law 335 of 1996 modifies the law on television. Article 20, paragraph 2 says that the state shall guarantee to ethnic groups permanent rights to use of the electromagnetic spectrum and to the public telecommunications services and means of mass communication of the state, creation of their own communications media of various types, and implementation of a development plan for ethnic groups based on criteria of equity, recognition of positive differentiation, equal opportunity, and fair distribution of resources in accordance with the legislation of the communities, to ensure their ethnic and cultural rights and their integral development.

Jurisprudence

The country's high courts have already established legal precedents related to regulations concerning Afro-Colombian communities, because in some cases these provisions have been challenged, citizens have exercised their constitutional right to request compliance with regulations, and the national government itself has turned to the courts in search of legal opinions on the matter. Below are brief excerpts from some of these rulings.

Decision T-422/96, Third Court for the Revision of Legal Protection Issues of the Constitutional Court

Positive Differentiation for Black Communities

Positive differentiation is linked to recognition of the social marginalization of the black population and the resulting negative impact on their access to opportunities for economic, social, and cultural development. For social groups that are poor off because they suffered persecution and unfair treatment in the past, special legal treatment that is intended to redress past wrongs and improve living conditions tends to restore social equity, and consolidate internal peace, and therefore gains constitutional legitimacy.

If the law uses the racial criterion that, in principle, is prohibited by the Constitution, it does so with the sole objective of introducing a positive differentiation, which, in the opinion of the Court, is admissible. The participation of a population, traditionally marginalized from decisionmaking powers in the government's education system, is a key factor in achieving the optimum integration of a society and the respect for and perpetuation of its valuable cultural contribution. One way of ensuring that education will not become an area of discrimination in the future could be, as the law intends, that representatives of the black population participate in district education boards together with representatives of other groups and sectors of society and the state. Black participation in this institution promotes social integration and cultural pluralism, which are the objectives of the educational law.

Unfortunately, Colombian history has been based on the violent confiscation of land from native peoples and the mandatory expatriation of black people from Africa, who were uprooted from their own land to work on foreign soil. It is understood that the admission of the court's criterion would lead to the ancestral communities and the communities of African origin, particularly those trapped in the cities, estates, and haciendas, being deprived of protection.

In fact, in this case, positive discrimination would amount to an acknowledgment of the conditions of social marginalization to which the black population has been subjected and which has had a negative influence on their access to opportunities for economic, social, and cultural development.

Sometimes, however, the discrimination against a particular group is expressed through the invisibility acquired by its members in the eyes of the dominant group. This explains how publicly known issues, such as the black population's presence on the Atlantic coast of the country and its significant contribution to Colombian culture, may be denied.

Decree C-530-1993, Constitutional Court

Right to Life–Protection/Population Density–Control

Because life is the prime concern of humanity's legitimate interests, it is hardly surprising that Decree 2672, issued in 1991, establishes constitutional regulations to the extent that the control of population density has no further aim than to protect life or make life viable. It is a question of survival: the risk that the revised law intends to counteract is lethal, not only for future generations, but also for the present population of the Islands.

Native Population—Cultural Protection/Cultural Heritage/Ethnic Diversity

“The culture of the indigenous population of the islands is different from the culture of the rest of Colombians, particularly in terms of language, religion, and customs. This gives natives of the islands a certain identity. This diversity is acknowledged and protected by the state and contributes to the nation's cultural wealth. The increase in the migration of nonresident Colombians and foreigners to the islands has been posing a threat to the cultural identity of the islands' established inhabitants to such an extent that in San Andrés, for example, they are no longer the majority population, and the conservation of the native cultural heritage, which is also the heritage of the nation as a whole, is in jeopardy.”

Environmental Protection

The excessive increase in the population exerts pressure on the natural resources of the islands. Demand for these resources is greater than supply, and this excess demand is triggering an irreversible process of deterioration of the ecosystem. This process not only lowers the standard of living of the present population, but above all, seriously threatens the survival of future generations. In other words, the ecosystem—fragile in itself—does not belong exclusively to the present population. There is a constitutional duty to protect the environment for future generations to inherit a livable world, and livable implies certain standards of living.

Hence Gallardo contends that “the application of provisions on the control of population density is essential if we wish to guarantee the preservation of the natural wealth of our islands and the survival of a community whose culture and ethnic presence enhance the heritage of the Colombian nation.” (See

Gallardo Archbold, Julio E. 1993. "San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina. Law 47 of 1993 from the Congress of Cucuta to the Constitution of 1991." Bogotá.)

The legal aspect of the study in question is basically as follows: When we compare the limitations of the rights of foreigners and of nonresident Colombians to enter, travel, reside, work, study, vote, and be elected under conditions of equality in the Province of the San Andrés Archipelago, Providencia, and Santa Catalina, which are set forth in Decree 2762 of 1991, with the objectives of ensuring special protection for human survival, the native community, and the environment, authorized by Article 310 of the Constitution, do we find that the methods set forth in the decree are of such a nature or magnitude as to outweigh their aims, so that the regulation becomes contrary to the Constitution?

Survival in a Dignified Framework

The new philosophy of the 1991 Constitution is not only to defend human life, as noted in the previous paragraph, but also to ensure the quality of life—a dignified life. This is stipulated in the first article of the Constitution, which says that the Colombian state is based on respect for human dignity. Also, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights begins its preamble with the words: "Whereas liberty, justice and peace in the world are based on the acknowledgment of the intrinsic dignity and of the equal and irrevocable rights of all mankind . . .," and the first article states, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights . . ." Therefore, the 1991 Constitution sees the value of the insoluble dignity of the human being as an essential, ontological aim of the state.

It could hardly be otherwise in a social constitutional state. In effect, mere factual survival is to the formal constitutional state as survival with dignity is to the material constitutional state. As for this right, life means much more than mere rhetorical statements. In the social constitutional state, only one kind of life is conceivable—a dignified life, filled with spiritual and material content.

These ideas, dear to this society, adapt in this specific case to the fact that the human dignity of the individuals living on the islands is threatened by population density. In other words, the population's high density not only poses a threat to their survival but also flagrantly jeopardizes dignified life. Thus, although this generation of inhabitants of the archipelago is not actually dying as a result of population density—something that cannot be ensured for future generations—it is a fact that they no longer have the same quality of life as the previous generation. Life is threatened, degraded, altered, diminished, impoverished, and contaminated. Population density, therefore, poses a threat to dignity.

Protection of the original inhabitants

In articles 7 and 8 of the Constitution the state recognizes and commits to protect ethnic and cultural diversity and the cultural and environmental riches of the country. This is consistent with Article 301, previously cited, which makes provisions for protection of the islands. In light of the unique ethnic and cultural identity of the islands' long-established black population, and the threat to their cultural heritage, identity, and environment posed by outsiders, this population clearly merits protection under these provisions.

Environmental protection and the ecological character of property

Article 79 of the Constitution states that all people have the right to enjoy a healthy environment, and guarantees the participation of the community in decisions that affect it.

It is the state's duty to protect the diversity and integrity of the environment, conserve areas of special ecological importance, and promote education to help achieve these goals.

As mentioned before, Decree 2762 affirms that "the natural resources of the archipelago are at risk, and therefore immediate measures must be taken to prevent irreversible damage to the ecosystem." On this basis, Part (c) of Article 26 of the Decree bestows on the Managing Board of the Office for Control of Circulation and Residence (OCRE) responsibility for the "preservation, defense, and rescue of the natural resources of the Archipelago."

Since there is such a clear relationship between the growing population pressures and the cultural and environmental threat, these revised rules aimed at protecting the archipelago are considered to be in complete harmony with the intent of the constitutional provisions.

With reference to property, Article 58 states that property has "an inherent ecological function." The article also adds that in the event of conflict, "private interest should yield to public or social interest." This provision agrees with Article 95.8 of the Constitution, which stipulates that "exercising of the rights and freedom acknowledged by this Constitution implies responsibilities . . . the individual and citizen has the duty to . . . protect the country's cultural and natural resources and to safeguard the preservation of a healthy environment." In fact, compliance with the "social duties of the state and of the individuals" has already been stipulated in Article 2 of the Constitution as one of the essential aims of the state. Thus, nonresident individuals on the archipelago who have inherited land on the islands must withstand the temporary limitations set forth in the decree to enjoy permanent ownership, precisely because of this need to protect the ecology. Hence the constitutionality of the ruling.

Decree C-086 of 1994, Constitutional Court

Special Treatment for the Province of the San Andrés Archipelago, Providencia, and Santa Catalina

The National Constitution confers special treatment on the archipelago and its people to preserve their cultural, religious, and linguistic aspects and their capacity and right to forge their destiny as part of Colombia and to improve their living conditions.

In summary, the Constituent Assembly of 1991 was aware of the importance of the archipelago and of the dangers threatening Colombian sovereignty over it. This explains the reasons behind the present political attitude toward the defense of that sovereignty, acknowledging the following facts: (a) the existence of an ethnic group made up of the descendents of the early island dwellers, (b) the limitations imposed by the territory and the natural resources on the growth of the population, and (c) the capacity and the right of the islanders to determine their destiny as part of Colombia and to improve their living conditions.

The native population of San Andrés and Providencia is a well-defined ethnic group, as evidenced by their physical appearance, their language, and their largely Protestant beliefs. To deny such definition on the grounds that the islands were inhabited by people of different racial origins is a very poor argument because it is well known that no pure races exist.

With reference to civil servants, it is a minimum requirement that they should at least speak the language of the country they are working in. It would be a violation of the Constitution to force the islanders to abandon the use of their own language, which is part of their cultural heritage.

Council of State, Civil Service Section

Bogotá, May 13, 1996. Reference: Amendment of the draft decree to regulate Article 40 of Law 70 of 1993, on black communities.

Law 70 of 1993 was promulgated to recognize the right to collective property of the black communities that have been occupying vacant lands in the rural areas along the rivers of the Pacific basin, as well as to establish mechanisms for protection of the cultural identity and rights of the black communities in Colombia as an ethnic group, and to promote their economic and social development.

The intention of the law is therefore to guarantee that the black communities enjoy a genuinely fair and real situation of equality relative to the rest of Colombian society.

In this regard, the intent of the law on black communities is the same as that reflected in the Constitution. The Constitution recognizes the individual's inalienable rights without any discrimination whatsoever (Article 5) and protects the ethnical and cultural diversity of the Colombian nation (Article 7).

This vitally important mission is assigned to the political organization of society. The state shall provide conditions to make equality real and meaningful, and shall take necessary steps to favor groups that are victims of discrimination or neglect.

This means that the right to equality, recognized in Article 13 of the Constitution, cannot remain an abstract principle. It must be real and meaningful, as the only way of improving the life of the victims of discrimination or neglect.

Considerations concerning the draft regulatory decree: In the draft decree, which contains 20 articles, the national government cites authority in Article 40 of Law 70 of 1993 to establish the Special Fund for Nonreimbursable Credits "for Afro-Colombian students of limited economic resources" and provides for its funding and management.

The Ministry of the Treasury has objected to the draft, citing rulings of the Constitutional Court considering it unconstitutional

Specifically with regard to the policy favoring development in ethnic communities that have been victims of discrimination or neglect, the Constitution (Article 13) not only recognizes the principle of equality of opportunity but also stipulates preferential treatment, because in its absence that right could become nullified in reality.

In ruling T-288/95, the Constitutional Court stated:

- Equality of opportunity and most favorable treatment (Constitution, Article 13) are fundamental rights, to be applied immediately (Constitution, Article 85), recognized for groups that have been victims of discrimination or neglect and for those who are at risk because of their economic, physical, or mental conditions.
- The right to equality of opportunity supersedes the formal concept of equality before the law. It takes into account the natural or social differences as relevant factors for determining the treatment to which specific individuals or groups are entitled by right.

- Equality of opportunity is therefore a basic right for “equipping” disadvantaged persons for the full enjoyment of their rights.

The regulatory decree is also supported by the National Development Plan, adopted by Law 188 of 1995. In Article 20, Section 6.8, it provides for pursuit of social and institutional development of the “Indian and Afro-Colombian grassroots communities,” recognizing the ethnic and cultural diversity of the population of Colombia.

The Civil Service Section of the Council of State therefore considers that the draft decree for regulating Article 40 of Law 70 of 1993 is legally viable, and with the modifications suggested, along with others that may be considered useful or necessary, it will be a source of renewal for an ethnic group that needs access to technical, technological, and university education as a solid foundation for its progress.

Situation of the Afro-Colombian Community

On comparing the true condition of Colombia’s population of African descent with the laws, the resolutions adopted by the high courts, and the theoretical pronouncements of the national government, the first impression is one of great contrast. On one hand, it is the poorest community of all: its mortality and morbidity rates are the highest in the country, its educational levels are the lowest, and its coverage of public services is less than the coverage provided in the rest of the country. On the other hand, the legislation dealing with its acknowledgment and protection is so advanced that we may positively state that it would be the envy of those countries most interested in guaranteeing the acknowledgment and protection of diversity.

How can we explain this contrast between protectionist laws and theoretical policies of the government in favor of the Afro-Colombian community, on the one hand, and the community’s real situation of increasing poverty and invisibility on the other? I believe it is due to two factors: first, the widespread practice of issuing laws and not enforcing them, and, second, the phenomenon of the existing latent discrimination in our nation.

In effect, it is well known and openly accepted that in Colombia there are many rules and regulations (a popular saying is “*Aquí hay leyes para todo*”—“There’s a law for everything here”) that are not enforced. The law says that the state shall guarantee the use of the electromagnetic spectrum and access to telecommunications for ethnic groups, but this is not fulfilled; the law orders the creation of a curriculum of Afro-Colombian studies in all the country’s universities, but this is not enforced. The law indicates that bilingual education should be imparted in San Andrés, and this is not complied with. The Colombian state fails to enforce more than 90 percent of the laws on Afro-Colombian communities, and the few that are enforced are based on not encumbering the interests of the reigning power structure, to the detriment of the weak ethnic group.

The second factor, which is at the same time a cause of the first, is the existing latent discrimination. This is more limiting and degrading than the blatant discrimination practiced in other countries because the circumstances or actions to be counteracted are concealed, not accepted. The power structures, both public and private, that practice such discrimination fail to see their actions or omissions as being discriminatory, and whenever anyone attempts to question them they flaunt the legal and constitutional precepts of equality, even though the real situation is different.

When someone demands justice and recognition for ethnic groups in terms of material equality, that person is singled out and accused of promoting discrimination. That is because in Colombia, according to the law, we are all equal, and black people may become ministers or magistrates in the high courts or government representatives in multilateral organizations. However, in practice, each case depends largely on personal merits, constituting a perfect excuse for authorities to refuse to appoint black people as cabinet ministers or to the high courts, let alone to multilateral organizations. This concealed discrimination is accompanied by the intention to make the Afro-Colombian community invisible to Colombians and foreigners.

Despite the constitutional and legal provisions and the resolutions issued by the high courts, the Colombian state does not have a policy of positive actions in favor of true equality for Afro-Colombian ethnic groups.

In its third report, the Organization of American States (OAS) Inter-American Commission on Human Rights states that “the Afro-Colombians have been the victims of racial discrimination and that discrimination continues to exist. However, it is fair to acknowledge that this discrimination is not a deliberate State policy.”

Obviously, within the concealed or latent discrimination system, it is often very difficult to accuse the state of actions and omissions as part of a discriminatory policy. Nevertheless there are cases—in addition to the obvious one of nonrepresentation of the Afro-Colombian community in ministerial positions, the diplomatic service, and multilateral organizations—that should be pointed out. Such is the case of Article 18 of Law 70 of 1993, which authorizes the state authority to directly revoke resolutions awarding land to black communities, waiving the express written consent of the respective landowner. Thus contradicted is the universal principle of administrative law, accepted in Colombia for all other cases, that states that to directly revoke an administrative act that affects a private interest, the express authorization of the affected party is required.

Article 310 of the National Constitution stipulates that to protect the cultural identity and natural resources of the archipelago of San Andrés, laws may be issued that will require the absolute majority of the members of each chamber to be passed. It seems excessive that guaranteeing the survival of a minority ethnic group requires a qualified majority to pass a law, thus making any legal initiative raised for this purpose more difficult and complex to process.

Conclusions

1. The Colombian Constitution guarantees the protection of the rights of ethnic groups.
2. Colombian legislation for the protection and guarantee of the rights of the Afro-Colombian communities has progressed, becoming one of the most modern bodies of laws in Latin America.
3. To a large extent, neither the constitutional nor the legal provisions are complied with.
4. The resolutions adopted by the high courts have, to date, been largely in accordance with the spirit of the National Constitution.
5. Theoretical state policies acknowledge and protect the rights of the Afro-Colombians and their search for economic and social development. However, in practice these policies are nonexistent.
6. Discrimination—in some cases open discrimination, but more often concealed discrimination—against the community of African descent exists in the highest decisionmaking spheres of the Colombian government.

7. There is a great weakness in the Afro-Colombian community that prevents it from demanding due compliance with the various laws that protect it; this is compounded by the tendency of the majority of civil servants at all levels of the Colombian state not to apply these protectionist laws.
8. The power structures of the Colombian nation are unwilling to relinquish part of their decisionmaking powers or their economic interests to provide Afro-Colombian ethnic groups with opportunities for true equality. Measures must therefore be taken to promote the internal strengthening of the black community, empowering them to demand their rights, as well as the strengthening of international cooperation to force the Colombian state to comply with its internal legislation as well as with the international legislation to which it subscribes.

Discrimination Against Afro-Peruvian Groups (Legal Framework)

Dr. Jorge Ramirez Reyna (Peru)

Black Association for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights (ASONEDH)

Discrimination against ethnic Andean, Amazonian, and Afro-Peruvian groups is closely associated with racism, prejudice, and cultural, linguistic, and ethnic differences.

In this country, certain international agreements and treaties have been signed that, had they been enforced, would have helped to overcome the problem. These include the International Pact on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (signed on August 11, 1977, and ratified on April 28, 1978); the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (signed on August 11, 1977, and ratified on April 28, 1978); the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (signed on July 24, 1966, and ratified on September 29, 1971), etc.

Within this international legal framework, it is the Peruvian government's obligation to implement the policies needed to overcome the extreme poverty and social exclusion suffered by some of the different social groups that make up our country. However, little progress has been made in issuing laws to effectively overcome this problem.

Andean culture comprises a diversity of regional expressions, as does the culture of the peoples of Amazonia. In the case of black people, because of their arbitrary insertion into Peruvian society under subhuman conditions, their cultural development followed a trend away from their ancestral roots. Nevertheless they have developed a unique cultural identity derived from their connection to the original peoples brought from Africa, which is why they are referred to as Afro-Peruvians.

This diversity has been a stumbling block for the government when it comes to policy implementation, and is a structural rather than a recent phenomenon. Racial discrimination is a component of this problem, and provides the foundation for analysis of the social exclusion and marginalization that characterize these populations. However, the state has always either concealed, avoided, or disregarded this issue, and furthermore, the population appears to be unaware of how it prevents them from gaining access to and exercising their human rights.

Racial discrimination is derived from the attribution of certain psychosocial and cultural qualities to a person based on their physical traits, and particularly their skin color. This concept, inherited from our colonial era, found further support in the theories of Western anthropologists who maintained that the white race was superior. These concepts are integrally linked to the notion of race, which is a cultural concept without biological foundation..

As a Western theory, racism implies the inferiority of certain groups because of the color of their skin and because of their traditional—and consequently “backward”—cultures. This leads to the creation of stereotypes that attribute to ethnic groups different frameworks of behavioral conduct and levels of human potential. According to this logic, a person's physical features become a subjective x-ray upon which that person is valued.

Because the distinct facial features of certain ethnic groups—such as the black, Andean, and Amazonian populations—are subject to racial discrimination, it is precisely these groups that find themselves in an extremely vulnerable position. They suffer from limited access to resources and services, unequal opportunities in employment, education, economic development, and political power, and unfair treatment in a range of other situations. This discrimination is not an exception but rather a systematic reality in which certain groups within Peruvian society have been deprived of decisionmaking power, respect, and human rights, thus placing them at a disadvantage and in a vulnerable position compared with groups who have not been similarly held back.

In this case, discrimination consists of a number of interdependent variables: racism and cultural, linguistic, and ethnic diversity on the one hand, and economic, social, and gender conditions on the other. There is, therefore, a wide range of discriminatory situations, each acquiring a specific form, making this an across-the-board dilemma. The problem lies in trying to approach these as unrelated variables.

Recognizing this discrimination helps us understand the origin of attempts to destroy cultural diversity through standardized educational policies and development projects that emphasize Western technology over ancestral cultivation and soil management practices. In economic terms this destruction is carried out through the adoption of neoliberal open-market practices and land policies that encourage foreign investment—either in the countryside, to the detriment of peasant communities, or in the forests to permit large international companies to exploit oil. In either case the indigenous peoples' ancestral property rights are damaged, which contributes even more to their vulnerability.

The harmful effects of discrimination include loss of self-esteem and identity on the part of both individuals and ethnic groups, which turns the groups themselves into agents of their own disintegration. From an economic and social point of view, they are deprived of access to equal and fair development opportunities based on their own beliefs or way of thinking. Consequently, their needs are never met, creating an atmosphere of frustration and violence.

From an institutional point of view, discrimination gives rise to hierarchy, creating a situation of unequal access to decisionmaking power and participation in society. Consequently, the institutional system is based on exclusive privilege rather than on the principles of equality before the law, thus creating a broad category of second-class citizens and preventing the creation of a democratic and constitutional state.

In cultural terms, it promotes intolerance, disrespect for diversity, and belief in racial supremacy, thus giving rise to ethnocentrism and cultural alienation.

As mentioned above, despite the multicultural nature of our country, our society has been characterized by fragmentation. Very little has been done in intercultural terms, that is to say relations on an equal footing based on respect for others and their environment that are therefore symmetrical and democratic in nature.

According to the constitution, all citizens are eligible for election to public office. However, there has never been a case, as occurred in Bolivia, in which a Quechua, Aymara, Afro-Peruvian, or Amazon native has represented his or her respective group in the legislature. Rather, it is patronage, prestige, and economic power that determine who can gain access to such a decisive role in the destiny of the country.

As regards the steps taken by the government against racial discrimination, although Law 26772, issued on April 17, 1997, acknowledged for the first time the existence of racism and discrimination, stating that “job offers and access to means of educational information must not contain any requirements that involve discrimination or the annulment or alteration of equal opportunities or equal treatment” (Article 1), it is clearly inconsistent when it refers to the discrimination that occurs when a person is treated differently without an objective and reasonable explanation, implying that there is no discrimination as long as there is an objective and reasonable explanation (Article 2).

Moving on to another matter, this law makes no reference to the different manifestations of discrimination and their interdependence. Furthermore, it refers to relations within society rather than to the role performed by the state in creating this situation, intentionally or otherwise. The Disadvantage Test, created in Canada in 1989, suggests that “if a person is part of an underprivileged group and can prove there is a distinction based on personal characteristics or on those of the group to which he/she belongs, which is not imposed on others or increases his underprivileged status, then this distinction is discriminatory, whether it is intentional or not.”

Since the beginning of this year the National Institute for the Defense of Competition and the Protection of Intellectual Property (INDECOPI) has been investigating claims that people with specific ethnic characteristics are being denied entry to public places. This is part of a consumer protection policy (INDECOPI issued a press release on the effort in April and has initiated legal actions on the matter), and comes in response to years of pressure by NGOs, the press, and researchers.

The provisions of criminal law are limited to monetary fines imposed on establishments that violate this standard, without solving the serious psychological damage and loss of self-esteem suffered by the people or groups subject to discrimination. There is an urgent need for a body of laws that captures the contributions of the NGOs and other institutions that are studying this issue.

The lack of overall policies aimed at eradicating all types of discrimination is cause for concern. At present there are only sectoral measures that are not designed to resolve the problem, but rather to consider specific cases (such as the claims addressed by INDECOPI). We therefore feel that an organization should be created that is exclusively devoted to addressing this problem as a structural phenomenon, and that can consolidate the proposals and initiatives of all the institutions and organizations involved in this subject.

The almost complete lack of coordination between state entities and institutions involved in this problem is another concern. There is a pressing need for effective policies to eliminate all forms of discrimination, particularly of a racial nature, to end the equation that: skin color = discrimination = exclusion and marginalization = poverty = unequal access and limited exercise of rights = breakdown of human rights.

Session 2

Civil Society Organizations that Promote Afro–Latin American Interests

Brief Summary of the Policymaking Process of Afro-American Organizations <i>Romero J. Rodríguez (Uruguay)</i>	19
Civil Organizations that Promote the Interests of Afro–Latin Americans: Voices to Break the Silence <i>Celeo Alvarez Casildo (Honduras)</i>	27
Incivility that Makes for Exclusion and Participation that Aims for Inclusion: An Afro-Venezuelan Perspective <i>Jesús Chucho García (Venezuela)</i>	33

Brief Summary of the Policymaking Process of African-American Organizations

Romero J. Rodríguez (Uruguay)

Director General, Afro World (Mundo Afro) Organizations

As the new millennium begins, a discussion has been opened that many of us wish had been started long ago: creating an international vision of the importance of African-American organizations in proposals for the overall development of our communities. The purpose of this brief study is to evaluate the significant gains made by the institutions themselves through their seriousness, professionalism, and above all, their commitment to and confidence in the promise of their own communities.

To recount the history of our organizations is to speak of dreams and projects, important community-based studies, and a continual search for solutions to the problems they have faced and the failures they have suffered.

It is to bear witness to the daily struggle against racism and see the sadness caused when communities are divided by foreign agents that try to meddle with indigenous knowledge and proposals.

To describe these organizations is to reaffirm that they are the only instruments that African-American people can genuinely all their own, and that they also are the ones truly responsible for the success, failure, and reach of their projects.

Background

The history of our organizations and movements dates back to the forced arrival of our ancestors and their struggle for freedom, which was simply the effort to maintain a way of life based on the teachings and culture of our places of origin. The struggle for freedom often is seen as an abstract vision that cannot be realized, thus concealing the fact that behind those struggles were constant efforts to establish well-defined and concrete political or social projects.

Today we are left with the teachings of Zumbi, with his *Quilombo* Republic of Palmares-Brazil; of King Michael the African, organizer of the *Cumbe* in Venezuela; of Benko Bioho, leader of the heroic and resistant *Palenque* in San Basilio, Colombia; of Cuffe, leader of the revolutions in Suriname; of Captain Cudgoe of Jamaica; and the appeals made by Dessalines from the new nation of Haiti, urging the African diaspora to help consolidate the independence process of the first free and sovereign country in the Americas. These actions were supported by journals and newspapers promoted by black intellectuals. Let us recall the important editorials in *The Gold Coast Nation* requesting the cooperation of “all members of the African community in any part of the world,” sending out messages of solidarity and cooperation that reached slave enclosures, fugitive slave towns, and the Garifuna population.

As we know, these endeavors by the black population are not a new phenomenon, and it is surprising that they are not more widely known. Indeed there has never been a time when the struggle for a

dignified community life based on their own cultural parameters did not translate into concrete projects reflecting the wishes of the black community.

Let us quickly recall a few examples from the first decades of the 20th century:

- The Universal Negro Improvement Association, led by Marcus Garvey during the 1920s, formed more than 100 subsidiaries throughout the Americas, 52 of them in Cuba and some in South America (Brazil, Ecuador, Venezuela, etc.), with concrete proposals that were backed by the communities.
- The case of the young black men unjustly condemned to death in Scottsboro, Alabama (United States) during the 1930s prompted the creation of support committees throughout the Americas, giving rise to a strong current of opinion.
- The Peace and Antiwar Committees and committees for solidarity with Ethiopia were solidarity action organizations set up by black communities.
- The principles of Booker T. Washington and George Washington Carver gave rise to the establishment of trade schools such as the one created in Tuskegee, Alabama (United States).

Continental Ties

Congresses of the African Diaspora and Their Repercussions in Latin America

While important events were occurring on a worldwide scale, the black communities in the Americas were becoming aware of the results of such actions.

Pan-Africanism began to take shape as a formal movement. The first Pan-African Conference in London (1900) set the path for the 20th century and through to our own time. The ideas and tenacity of Sylvester Williams, a lawyer from Trinidad and Tobago, marked the beginning of the African community's international work in the 20th century.

Beginning with this conference, black intellectuals, and gradually other sectors as well, established a foundation that would organize a series of future congresses. To this day, these congresses form the basis of the African community's ideas regarding development.

The first four meetings were guided by the theories of W.E.B. Du Bois, which were a determining factor in articulating analyses and enabled considerable progress to be made in the global understanding of the new problems and challenges being experienced in the world during that time.

We shall briefly review the main points discussed at these congresses:

- Fifty-seven delegates (the one from Santo Domingo being the only Latin American representative, as far as we know) attended the Pan-African Congress held in Paris in 1919. Among the different issues addressed there, one was of particular importance: addressing the need for people of African descent to create and manage their own capital investment strategies.
- At the 1921 congress, we saw how progress was slowly being made with the idea of development based on the condition of the displaced community. This congress was held in three sessions in Brussels, Paris, and London, where the controlling presence of Marcus Garvey was a determining factor for those opposing Du Bois's ideas. An important

International Pan-African Association was created as a result of this second congress. Its purpose was worldwide improvement of the lives of black people through the creation of policies of economic cooperation and organization.

- The 1923 congress, after a series of complications and relocation from Lisbon to London, undertook the analysis of and search for solutions to the problems of colonial Africa, as well as different visions of the impact of ideas emerging from the Russian Revolution.

The fourth congress (1927), held in New York, can be considered the most important, not only because of the number of delegates attending (207) but also because of the participation of several people from South America. At this congress there was a solidification of factions favoring the ideas of either Du Bois or Garvey. These factions were an important element in the movement's evolution during this period, and of the political theories regarding development of the diaspora.

South and Central American communities had only modest participation in these events. However, activities in every Latin American country confirm that during the first 30 years of the 20th century, there was a constant concern with establishing clear, deep-rooted policies for change at the global level. Studies of and information about these events reached South American communities in only a limited way, as revealed by the events that took place within these communities. Upon the arrival of the information, however, it was quickly embraced and adapted to local circumstances.

Initial steps to establish international instruments for the African diaspora coincided with distressing events such as the rise of fascism in Europe and Italy's invasion of Ethiopia. The blow struck on that sister state gave rise to the first action that had a strong impact on all countries with black communities. From Uruguay to the United States, Peace and Antiwar Committees for the Defense of Ethiopia were formed, echoing the distressing situation in the African continent and denouncing the abuse committed.

The slow process of organizing the African diaspora at the continental level made a giant leap at the fifth congress (1945), which stands out for the participation of African activists who introduced important new lines of thinking. Many of these activists became leading figures in their countries after winning independence.

Jean Price-Mars, a mentor of independence leaders and prominent educator whose theories helped mold leaders such as Aimée Cesaire and Sedar Senghor, made a substantial contribution to the movement during the preindependence era.

Other important figures were George Padmore of the African International Service Bureau, and C.L.R. James, who was responsible for coordinating the campaign to liberate Ethiopia, which included Jomo Kenyatta and other future leaders.

A Pan-African Federation was formed to organize the fifth congress. A formidable committee composed of Peter Abrahams (South Africa), Peter Milliard, Makonnen, Padmore, Nkrumah, Kenyatta, and James carried out the preparations. It is therefore evident that the fifth congress of the African diaspora was the forerunner of the independence gained by various African nations in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

The visions of development introduced at the fifth congress included those of Nkrumah, "A Unique and Indivisible Africa," Kenyatta and his proposals, and the socialist concept of "Ujamaa," each with their

own cultural components. Following this trend, Senghor and others also created and implemented their proposals.

The world changed substantially between 1945 and 1974, the year the Sixth Congress was held. Independence had become a reality in Africa, the world's political balance had shifted, and the Vietnam War was ending with the defeat of the United States.

The African diaspora had been reorganized within this new context, and the founders of the sixth congress were well aware of this fact. The Organizing Committee chaired by James defined the objectives of the congress, two of which we shall focus on in this study: (a) to develop greater unity between people of African descent in the West and African peoples in Africa, and (b) to develop the capacity of the worldwide African community to meet our own basic needs by ourselves. The main objective was to form independent institutions throughout the world that would implement concrete programs to deal with our needs.

For example, the framework of the program included a Science and Technology Center, an Association of Scientists and Technicians, a Health and Food Center, and an Information Center. To this end, five regions were instituted: Continental Africa, the Caribbean and South America, North America, Europe, and the Pacific.

These facts form the basis of our arguments because we believe it is impossible to discuss development policies without taking into account this background of joint planning and activities that were discussed within the diaspora at either a universal, regional, or continental level.

This is not the time to discuss or evaluate whether these events were successful or not. What we may emphasize is that, successful or not, they are a part of our reality and of our interpretations.

Continental African-American Process (South America)

After the experiences of the Black Fronts during the 1930s, solidarity activities and the peace and antiwar efforts in the 1940s, and the work of researchers and university students during the 1950s and 1960s (Carvalho Netto, Roger Bastides, Frantz Fanon, etc.), the theories of Aimée Cesaire and Senghor reached our communities. The impact of the struggle for civil rights in the United States and the decisive role played by the black community—which included figures of black pride such as Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Angela Davis, and the literature and thoughts of James Baldwin—coupled with the attention given to the independence process in Africa, form the context in which black organizations in the Americas endured despite the climate of fear and instability in the region (years in which most South American countries were governed by dictatorships). There was even a certain level of coordination between communities of different countries, as well as modest plans for development and interchange between them.

In 1997 the First Congress on Black Culture in the Americas was organized by the Cultural Association of Black Peruvian Youths, the Afro-Colombian Studies Center, and the Colombian Foundation for Folklore Research. Together they planned this important event, which followed in the footsteps of the Pan-African Congresses. To the present day this first black congress of the Americas, convened during a period of dictatorships, stands as an important part of the broader convergence and cooperation among black communities in the Americas. The preparatory meeting for the Congress was held in Cartagena, Colombia, in December 1976, and the Plenary Assembly met in Cali, Colombia, in August

1977. The Congress was attended by more than 200 delegates from all over the Americas as well as by representatives from Africa. At this assembly, Manuel Zapata Olivella was elected chairman of the First Congress, and Panama was chosen as the site for the Second Congress.

This Second Congress took place in March 1980, organized by the Afro-Panamanian Studies Center and the Traditional Heritage unit of the Panamanian government's National Cultural Institute. Gerardo Maloney chaired the event.

At the Plenary Assembly, Brazil was selected as the site for the Third Congress, which was held in São Paulo on August 21, 1982, and was chaired by Abdias do Nascimento.

All of these meetings were based on the beliefs of one of the greatest black activists in South America, the Afro-Brazilian Abdias do Nascimento, along with the Afro-Colombian Zapatalla de Olivella. They are the ones most responsible for the progress and development of the peoples they represent with such dignity—the black movements in Colombia and Brazil, the two largest countries in South America.

These congresses left not only an experience of continentwide expression, but also proposals and methodologies that today are a basic part of the various bodies of scholarly works that represent the black movement in South America.

At the beginning of the 1990s the new rules imposed in our countries produced a need to develop common methods and projects. The creation of Mercosur (Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay) led the black communities in these countries to plan their own activities.

On May 6, 1990, the First Meeting of Black Entities of the four Mercosur countries was held in Montevideo, Uruguay, and the initial exchange protocols between organizations were signed.

The campaign marking the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America by the Spanish was an insult to black and native communities, and an event they could not celebrate. Throughout Latin America networks were created to organize countercelebrations, and from its beginnings in Central America the Black, Native and Popular Resistance Campaign expanded throughout the continent. This (together with community actions) was the first mobilization on a continental scale in the final years of the 20th century.

The important and powerful Catholic Church held an Assembly of God's People in Quito, Ecuador, attended by all the ecumenical congregations of our communities.

Continental Network of African-American Organizations

In December 1994 more than 130 delegates met in Montevideo, Uruguay. They represented more than 50 organizations and institutions working on behalf of the black population, and came from almost all the countries in the hemisphere.

This event, the "First Continental Seminar on Racism and Xenophobia, Development Program for African-Americans," reached the conclusion that it was both essential and urgent to create a forum such as the Network of African-American Organizations. This was built from within the core of the African community in the Americas, in response to the need to reunite these people who, for many reasons, still remain divided.

The colonialist strategy of dividing in order to control, based on a racist and imperialist concept of dominion and exploitation of human by human, had the most negative impact on African-American people, causing their atomization in geographic terms and, unfortunately, in conceptual terms as well.

As we approach the 21st century, it is imperative that we renew efforts to ensure that the more than 150 million black people in this continent find their own ways to end these divisions and create new means of forging their own destiny. To this end it is essential that these strategies:

1. Are designed by the black people themselves.
2. Encompass the entire spectrum of African communities in the Americas and command sufficient consensus to stand the test of time.
3. Are flexible enough to adapt to the different societies in which black people have come to live.

The Network of African-American Organizations proposal meets all these requirements.

The network structure is based on commonly used regional groupings: the Andes, the Southern Cone, the Caribbean, North America, and Central America. In the Central America region, the network was based on the Central American Black Organization (ONECA), with headquarters in La Ceiba, Honduras. ONECA is organizing a Development Summit for the Peoples of the Diaspora, to be held in November 2000.

The potential for furthering regional collaboration and joint policies is reflected in accords such as the binational agreement between the black communities of Colombia and Ecuador. This process has not only heightened awareness of commonalities between the two groups, but also provided the opportunity to fashion a regional development plan managed by the black organizations themselves.

The already established collaboration within the Southern Cone has made possible not only the inauguration of the previously mentioned center in Montevideo, but also the technical cooperation with the *Camba Cua* Afro-Paraguayan communities for construction of a community housing complex (300 units) after a struggle to regain legitimate title to their lands.

In Argentina, support was provided to the largest black documentation center in the country, owned by the Indo-Afro-Argentine House in the city of Santa Fe. In addition there is a project to recover and preserve Afro-Argentine history by establishing the House for Afro-Argentines in conjunction with the Argentine government. This project is being implemented by black institutions and the Black People's Defense Council.

The creation of a Regional Development Fund is a project implemented by Afro World of Uruguay and Geledés of Brazil, with a view to becoming the first regional development bank.

The Network is now operating a Higher Institute of Leadership Training, at which leaders of different Afro-American organizations can convene once a year and receive training.

Network of Afro-Caribbean and Afro-Latin American Women

The Network of Afro-Caribbean and Afro-Latin American Women was established at the First Meeting of Black Women, held in the Dominican Republic in 1992.

The Second Meeting took place in San Jose, Costa Rica, in December 1996, with the participation of 125 women activists.

The objectives of the Women's Network include promoting the consolidation of a wide-ranging movement that incorporates ethnic, racial, and gender perspectives; identifying the socioeconomic, political, and cultural circumstances that make black women subject to discrimination and subordination; influencing state entities involved in the design and implementation of public policies; and making every effort to ensure the enforcement of international agreements that directly benefit black women in Latin America and the Caribbean.

This is an autonomous entity, established in solidarity with movements that are struggling to gain a better standard of living and respect for diversity and human rights, promoting integrated development programs for women, and struggling against the neoliberalism that produces racial and social exclusion and the feminization of poverty.

The Network works with subregional coordination teams and national committees in each country, under the umbrella of a General Assembly and a General Coordination Team. Regional coordination takes place on a rotating basis, thus ensuring the active participation of all members of the network.

Other Networks

Other networks and coordinating units also operate within the various black communities. They share similar goals but use different methods, responding either to ecclesiastic organizations, political or business groups, or other sectors representing a wide range of interests. For example:

- A communications project through which important ecumenical sectors have contributed to a network called "Sister."
- The Network of Pastoral Agents, which played a key role in the organization of the previously mentioned Assembly of God's People in Quito, Ecuador, at which the ecumenical congregation of our own communities set out their plans and actions.
- Coordination work related to Afro-religious cults, such as the important but now virtually nonexistent Afrobras.
- Afro-America XXI, responsible for a highly polemic study, which instead of helping to reach a consensus and carry out joint actions, triggered crusades and violent campaigns against black leaders. These actions were very harmful to the interests of black communities, because they were based on selection criteria between organizational categories, thus encouraging interpretations of discrimination and exclusion.
- Finally, the Global Afro-Latin and Caribbean Initiative (GALCI) is being formed early in the new millennium as an instrument based on in-depth analysis of markets and their repercussions. GALCI is a global, nongovernmental alliance of organizations, networks, universities, and agencies aimed at stabilizing communities of African descendants in the Americas. The alliance, established by community organizations and institutions whose working background and studies are well known within Afro-Latin communities, will help identify issues and propose solutions in collaboration with the communities themselves. This new initiative is part of a strategic leap forward in the effort to deepen development planning, and is innovative in the way that it links communities with the multilateral organizations, universities, and other entities that, in the modern world, have become an integral part of the African diaspora's reality.

Conclusions

We have briefly examined the road taken by black communities, which have always played a historical role, both under dictatorships and democracies, in the struggle against exclusion and in favor of democratic ideals. It truly has been a struggle for equality in an unequal society.

Under these circumstances, the black community has created projects, sought consensus, established alliances, and set policies, always interpreting the historical moment, from the days of colonialism and independence, to the recent creation of GALCI as an innovative tool for a globalized world.

To focus on development programs for African-American people, it is necessary to engage in a deeper analysis of the historical and contemporary conditions of their approaches, visions, and plans. Just as we know that economic policies are a substantial part of globalization, we should be aware that the approaches and joint views of the African diaspora have always interacted in all those processes experienced by black people.

In facing the new millennium it is important that policies clearly take into account peoples of African descent—their processes, organizations, structures, ways of conceiving plans, and the beliefs and visions they hold. We must be well aware of the fact that these policies will be thoroughly analyzed, enhanced, and promoted to the extent that they resonate with our communities, and this is achieved only through participation.

Our future is being determined by our own efforts, because history has taught us that any policies not balanced by the proposals of diverse social and cultural sectors will tend to increase economic inequality and perpetuate racism.

Our aim is that this summary provides a quick insight into the history of our peoples' quest for equality and development.

Civil Organizations that Promote the Interests of Afro–Latin Americans: Voices to Break the Silence

Celeo Alvarez Casildo, President,
Organización de Desarrollo Etnico Comunitario (ODECO) and
Central American Black Organization (ONECA)

Introduction

To be invited to the capital city of the most important superpower to speak about the Afro–Latin American situation is amazing enough, but to be sponsored by the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank seems a dream, something incredible is happening here.

This forum coincides with fragments of the speeches given by the president of the IDB, Mr. Enrique Iglesias, who on several occasions has lamented the “invisibility” historically suffered by indigenous and Afro-American peoples, a condition clearly manifested in their low levels of education and health, high unemployment, meager access to credit or economic support, and limited access to land, etc.

It is repeated with ever-greater insistence that in the Americas there are more than 150 million individuals of African descent, immersed in extreme poverty, marginalization, and victimization through racism, discrimination, and xenophobia.

Our greatest concern is to take our destiny into our own hands and thereby facilitate the creation of political, economic, and sociocultural conditions favorable to the human development of our communities.

The struggle against poverty is one of the greatest challenges facing the member countries of the United Nations, and it is also becoming a prime concern of financing agencies. It is understood that poverty is the mother of all social unrest, it is the cause of insecurity, murders, assaults, and rape. Poverty itself is not the cause, but rather the effect of institutionalized corruption, unfair distribution of wealth, and the application of economic policies that promote social polarization between the increasingly few multimillionaires and the many millions of poor and deprived who struggle for their daily survival.

In light of this discouraging reality, there is no alternative but to take urgent measures to promote human welfare, citizen participation in local and national political life, and access to technology, land, loans, economic support, and markets, etc.

One hundred and fifty million individuals are quite an attractive market. In Central America alone there are some 2 million people of African descent, struggling day to day, shoulder to shoulder, to overcome poverty, pleading for a chance to make a dignified living. They are trying to overcome the deplorable repercussions of slavery, the indelible marks of the greatest crime ever committed against mankind.

Afro-Honduran Organizations

The communities of African descent in Honduras can be divided into three cultural groups: Garifunas, Creoles, and Spanish-speaking. The Garifunas arrived in Honduras from the island of St. Vincent on April 12, 1797, the Creoles arrived at the end of the 19th century, and the Spanish speakers are people who lost their native tongue through a gradual process of acculturation.

In 1995 Honduras ratified the International Labour Organization's Convention 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries. This agreement reaffirms the property and territorial rights of indigenous peoples and Afro-Hondurans, and their right to be educated in their mother tongue. However, fulfillment of the Convention's mandate has been slow because there is a lack of political will in the sectors that hold power.

Types of Garifuna Organizations

Traditional Grassroots Organizations

This group includes all the community organizations, governed by Garifuna culture, customs, and traditions, that naturally arise from activities such as boat building, housing, fishing, agriculture, dance lessons, and the meetings of elders.

Community Organizations Regulated by the State

Patronatos (trusteeships) are the most representative organizations in this group, and they are largely influenced by the ruling government's political party. However, in recent years, they have evidenced a greater autonomy when it comes to defending the interests of the community, mainly on the issue of land tenancy. As a special case, this group also includes the Cristales and Rio Negro Community Organization, whose influence on collective land settlement and ownership in Trujillo is important from a legal point of view, and yet in practice the Trujillo Garifunas have less and less land. As a result of political and economic influence, the land has been concentrated in the hands of only a few families. More recently, foreigners have been taking over the land, especially seaside property.

NGOs with Closed Membership

These organizations first began to appear in the 1980s, led by professional, college-educated Garifunas. They develop specific projects with any segment of the Honduran population, Garifuna or otherwise, and are mainly engaged in the sale of professional services to national or international institutions. These organizations have a limited membership that may be composed of family, friends, and/or a specific category of professionals; in other words, they are not open to every member of the Garifuna community who wishes to join.

NGOs with Open Membership

These are the organizations engaged in asserting the political, social, economic, and cultural claims of the community. They admit any individual of the Afro-Honduran community who wishes to join, and are financed by membership fees and monthly dues. Nonprofit private development organizations that share these characteristics can be put into this category.

Religious Organizations

These organizations, which grew out of the many different religions of the Afro-Honduran communities, have gained expertise in implementing development projects and are especially effective at influencing and organizing their followers. Until a few years ago the churches were not engaged in this type of work; however, greater emphasis has been placed on development projects in the wake of Hurricane Mitch. (The Garifuna Catholic Pastoral is the best example of this type of organization.)

It is important to note that before 1986 no Garifuna organization had received direct financing from the government or foreign agencies. All financial support for the communities was handled by intermediaries on the grounds that the Garifunas were incapable of managing projects and money. Some even dared to say that the Garifunas could not even count. One of the most outstanding intermediary organizations was Counselors for Development (ASEPADE).

Central American Black Organization (ONECA)

Understanding the importance of transnational unity, five organizations met in Dangriga, Belize in 1995 to create the Central American Black Organization (ONECA). Today ONECA consists of 16 organizations from 7 different countries:

1. National Garifuna Council, Belize
2. UBAD, Belize
3. National Creole Council, Belize
4. ONEGUA, Guatemala
5. ODECO, Honduras
6. OAGANIC, Nicaragua
7. INSCA, Costa Rica
8. Center for Afro-Costa Rican Women, Costa Rica
9. Caribbean Project Association, Costa Rica
10. Association of Friends of the Ethno-Caribbean Museum of Bocas del Toro, Panama
11. Southern Diaspora Research and Development Center, Panama
12. Afro-Panamanian Women's Network, Panama.
13. Coalition of Organizations of the Garifuna Nation, United States
14. Hondurans Against AIDS, United States
15. Association of Garifuna Women of Guatemala (ASOMUGAGUA), Guatemala
16. Association for the Development and Promotion of the Atlantic Coast (ADEPHCA), Nicaragua.

ONECA, in turn, forms part of the Central American Agricultural Coordination Office, the Advisory Board for the Central American Integration System, the Continental Network of African-American Organizations, and the Caribbean Afro-Latin Global Alliance (AGALAC).

Main Problems

Land Ownership

The Afro-Honduran communities are located in five departments on the Atlantic coast. Because these are considered strategic areas for development of the tourist industry, the government, in complicity with international agencies and organizations, has created mechanisms and taken actions that

dispossess the Afro-Honduran communities and fail to acknowledge their territorial and property rights. As the result of organized struggle by the communities, in 1996 the government signed an agreement promising to title, consolidate, and expand the land of the Garifuna and black communities. So far 35 communities and associated businesses have received title to approximately 31,000 hectares of communal land. The Mesoamerican Biological Corridor crosses the lands of Afro-Honduran and Afro-Central American communities. The corridor is designed to preserve biodiversity, and we believe it should also serve to improve the lives of its human inhabitants. The Afro-Central American communities should, therefore, play a visible role in the overall development of the project.

Education

If we bear in mind that education is the key element in the development of populations, it may be said that our communities have been forgotten as a consequence of the lack of formal education in the different areas of modern knowledge. In most cases, education reaches the primary level only. In some communities there is a basic educational scheme, and to pursue higher studies implies emigrating to the cities. Thus, only very few individuals complete their secondary education, and fewer still reach the university level. All of this has to do with government policies and with the low purchasing power of the Afro-Honduran families, whose underemployment and unemployment levels are as high as 95 percent; that is to say, they survive on traditional activities such as fishing and agriculture. We should also emphasize the need to access technology and ongoing training for an improved and greater use of the natural resources available to improve the standard of living.

Health

Health is another predominant factor in the development of a population. The communities lack the infrastructure required to guarantee access to health services. In most cases, there are only *Cesares* (rural health centers) without doctors or medicine, and therefore the people resort to traditional medicine. In many communities there is no safe drinking water or electricity, nor is there any education program in nutrition and preventive health care. At present there is an alarming increase in the spread of HIV/AIDS, whose real impact is not truly known because of the lack of specific programs on the part of the government and cooperating agencies. The most important thing seems to be the social marketing of the condom. Furthermore, there is an increasing deterioration in child nutrition, which stunts normal growth and causes school dropout, learning difficulties, grade repetition, and educational and developmental problems that work to the detriment of the overall community.

Political Participation

The Declaration of Independence of Central America and Honduras, in its fourth amendment, mentions "the election of one deputy for every 15,000 inhabitants, including the citizens of African origin." Nevertheless, of the 128 deputies in Congress, not one is black; within the Executive branch, only the Treasurer General of the Republic is a member of the Afro-Honduran community. The community is not represented in the Supreme Court of Justice at all. Thus, invisibility continues, not due to good or bad luck, but as a result of poor public policies designed by the people in power.

How to Solve These and Other Problems?

We believe that the problems mentioned may be addressed with the following measures:

1. Development of local capacities
2. Empowerment of the population
3. Institutional development, strengthening, and efficiency.

What Are We Doing? A Glimpse of the Future

1. We are struggling tirelessly to finish the process of awarding property titles, lifting property liens, and expanding our communities.
2. On October 6, 1999, we began the process of self-mapping and the inventory of resources of the Afro-Central American communities as a basis for drafting master development plans of the aforementioned communities.
3. From November 29 to December 2, 2000 the Continental Summit on the Development of Afro-American Communities and Populations will be held with the following objectives: (a) present a development plan including economic, political, social, and cultural aspects for each participating country, (b) share the experiences of the different regions and strengthen the institutional skills of the participants in project management, (c) promote the development activities and proposals of the African-American organizations to governments, cooperation agencies, and other organizations interested in the development of the communities of this region, and (d) establish a continental position to take before the World Conference Against Racism, to be held in South Africa from August to September 2001.
4. On August 15 and 16, 2000, the First National Conference of Honduras Against Exclusion, Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Intolerance is scheduled to take place in Tegucigalpa.
5. The Barauda Training Center is currently in operation, where training is provided in traditional fishing, agriculture, tourism, woodworking, handicrafts, aviculture, business organization, accounting, etc.
6. The Satuye Cultural Center and the Dr. Alfonso Lacayo Sánchez Popular Medical Clinic are currently operated by a professional belonging to the Cuban Medical Brigades. This clinic provides services to the poor people of the city of La Ceiba. Campaigns are also carried out twice a month to provide medical treatment and medication in the communities.
7. We provide tools and training to support traditional fishing associations.
8. We provide support for the defense of land, by means of community organization, mobilization, legal counsel, and the development of agricultural activities and alternative tourism.
9. We support the post-Hurricane Mitch reconstruction process through crop replacement; reforestation; construction of housing, bridges, and cultural centers; replacement of traditional fishing equipment and supplies; and donation of medicines and medical equipment to community health centers.
10. We support the political enfranchisement and visibility of the community of African descent.

What Do We Expect of the World Bank, IDB, and Inter-American Dialogue?

We expect you to support our initiatives for integrated development, such as:

- The Continental Summit on the Development of African-American Communities and Populations
- The Process of Self-Mapping and Inventory of Resources of the African-American Communities and Populations
- The World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Intolerance

- Recognition of the Continental Network of African-American Organizations, the Caribbean Afro-Latin Global Alliance (AGALAC), and the Central American Black Organization (ONECA) as valid representatives of black communities
- Integration of all Afro-Latin American communities as stakeholders in the different development projects and programs
- Making all support to Afro-Latin American communities during the next 20 years in the form of credits rather than loans.

Incivility that Makes for Exclusion and Participation that Aims for Inclusion: An Afro-Venezuelan Perspective

Jesús Chucho García (Venezuela)
Afroamerica Foundation

If the decade of the 1980s was termed the lost decade from the point of view of economic growth for so-called Latin America (which is made up of a population of African, more than “Latin,” descent), the decade of the 1990s was marked by social programs set up as a kind of “band-aid” to alleviate the poverty resulting from the ongoing macroeconomic adjustments and the adverse effects of an irresponsible globalization.

However, the results of that “social program essay,” which, in our opinion, was more a type of social contingency plan, revealed that the 1990s were the decade of poverty. These programs were classified by stages as they were progressively put into practice. They were in most cases drawn up, and apparently continue being drawn up, in the niches of multilateral agencies, in combination with the state’s technobureaucracies, which seem to disregard realities and the most deeply felt needs of the largely excluded sectors of our countries.

“As we look at the world, we have to admit that, so far, the war against poverty has failed,” Gro Harlem Brundtlan, General Director of the World Health Organization (WHO), said recently. The consequences of the structural crisis we are experiencing in our countries have considerably affected “investment in education, nutrition, and health, thereby reducing the human capital of the poor (that is, knowledge, information, and job skills) and preventing them from overcoming their poverty.”

Critical poverty, extreme poverty, absolute poverty, until it reaches the character of indigence, were, and still are, the new indicators of “antiwelfare” and of the incivility projected toward our Afro-South American communities.

We say incivility because this situation has actually created a vicious circle of poverty. It is producing a passive holocaust, as shown by the statistics prepared by organizations such as the Pan-American Health Organization, International Monetary Fund, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank, and Inter-American Development Bank.

It is no secret that the American continent south of the Rio Grande is the most socially and economically unequal territory in the world, and that within this context of inequality the African descendents are the least favored, for historical, racial, and discriminatory reasons.

Ever since colonial times, passing through the modernization processes of our states from the 1930s up to the more recent legal and administrative adjustments, progress on the issue of including Afro communities in the region’s government development plans has been practically nil.

Although the 1990s were the decade of increased poverty, they were also the decade of awareness of Afrodescendents. We experienced a process of recovery based on self-recognition, going from a naïve,

folkloric, endoracist awareness to a critical, self-appropriating awareness as historical agents of our own destinies.

In this context, the community-based organizations began to insert themselves into the greater public arena to make room for themselves in civil society, multilateral agencies, and, above all, constitutional reforms, a process that continues to this day and is a new way of carrying forward their struggle.

Law 70 on black communities in Colombia (1993); Brazil's body of laws and decrees against discrimination and racism (1998); the Autonomy Law in Nicaragua; the antidiscrimination law, Law 26772, in Peru (1977); and the draft Bill on the Afro-Ecuadoran peoples (1999) form part of an unstoppable progressive movement.

In Venezuela, although the Black Women's Union and the Afro-America Foundation together drew up a table of proposals to be included in the new constitution, they did not meet with total success. However, this effort has opened a door for us to continue intensifying the process of legal-political recognition.

In its preamble, the new Venezuelan Constitution states that the refounding of the republic "goes through deep transformations to establish a multiethnic, multicultural society made up of men and women, boys and girls, who are the prime interest of the state, in accordance with the values of nationhood and identity."

Last year, we were invited by the Caribbean Cultural Center of New York to create a work group that we called GALCY (Global Afro-Latin-American Action Group). There we discussed Afro-Latin-American issues with different multilateral organizations and U.S. foundations, obtaining modest funding from the World Bank. We used these funds to organize a meeting of 23 Afro-Venezuelan community-based organizations, and we founded the Network of Afro-Venezuelan Organizations. This is the vehicle used to articulate the common interests of eight Venezuelan states, among them the regions most severely affected by the recent tragedy in December. (This tragedy was the severe flooding that took place in Venezuela several weeks before June, mostly affecting regions populated by the poor and black.) According to the International Red Cross, this tragedy caused 40,000 more deaths than Hurricane Mitch. You may not be aware that 80 percent of the affected population belong to the Afro-Venezuelan communities of the states of Vargas, Miranda (Barlovento), Yaracuy, Sucre, Falcon, and Carabobo.

The Network of Afro-Venezuelan Organizations set up an enlightening series of discussions with the following agenda:

1. Insertion into programs and projects with public organizations in fields where the Afro-Venezuelan issue is already being included in public agendas, such as culture, education, social development, health, and integrated rural development.
2. A relationship of recognition with the missions of the multilateral agencies resident in our country, such as the World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and other international agencies.
3. The demand that our government acknowledge ILO Convention 169, Decision 391, penalizing all forms of racism and provide support for participation in the Universal Convention Against Racism to be held in South Africa in 2001.

4. The design of a training program on sustainable development in order to make a clean break with governmental paternalism (that is, without setting aside the acknowledgment of the state's responsibility) and the provision of donations that have trapped us in a vicious circle.
5. A review of types of leadership and their vices, such as messianism, deification, perpetuation in office, and corruption, which definitely affect organizational growth, vision, mission, and the goals to be attained by the majority of the African-American organizations.
6. The provision of attention to our children and youth, who are regarded as our sustainable hope. A recent United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) survey of 12,000 children in Latin America gave the following results: (a) children do not admire political leaders—only 2 percent of the children surveyed mention them as figures worthy of admiration, (b) the majority identify musicians, entertainers, and sports figures as idols, (c) twenty-seven percent do not recognize any leader at all, and 63 percent of the children have a low level of esteem for their governing leaders, (d) fifty percent of the children claim that their voice is not heard at home nor at school.

Ladies and gentlemen of the World Bank, Inter-American Dialogue, and Inter-American Development Bank, this is the time to propose the redesigning of formulas to overcome poverty in an increasingly unfair and unequal world. The new design should be based on a dialogue, such as the one to which you have invited us, to learn of the deficiencies and voids that are the heartfelt needs of our communities, as expressed by those “without voice or opinion.”

It also means coordinating action strategies among you, as multilateral agencies, as you play an important role in the decisions to be made on our destinies, the governments of the region, and our organizations. To this effect, it will be necessary to hold a technical meeting this year to decide on lines of activity and to identify points of consensus so that the dialogue and the consultation set in motion here may become much more than a mere romantic recollection in the comfortable chairs of the World Bank's Board of Directors.

Session 3

Politics and Race in Latin America

Development, Conflict, and Territory	
<i>Piedad Córdoba Ruiz (Colombia)</i>	39
Politics and Race in Latin America	
<i>Francisco Campbell (Nicaragua)</i>	42

Development, Conflict, and Territory

Piedad Córdoba Ruiz (Colombia)

Senator

The social organization of the Colombian territory is characterized by its disorder, violence, forceful displacement of the population, poverty, illegitimate concentration of assets, and the exploitation of natural resources.

The dynamics of the population's mobilization and land occupation depend on power relationships, a knowledge and appreciation of natural resources, poverty, the depletion of ecosystems, demographic growth, economic cycles by products and regions, the demand in international markets, and the flow of foreign investments. These processes have been accompanied by war and chronic social and political conflicts in which violence was used to displace the rural population, encroaching on their land to take advantage of its rising value.

The relationship among social development, conflict, and territory is based on the development of renewable and nonrenewable natural resources, the exploitation of nature, the impact of infrastructure projects, colonization, the expansion of the agricultural frontier, and disputes over the control of strategic areas. All of these have affected essential ecosystems, such as those in national parks, native reserves, peasant economy areas, and the collective properties of black communities. The conflict was created by a type of development that produces social injustice, exclusion, and poverty while causing the destruction and degradation of the country's biodiversity and natural wealth, without any social or environmental sustainability.

This type of development explains the significant transformation of Colombian ecosystems. More than half of the forest canopy has been lost, as well as virtually all of some ecosystems such as the dry tropical and sub-Andean forests. Deforestation affects 300,000 hectares a year in Colombia. All Andean watercourses are polluted, which reduces their recreational qualities and means that a quarter of the population has no access to drinking water supplies. Fishing and hunting have practically disappeared in Andean areas and in the Magdalena River ecosystem. Forty-five percent of the land is used for purposes other than those for which it was intended, and 10 percent is affected by severe erosion.

The Pacific region, known for its abundance of natural resources and cultural wealth, is being submitted to a constant process of depredation. The Afro-Colombian communities forcefully displaced from the Cacarica basin have reported the illegal deforestation and indiscriminate use of their land by the firm YIRH, which operates in connection with the timber company Maderas de El Darien. This company operates as a result of the negligence of Codechoco, the government entity in charge of awarding felling concessions, and under the armed protection of paramilitary groups.

In other words, as a result of the prevailing violence in Colombia, entire rural communities are being forced to leave their homes and lands. In addition to affecting them in social and cultural terms, these forced displacements have also created the conditions for ulterior negative impacts on the forests.

In the Choco biogeographic area, there is a confluence of important hydroelectric projects, ports, an interoceanic canal, oil pipelines, highways, and railways. The expectation of rising land values caused

by these projects explains the war unleashed against local communities, the forceful displacement to which they have been subjected, the change in land ownership, land use, and the intensification of the conflict.

The interoceanic canal would join the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean, from the mouth of the Atrato River to the Sucio and Truando rivers, with a road and a canal leading to the sea. The construction of a railway, another road, and an oil pipeline running parallel to the interoceanic canal has also been planned. The fruit industries of Uraba, Antioquia will expand to the Acandí and Riosucio territories. Oil exploration and mining developments will begin throughout the Chocó territory. The largest hydroelectric complex in Colombia will be developed in the Cauca River canyon between Pescadero and Ituango by Colombian and foreign investors invited by the Antioquena Power Company. Projects to export energy to Central America and Mexico have been designed. These large projects cover territories that, during the last decade, have been the scene of massacres, human rights violations, and forceful displacements.

Biodiversity has also been the object of promotion and sale by the Colombian government. During two fairs held in Germany and promoted by the Ministry of the Environment, the Samper administration (1994-98) offered the natural wealth of the Chocó biogeographic area to multinational chemical and food companies in Europe. French multinational companies are currently in the area, extracting genetic material and medicinal plants. The European Union is running an important program throughout the Amazon basin to obtain knowledge and to take advantage of its biodiversity. It is also common knowledge that the United States is interested in controlling the Amazon area, given the strategic importance of its biodiversity and the fact that it is the world's main "lung."

Energy resources are also coveted by multinational companies. Part of the surplus obtained from oil exploitation is used to finance the war in Colombia. Illicit crops are another source of funding. The involvement of the British Petroleum Company in financing paramilitary groups in Colombia is well known, as is the pressure exercised by the North American firm Oxy for the approval of Plan Colombia by the U.S. Congress.

The growing centralization in the reprioritizing of the economy, the strengthening of the financial sector, and the priority given to foreign investments are counterproductive because of the negative impact they have on communities and the environment. The civil war has not only generated assassinations and the displacement of communities, it has also represented the destruction of biodiversity and high profits for armed groups, multinational companies, bureaucrats, and private economic groups. Violence is part of business in Colombia. Land control strategies, investments in infrastructure, the management of large development projects, the exploitation of renewable and nonrenewable natural resources, the accumulation promoted by the state and the private sector, and the main demographic processes (in terms of the dead, the forced displacement, and the resettlement prompted by groups in conflict) all take place within the scenario of a civil war.

The main victims of this perverse accumulation are the most vulnerable and historically excluded and exploited members of the population, because the conflict and the expansion of capital coincide with the most poverty-stricken areas. Once again, indigenous people, Afro-Colombians, peasants, tenant farmers, workers, and the inhabitants of small settlements form part of this new chapter of national disgrace.

Based on the experience in the region, the Diocese of Quibdó has made a thorough analysis of violence in Colombia, identifying four structural factors that cause it. Although these refer to one region in the country, they can be applied to the history of social development, the conflict, and the dynamics behind land occupation throughout Colombia:

- The people's abandonment by the state, condemning them to live in inhumane conditions, with the highest illiteracy, illness, death, and unemployment rates.
- Implementation of economic models of exploitation, focused exclusively on mineral, energy, timber, biodiversity, and land resources for extensive farming in this region, compromises the communities' ancestral rights to their territories.
- Implementation of a development model and the planning of infrastructure works totally disregard the population's territorial, social, political, economic, and cultural rights.
- The state's policy on terrorism denies the communities the opportunity to think about and build a more dignified and democratic future for themselves with social and environmental justice.

The dynamics of social, economic, and political conflicts and the resulting armed hostilities and social struggles, forced development, the population's territorial movements, and consolidation of capitalist accumulation processes continue, with a marked regional bias. Toward the end of the 20th century, "globalized regional cities" began to be established in Colombia.

These globalized regional cities disregard traditional natural and administrative political boundaries, urban-rural separations, and the nation-state concept. The powerful city has become an international business center and satellite territories are slaves to international economic circuits and suppliers of local, regional, and national consumer needs, while any surpluses that are generated are accumulated by the capital circulating in the region. Globalized regional cities autonomously determine their development plans, establishing strategic alliances with foreign investors and global markets while competing with other globalized regional cities to control territories, concentrate public resources, and attract foreign investments.

Four globalized regional cities have been established in Colombia: Bogotá, Medellín, Cali, and Barranquilla. Large areas are still not polarized or are the center of dispute between consolidated regional cities, such as in the coffee region (departments of Caldas, Quindío, and Risaralda). Conflicts and forced development will be determined by the logic and processes defined by these globalized regional cities.

In the 21st century, the conflicts that generate forced displacements are both rural and urban, inter- and intraregional, racially and ethnically conscious, and class conscious. New forms of exclusion are added to the chronic violence in the history and future of Colombia.

Politics and Race in Latin America

Francisco Campbell (Nicaragua)

President, Center for Human, Civil, and Autonomous Rights

The racial element has been a constant factor in the policies of Latin American countries since the Spanish conquest. The administrative-political structure of colonial times was based on the assumption that white Europeans were superior to indigenous people and those of African descent, a concept that persisted even after Latin American countries gained political independence. In fact, the newly independent countries proceeded to strengthen the notion that the only legitimate source of nationality in Latin American countries was the white/mestizo, Catholic, and Spanish-speaking race. (Portuguese substitutes for Spanish in the case of Brazil.)

Under this scheme, the people of African descent and the indigenous peoples have been marginalized, banished, and systematically excluded, and are thereby among the poorest in a region that has the highest rate of inequality in the world.

Such an exclusionary vision by the dominant groups in the countries of Latin America permeates all sectors, which, in turn, replicate it. It is present in the political parties, the church, the trade unions, educational programs, the administration of justice, land tenure, and the media. Such a situation prevents any possibility of development, because the exclusions deprive the system of legitimacy, promote instability, and disturb the peace.

To move forward, Latin American countries must first become reconciled with a reality they have always wished to hide or ignore: Latin American countries are eminently multiethnic and multicultural, and their diversity should be capitalized on as a source of creativity and strength.

The first country of Latin America to begin this transformation was Nicaragua, when its 1987 constitution explicitly stated that Nicaragua was a multiethnic and multicultural country. In addition, it proceeded to enact the Autonomy Statute of the Autonomous Regions of Nicaragua's Caribbean Coast in October of that same year.

In the following paragraphs, I wish to share some of our experiences in the difficult task we have adopted of trying to build a multiethnic democracy in our Caribbean region.

The process of autonomy of the Caribbean coast of Nicaragua seeks to build a multiethnic and multicultural democracy. It is based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Political Constitution of the country, which incorporates the Autonomy Statute (Law 26) of the Nicaraguan Caribbean as a basic instrument. It concentrates its efforts on three fundamental, intimately related, complementary areas to begin bridging the gap between theory and practice. These areas are:

1. Education in values that foster respect and appreciation of our ethnic and multicultural diversity.
2. Legal defense of the human rights and autonomy of the coastal population.
3. Participation in public policies that affect the situation of the Autonomous Regions.

A multiethnic democracy must be promoted through the teaching of values such as citizenship, solidarity, mutual respect and understanding, acceptance of each other, democracy, development, and tolerance. One of these values that stands out from the rest is the strengthening of coastal people's identity within the context of a genuine national unity, valuing in their true dimension the different sources (mestizo, indigenous, Afro-Caribbean) that nourish the multiethnic and multicultural Nicaraguan identity. While rejecting all types of discrimination, we must acknowledge the right to the use and preservation of different languages, religions, art, and culture. We must also encourage respect for community property, the preservation of a healthy environment, and the rational and sustained use of natural resources to the benefit of present and future generations.

An autonomous regional educational system, with emphasis on intercultural bilingual education, is indispensable for transmitting or instilling such values. Values should be widely disseminated, stressing the fact that boys, girls, and adolescents have rights.

The following materials, among others, were therefore prepared and published: *Human Rights Handbooks*, the popular version of the Autonomy Statute, and the *Children's Rights Handbook*. These are all translated into four languages: English, Creole, Spanish, and Miskito/Sumo-Mayagna. In addition, teachers working in the Autonomous Regions received up-to-date training and skills enhancement. This experience has given rise to the need to draw up a children's rights curriculum, permeated with the multiethnic and intercultural vision of the Nicaraguan Caribbean, and incorporate it into the subjects of civic formation, social sciences, and natural sciences.

This multiethnic view also sustains programs on gender, civic education, electoral surveillance, environmental study, etc. It emphasizes above all that education in human rights and autonomous rights must go beyond the mere preservation (as a museum exhibit) of the cultural identity of indigenous communities and those of African descent: their very existence should be valued in its full dimension, as it enhances and revitalizes our different sources of creativity, strengthening the bases for rational sustainable development.

Although human and autonomous rights are established in the Constitution of the Republic and in the Autonomy Statute, thereby obtaining a judicial-legal character, it should be emphasized that these rights form part of a classification that goes beyond the legal area. Their full force and effect are achieved through the defense of values and awareness, which in turn is nourished by coastal people's view of the world that gives meaning to the struggle of our indigenous populations and people of African descent.

Thus, priority is given to drawing up a model for administering justice, which in addition to formal law, acknowledges and legitimizes traditional common law as a means for imparting justice in the communities based on the interpretation of their environment and the reaffirmation of their identity.

The Autonomy Statute (Law 28) states that autonomy is "the recognition and effective exercise of economic, political, social, cultural, and environmental rights" by the coastal population; that is, it goes beyond legal acknowledgment or juridical interpretation. For this reason the strategy proposes that, based on education and defense of values, demands are generated that, in turn, should lead to actions that will produce changes in public policies that affect the full enforcement of human rights and the development and deepening of the process of autonomy.

Several achievements in this field are worth mentioning: the campaign to gather more than 10,000 signatures in support of regulation-making for the Autonomy Law, the electoral procedures recommended by the Center for Human, Civil, and Autonomous Rights (CEDEHCA) and approved by the Supreme Electoral Council to hold elections in the Autonomous Regions, and the institutionalization of the idea of autonomy as well as its representation in Geneva for the education and defense of the human rights of minorities. We also took part in setting up a process to establish a framework of regional interest based on strategic guidelines that must obtain the consensus of all coastal sectors.

This Consensus of Regional Interest is of key importance for the development of the Caribbean coast of Nicaragua and should transcend any specific government. Undoubtedly, the promises contained in the Autonomy Statute represent the most deeply felt aspirations of the coastal people and, consequently, constitute the ideal context in which to strengthen that regional vision. CEDEHCA strategy, therefore, is directed toward education, the defense of political activity to instill the conviction in the coastal population that they are the key agents of transformation, actors in the construction of a more just and prosperous Caribbean coast—the Caribbean coast of our dreams.

Finally, based on our experience in the Caribbean coastal region of Nicaragua, we believe that the following actions should be taken to begin eliminating the harmful effect of those exclusionary racial concepts so firmly interwoven in the political, social, and cultural fabric of the Latin American countries:

1. The political parties must make room for and incorporate full recognition of the multiethnic and multicultural nature of the Latin American population in their government plans and proposals. This implies guaranteeing the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and those of African ancestry from the perspective of their own cultures and, at the same time, fighting any kind of racial discrimination, be it blatant or concealed. In addition, the adoption of rules and regulations to prevent and penalize racially discriminatory practices should be promoted.
2. Implementation of multiethnic and intercultural education systems should be supported and promoted based on the construction and revitalization of the identity of the different cultures, thereby strengthening genuine democracy and the solidarity of Latin American countries.
3. Legal systems that acknowledge common law as a legitimate means of imparting and administering justice in Latin American countries should also be promoted, thus respecting the ancestral customs and traditions of the indigenous population and people of African descent.
4. An “American Declaration on the Rights of Peoples of African Descent” should be drafted and issued.
5. Negotiations should be carried out at meetings with representatives of the different Latin American governments, multilateral banks, the United Nations, the Organization of American States, etc., to obtain further technical assistance and financial support for the design and execution of projects and programs with the participation of black communities.
6. The Latin American states should be urged to carry out further research on abuses of the human and civil rights of the communities of African ancestry, and the results should be published. Funds could also be allocated to develop the capacities of human rights organizations that work with black communities, aimed at helping them design and implement their human rights agendas and programs in their countries.
7. The Latin American states should be urged to include specific reference to their population of African descent in their official documents, their formal and informal educational systems, and the whole of their cultural heritage.

Session 4

Race and Poverty in Latin America

The Causes of Black Poverty in Brazil: A Few Reflections	
<i>Antonio Sérgio Alfredo Guimarães (Brazil)</i>	47
Race and Poverty in Latin America: Conceptual Difficulties	
<i>Melissa Nobles (United States)</i>	55
The Comparative Human Relations Initiative	
<i>Lynn Walker Huntley (United States)</i>	62

The Causes of Black Poverty in Brazil: A Few Reflections

Antonio Sérgio Alfredo Guimarães (Brazil)

Department of Sociology

University of São Paulo

Before I begin my short undertaking, I would like to recognize black poverty in Brazil as a fact. All of us, at some point, have seen and read the statistics about poverty and racial inequality in Brazil and accept black poverty as self-evident. However, reviewing some of these statistics helps us to think about its causes in a more concise manner. Let us refer to the data that establish unequivocally that poverty in Brazil affects blacks more intensely.

The Data

First of all, blacks (blacks and mulattos) have less schooling, their per capita family income is less than half that of whites, they have larger families, they are more likely to reside in rural areas, and they have lower occupational status.

Second, there is a great difference in status and income, to the disadvantage of blacks, due to the place of employment (in rural areas, income is almost 50 percent less), which is expressed in the difference between strata 1 and 2, as well as between manual and nonmanual occupations (expressed in the difference between strata 3 and 4). These two facts demonstrate the great importance of education (schooling required for nonmanual jobs) and urban residence in our social hierarchy. But, in all of the occupational strata, or status groups, blacks' income is, on the average, about half of that of whites (49 percent).

Third, sex, besides color, is a large factor in discrimination in terms of income and, therefore, of distribution of poverty. We can see in Table 3, for example, average earnings measured in number of minimum salaries according to gender and race.

Table 1. Selected Socioeconomic Characteristics by Color—Men

<i>Socioeconomic characteristic</i>	<i>Color</i>			<i>Eta2</i>
	<i>White</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>Mulatto</i>	
Years of schooling	6.25	3.81	3.96	0.069
Age at first employment	12.66	12.20	12.01	0.008
Per capita family income	376.57	166.87	163.61	0.040
Size of family	3.70	4.05	4.18	0.018
Urban residence (%)	83.17	77.79	73.19	0.014
Father's years of schooling	2.96	1.33	1.57	0.047
Father's occupational status	8.66	5.58	6.04	0.022

Source: PNAD, 2000; special compilation by Nelson do Valle Silva/IUPER.

Table 2. Income Averages by Occupational Stratum and Color

<i>Occupational stratum</i>	<i>Color</i>			<i>Total</i>
	<i>White</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>Mulatto</i>	
1	315.96	158.12	182.06	239.46
2	577.88	311.75	350.09	173.17
3	644.88	464.99	458.49	567.48
4	1,246.94	717.05	775.80	1,100.78
5	1,877.23	987.32	1,039.20	1,678.49
6	2,919.93	1,805.16	1,940.11	2,772.62
Total	949.66	403.24	432.81	734.18

Source: Silva 2000.

Table 3. Average Earnings by Gender and Race

<i>Race and gender</i>	<i>Average Income (in monthly minimum wages)</i>
White men	6.3
White women	3.6
Black men	2.9
Black women	1.7

Note: Expressed in multiples of the monthly minimum wage (at this writing, about US\$75.00).

Sources: IBGE 1994; Apud: Nascimento and Nascimento 2000.

This fact also can be demonstrated by rates of participation and unemployment by gender and race. Black women participate more in the work force, but are more susceptible to unemployment than white women; and even though black men participate in the labor force in an equal proportion to white men, unemployment among blacks is much greater.

Finally, in what is referred to as absolute poverty, the percentage of blacks is almost twice that of whites (Nascimento and Nascimento 2000).

Table 4. Participation and Unemployment Rates by Gender and Race, São Paulo Metropolitan Area, 1998

<i>Rate</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Black (blacks and mulattos)</i>	<i>Nonblack</i>
Participation			
Male	73.3	73.3	73.4
Female	50.9	53.8	49.5
Unemployment			
Male	18.3	22.7	16.1
Female	21.2	25.0	19.2

Source: INSPIR/DIEESE 1999.

Table 5. Percent of Absolute Poverty by Region and Color, 1998

<i>State/Region</i>	<i>Color</i>		
	<i>White</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>Mulatto</i>
Southeast			
Rio de Janeiro	6.0	12.7	13.8
São Paulo	4.0	12.3	8.7
Minas Gerais/Espírito Santo	19.4	37.7	35.1
South	15.2	23.8	27.9
Northeast	38.5	51.3	49.5
North/Central-West	14.0	26.9	23.2

Note: Absolute poverty includes per capita family income up to one-fourth minimum wage. Special compilations courtesy of Nelson do Valle Silva, IUPERJ.

Source: IBGE/PNAD 1988.

Therefore, we can see that statistically it is a well-established and demonstrated fact that in Brazil poverty affects blacks more than whites. Moreover, it has been demonstrated in sociological literature since the 1950s that in the Brazilian perception, ideology, and discourse, there is an equivalence between black and poor, on one hand, and white and rich, on the other. Anthropologist Thales de Azevedo (1966), for example, in a text written in 1955, studied the social hierarchy in Bahia, Brazil, and concluded that the principal rift occurs between blacks and whites, a rift that is equally referred to in everyday language as being between rich and poor. Comparing the social structures of Bahia and those of the southern United States using the diagram proposed by Lloyd Warner to visualize the relationship between the system of racial castes and the class system, Thales depicted the Brazilian social structure in this manner as shown in Figure 1.

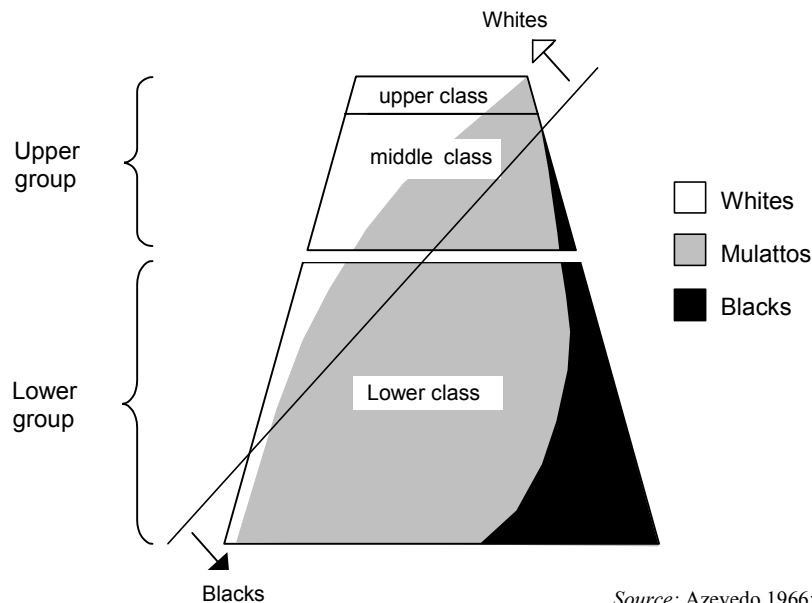
Nevertheless, in Brazil there exists—whether in the popular mentality or in erudite thought; in demographics or sociology, economics or anthropology; between the governors and the governed—a consensus that the poor are black and the rich are white.

What are the causes of black poverty? The normally accepted explanation, for the government as well as for the people, is that the discrepancy between blacks and whites is due to slavery in the past. In this case, it would be an inheritance of the past that would disappear over time. This explanation, although it has a grain of truth, masks some serious problems. First, it absolves present generations of responsibility for the current inequality. Second, it offers an easy excuse for inequality to remain. (“How can we reverse the product of five centuries in the space of five years?” has been the sentence most repeated by the various republican governments, including the current one.) Third, this explanation suggests that the various governments have sought to correct, gradually, these disparities. (Sometimes, it has been more than suggested—this argument is explicit among economists: It is necessary for the economy to grow for social problems to resolve themselves naturally.)

Throughout the years (at least since 1930, in an organized fashion), black leaders, who see the causes of black poverty as lack of opportunity, prejudice, and racial discrimination, have revolted against this conservative explanation. Until a very short time ago (the movement can be dated to 1988), when the actual constitutional charter was written, the black leaders’ arguments were peremptorily rejected: there existed neither discrimination nor racial prejudice—black poverty was simply poverty. This is the discourse of “racial democracy,” a discourse that explains black poverty as being a result of the past, of prejudice, and of class discrimination—that is to say, discrimination against the poor. Currently, a

significant change can be noted: the government, as well as public opinion, recognizes racial discrimination.¹ However, it is my opinion that class discrimination is still considered legitimate and, in the end, leads to the same result for blacks.

Figure 1



Source: Azevedo 1966: p. 39

It is important to call attention to the legitimacy that prejudice and class discrimination against the poor have acquired in Brazil. What makes this legitimate is the recognition of the lack of opportunities for the poor and the prejudice and discrimination of which they are the victims. To a large degree, according to militant blacks, this legitimacy stems precisely from the fact that the poor are black. I feel that these militants are right. If not, we shall see.

First, there is what Hasenbalg and Silva call the “cumulative cycle of disadvantages” for blacks. That is to say, statistics demonstrate that it is not just blacks’ point of departure that is disadvantageous (the inheritance of the past), but in each stage of social competition, in education and in the job market, new points of discrimination add up that increase this disadvantage. Statistics demonstrate that the disadvantage faced by blacks is not simply a consequence of the past, but is amplified in the present through discrimination.

Second, and perhaps more important, is the character of this discrimination. It would be difficult to affirm that in Brazil, as it was in the past for the United States or for South Africa, that the racial factor is a cause of outright discrimination or is directly detectable. By contrast, in Brazil, the racial factor is generally diluted into a series of personal attributes, all of them of an ascribed nature. We can take access to employment as an example: According to the DataFolha (1955), 45 percent of all black Brazilians considered this the main problem faced by the black population in Brazil.

1. At the government level, the Fernando Henrique Cardoso administration publicly recognized, on various occasions, that racism exists in Brazil. At the level of public opinion, a sample poll by DataFolha, which took place in 1995, showed that 89 percent of Brazilians believe that whites are prejudiced against blacks, and 58 percent think the fact that the black population lives in worse conditions than the white population is due to prejudice and discrimination against blacks.

Presently, in the job market, aesthetic and behavioral values, which are translated into the notion of “good appearance,” are the factors most responsible for discrimination against blacks and poor people.² Besides “good appearance,” for young university students in search of employment, another decisive factor is the reputation of their university; degrees from public and free universities, to which admission is more competitive, are much better accepted in the job market than degrees from private universities.³ The problem lies in the fact that the quality of public education has deteriorated to the point that only those who can afford private high schools can hope to enroll in a free public university. It is not only the poorest youths who do not have access to the public universities—but also a large number of black youths who are blessed with more financial resources but do not attend elite high schools, and therefore have to pay for their university studies. Thus, the job market and the government discriminate twice against blacks: first, they offer more opportunities for gaining qualifications to students coming from private high schools; second, they value universities in the public system more highly.

Moreover, for less-skilled occupations, exactly those for which the black and poor with an average education would have a greater chance to compete, the job market in large Brazilian cities such as São Paulo is totally fragmented according to residential areas. The first question asked of an interviewee in search of employment is the area in which he or she resides and how many buses he or she would have to take to get to work. This restricts the chances for black and poor people to acquire employment. On one hand, poor neighborhoods are stigmatized by violence, filth, and dishonesty; on the other hand, the most affluent neighborhoods offer more job opportunities.⁴

But there is an even more perverse factor, the gender factor, which cannot be left out. Poverty, lack of opportunities, inequality of income, and discrimination affect women much more strongly than men. In the last few years, the struggle for women’s liberation and for actual equality between the sexes has greatly improved the status of women in Brazilian society. However, looking at certain statistics separated according to color, one gets the idea that up until now, this benefit has been almost totally restricted to white women. Women’s liberation seems to have remained limited to the middle and upper classes, having not reached poor, generally black, women. The data show, for example, that although white women have expanded their participation in the total payroll and in the employment sector, including with salary gains, black women continue to be confined to unemployment and discriminated against in terms of salary (Guimarães and Consoni 2000).

The picture painted up to now demonstrates that there is a historical sloppiness on the part of Brazilian officials in relationship to poverty, the main recipient, if not target of which is the black population. The policies that can really reverse the poverty situation of Brazil’s black population are in areas such as education for blacks and the needy, public health and sanitation, lower-class housing, and urban transportation. These policies could really give blacks a competitive chance in the job market, creating a situation in which any persisting disadvantage for blacks could actually be attributed solely to past slavery.

2. A human resources consulting firm explains the concept of “good appearance” in this way: “Good appearance means success, courtesy, social acceptance. Although we are conscious of the fact that people should not be judged based on their appearance, in practice, the well cared for are favored.”

3. Only three or four private universities, all concentrated within Rio and São Paulo, deviate from this rule.

4. Terms such as “slumdweller”, for example, are among the most frequently used racial insults in Brazil (cf. Guimarães 1999).

Table 6. Distribution of Individuals Active in the Brazilian Job Market According to Gender and Race, 1989 and 1998

<i>Gender and race</i>	<i>Percent of economically active workforce</i>	
	<i>1989</i>	<i>1998</i>
Women (total)	35.2	42.2
Black women	14.6	18.7
White women	20.6	23.5
Men (total)	64.8	57.8
Black men	28.3	26.6
White men	36.6	31.1

Source: PNAD/IBGE Apud: Guimarães and Consoni 2000.

Table 7. Salary Differences in the Manufacturing Industry by Gender and Color, 1989 and 1998

<i>Year</i>	<i>Women</i>			<i>Men</i>		
	<i>Black</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>W/B</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>W/B</i>
1989	417.5	801.8	1.9	803.5	1,571.7	2.0
1998	263.9	438.1	1.7	393.9	790.3	2.0

Source: PNAD/IBGE (average nominal values) Apud: Guimarães and Consoni 2000.

This last point is important because affirmative action policies (the only ones that strive to repair errors of the past) currently proposed by black leaders have been rejected on the basis of class arguments (these policies would merely benefit middle-class blacks), as well as of race (there is no true black community in Brazil, that is to say, a precisely defined black identity). Now, we all know that the moral justification for its repudiation is based on the absence, among Brazilians, of feeling responsibility or guilt for the past, which renders any argument of “reparation” not viable.

Moreover, the Brazilian political landscape demonstrates a lack of sense of responsibility for the present and for poverty: affirmative action policies that seek to benefit the needy population are opposed in the name of academic excellence or the principle of competition based on merit,⁵ while policies concerning the war against poverty never get off the ground. For this reason, the black militants’ contention that this indifference to poverty, and the legitimacy of discrimination against the poor, has a racial basis seems quite plausible to me.

The Brazilian elite does not accept effective measures to combat poverty. Undeniably, there exists a clinging to age-old privileges, which are protected by corporate interests. These interests impede antipoverty measures from being taken or implemented by Brazilian government officials. In a recent article, Elisa Reis (2000, p. 187) expressed this difficulty:

Another noticeable aspect of the elite political culture is the strong preference for universal social policies to counteract poverty and inequality. The survey data also show a strong elite consensus against affirmative action and taxing wealth. While recognizing that there is negative

5. This is what happened with Bill 298/99, which has already been approved by the Senate but was amply repudiated by educators, university officials, and intellectuals, including the most progressive press. This bill, in progress in the House of Representatives, reserves 50 percent of the seats in Brazilian public universities for students coming from public secondary schools, the only ones that the neediest students can attend.

discrimination against blacks and women, the elite is not prepared to compensate for it with positive discrimination. Even education seems to be favored as the most effective solution to overcome poverty and inequality largely because it is perceived as a universal solution, free to all.

The discussion of affirmative action policies for the black population, for example, counts the best and most renowned social scientists in the country among its adversaries. They argue that these policies contradict liberal values (Reis 1997) and insult national intelligence (daMatta 1997, Fry 2000). For them, the idea of adopting these policies is mistaken and simplistic: mistaken because it reinforces ethnic and racial identities that in turn reinforce racism, and simplistic because it contradicts our cultural tradition. Intellectuals who defend more radical antipoverty policies, which take racial and gender-based discrimination into account, would therefore not be nearly sophisticated enough to understand the complexity of the Brazilian culture (Fry 1995), or would be ideologically contaminated by their involvement with the black movement (Fry 2000).

What these authors do not know or omit is the fact that the Brazilian people do not reject affirmative action policies, including the extreme form of quotas, as the authors suggest. Those who reject them are the middle and upper classes, including intellectuals. As early as 1995, the DataFolha research project on racism found that the poorest and least educated individuals are in favor of these policies, a position that reverses among the most educated and most economically favored strata. Would this be intellectual sophistication or pure defense of class privileges? We know from the same data that it is not a question of simple racial interests, given that, among the most well-to-do blacks, support for these policies diminishes. That is to say, undeniably, we stand before a society in which privileges are well structured and rooted in racial and gender groups. These privileges orient their multiplication and amplification through acts of discrimination, which is not to say that this racial and gender-based discrimination does not exist. This means that peace between the races in Brazil is a pact between the privileged, black and white (not that those who do not accept this pact desire racial warfare or are intellectually and culturally ignorant). Degler had already called attention to the Afro-Brazilian's difficulty in refusing his privilege not to be black, but did not add how difficult it is for an intellectual to have his name disassociated from higher culture.

In conclusion, I would like to cover another aspect of the legitimacy of discrimination against the poor that manifests itself in the justification given for the irrefutable and recognized cases of discrimination against black people. In these cases, the usual practice is to explain this discrimination as being

Table 8. Brazilians' Opinion of Quotas, by Income Class and Color Group

<i>Income level and color</i>	<i>Agree (percent)</i>	<i>Disagree (percent)</i>
Up to 10 minimum wages		
Whites	54.3	45.7
Blacks and mulattos	56.7	43.3
More than 10 minimum wages		
Whites	35.5	64.4
Blacks and mulattos	37.6	62.4

Note: The following question was posed: "In light of past and present discrimination against blacks, there are people who defend the idea that the only way to guarantee racial equality is to reserve a portion of the places in universities and jobs in firms for the black population. Do you agree or disagree with the reservation of places for study and employment for blacks?"

Source: DataFolha 1995.

discrimination by class and not by color. This common argument was, in the 1940s, accepted and refined by Brazilian social sciences and such important authors as Donald Pierson (1942), Marvin Harris (1966), and Thales de Azevedo (1953). Because these authors professed their antiracist beliefs, this meant that class discrimination was treated as natural and legitimate, leaving out the possibility that a poor individual may not be the bearer of the full rights of citizenship is unacceptable in a democratic order. The fact that the poor in Brazil are not really beneficiaries of full rights of citizenship has only recently been seen as a problem, when Brazilian social science began to normatively regulate itself according to the ideology of the modern citizenry.⁶ Only since then have studies of violence, crime, and the construction of modern citizenship begun to clearly delineate day-to-day discrimination perpetrated against all those who, according to physical characteristics—mainly color—do not look to government powers like bearers of subjective rights.

In Brazil there is a saying in public and legal circles that only the poor, blacks, and prostitutes go to jail. In fact, what these statistics reveal is that black and poor households, usually headed by women, are still branded with the stigma of the “three Ds”: dark-skinned (the racial hallmark); destitute (the hallmark of class); and “degenerate” (the sexist hallmark—a prostitute, or woman without a husband). To a large extent these households continue to be denied social and civil rights, so they either have to resort to protection from local authorities thus fueling political corruption, or fall back on collective organizations to directly demand their rights.

6. Habermas is the contemporary author who has probably placed the most emphasis on the normative foundations of the social sciences.

Race and Poverty in Latin America: Conceptual Difficulties

Melissa Nobles (United States)
Associate Professor, Department of Political Science
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

The Nature of Poverty in Latin America

Desperate poverty and profound inequalities are enduring features of Latin American economies and societies. Although the terms “poverty” and “inequality” are often used interchangeably in public discussions, they in fact refer to discrete, if related, phenomena. Poverty is understood here to mean “the absolute standard of living of a part of society,” and inequality refers to “relative living standards across the whole of society.”¹ Poverty, then, is an absolute standard, and inequality, a relational one. These two are causally connected in that inequalities can help to create and entrench poverty, and conversely, the diminution of inequalities can help to alleviate poverty.

Analyses identify several key factors that account for the persistence of income inequalities in Latin America. They include maldistribution of land and access to land, government policies of import substitution and policies that favor capital-intensive techniques over labor-intensive methods of production,² and “the widespread existence of imperfect factor immobility and imperfect information.”³ Because income inequalities are so deeply and complexly rooted in basic issues of land ownership and of the political organization and regulation of economic life, it is small wonder that poverty exists and persists. How, then, to address inequalities and reduce poverty is a fundamentally political and ideological question.

The Racial Dimensions of Poverty in Latin America

The question of how to address (meaning reduce) poverty is even more hotly contested when it is claimed or appears to be especially disadvantageous to a particular group within society. That is, although many countries are plagued by unacceptably high levels of inequality and poverty, this burden is deemed all the more unacceptable if it appears to be inequitably and unequally borne by a particular group(s). As we know, racial and/or ethnic distinctions have been widely used to determine how public (and private) goods are distributed. Racial distinctions have typically come into play in two ways. First, states have employed them as a means of inequitably distributing public goods of equal quality (for example, public education, health care, etc.). Second, employers deliberately incorporate them into their hiring and promotion practices. The development of racially stratified labor markets is a well-known story. Well-known, too, is the development of public policies designed to deliberately distribute public goods along clearly marked racial lines.

While there is no gainsaying the existence of poverty and inequality in Latin America, the racial dimensions of that poverty and inequality have been widely ignored and/or minimized. As I see it, there

1. *World Development Report 1990*. New York, 1990: 26.

2. Jenkins, Rhys. “Trade Liberalisation in Latin America: the Bolivian Case.” *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 16(3):307–25.

3. Gafar, John. “Growth, Inequality and Poverty in Selected Caribbean and Latin American Countries, with Emphasis on Guyana.” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 30(3):600.

are two related reasons why this discussion has been such a difficult one. Both of these reasons are rooted in the historical development of the concept of race and the deployment of this concept by Latin American political and intellectual elites, in particular.

How to Think About Race in Latin America

As is well known, racial and/or color identifications in Latin America are flexible, although never arbitrarily assigned or assumed. Indeed, Latin Americans have complex ways of determining an individual's proper "color" designation.⁴ This identity calculus, which is based principally on physical appearance, also includes assessments of class standing, educational training, place of origin, and the relationship of each person to the other. It is the very complexity, precision, and multiplicity of such identifications that at once discloses the pervasiveness of racial thinking *and* the mooted (but powerful) presence of race in political, economic life, and history.

Political, economic, and social life in Latin America have not been rigidly organized around race as in the United States, South Africa, Australia, colonial Africa, and Asia, for example. But this does not mean that race has been unimportant. To the contrary, Latin American elites have always been deeply concerned about the "racial" stocks of their populations and have always thought the European antecedents of their peoples and cultures to be the most important and valuable. Race has been a central preoccupation precisely because Latin Americans have thought of themselves in racial terms on two levels. First, Latin American societies are presumed to be the products of persons of different races. Second, extensive "racial mixture" has resulted in the formation of new "national" races (Brazilian, Cuban, etc.), and according to certain thinkers, these new "races" would become white or whiter over time.

The principal difference between Latin American countries and the United States (to which they are most frequently compared) is that in Latin America, color has referred to physical appearance and not only to racial origins. Color and race are conceptually distinguished but related: color refers to appearance, race refers to origins.⁵ However, in Brazil for example, racial origins are *not* disconnected from color because color is itself derived from the mixture of Brazil's three original races: Europeans, Africans, and Indians. By contrast, in the United States, color and race are often used interchangeably. Historically, there has been no meaningful conceptual distinction between color and race. When (black) "racial" identification seemed incongruous with "color" (for example, a "light-skinned black"), known African origins served as the arbiter (commonly referred to as "the one drop of black blood rule"). In Brazil, color trumps race; in the United States, race trumps color. Although these distinctions are hardly unambiguous, they go a long way in explaining how race is conceived and matters differently in Latin America than in the United States. The main point, however, is that race matters.

From Race to Color—but Does Color Matter?

Given, then, that color (and not race) is the operative term in most Latin American countries, the question remains: Does color matter, and if so, how? In other words, are color designations consequential (either positively or negatively) in economic and political life, or are they simply

4. For example, see Harris, Marvin, "Referential Ambiguity in the Calculus of Brazilian Racial Identity." *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 26 (1970):1–14; Wade, Peter. *Blackness and Race Mixture: The Dynamics of Racial Identity in Colombia*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993..

5. Nogueira, Oracy. *Tanto preto quanto branco: Estudos de relações raciais*. São Paulo: T. A. Queiroz, 1985.

deployed socially to distinguish among persons? Although there has been a veritable boom in scholarly and policy literatures on color discrimination (often using census data), the idea that color is somehow less consequential in Latin American societies persists, albeit with greater difficulty. Again, the Brazilian case is illustrative.

The idea that color is less of a determinant of poverty and inequality in Brazil than in other parts of the world has been championed by both the Brazilian right and left, although for different reasons. According to the Brazilian right, there is no systematic color or racial prejudice and discrimination. Racial discrimination (which is usually equated with U.S. “Jim Crow” segregation or South African apartheid) has not historically existed in Brazil precisely because of extensive racial mixture. As they see it, there are no pure races from which either racial antagonisms emerge or to which racial activists can appeal. Brazilians are simply Brazilians, with their many colors. Prejudicial incidences are isolated occurrences and not the products of systemic mechanisms. For the Brazilian left, the principal dividing line in Brazil is that of class. Color lines may weakly divide Brazil’s working rural and urban poor, but these divisions in no way override class. More deeply, color inequalities are derived from and reducible to more fundamental class inequalities. Brazil’s “colored” people do not suffer or bear more of the burden of poverty. Too many Brazilians, regardless of color, are poor, and, therefore, class struggle is the most appropriate political strategy. According to both right and left views of Brazilian politics and economy, color is of no causal significance. That is, the colors of individuals play no singular role in the distribution of goods, however maldistributed such goods are.

Although these interpretations remain influential, they have not gone unchallenged. As mentioned, in Brazil, census data have been especially useful in undermining the idea of a nondiscriminatory society.⁶ Yet, the use of census data has revealed another, more fundamental issue: the methods and color terms used in census taking.⁷ Self-identified black activists have raised these issues most forcefully in Brazil’s 1991 and 2000 censuses. As they see it, Brazil has a black majority, according to their definition of black. Their objective was (and remains) to get the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) to change its methods to reveal Brazil’s “true” racial composition.⁸ At stake for the black movement is the legitimacy of their claims that Brazil’s black population is Brazil’s majority and that this majority is underrepresented politically, disproportionately impoverished, and socially marginalized. Not surprisingly, IBGE has resisted their attempts. IBGE’s resistance, however, does not mean that it is not a participant in creating Brazil’s racial identity. To the contrary, IBGE has been deeply implicated in partly creating, upholding, and protecting Brazil’s image as a racially mixed (if not whiter) population and as a nondiscriminatory society.

6. For the most recent articles, see Lovell, Peggy A. “Development and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in Brazil: 1950-1991.” *The Journal of Developing Areas* 33 (Spring 1999):395-418; Lovell, Peggy A., and Charles H. Wood. “Skin Color, Racial Identity, and Life Chances in Brazil.” *Latin American Perspectives* 25(3):90-109.

7. See, for example, Telles, Edward E., and Nelson Lim. “Does It Matter Who Answers the Race Question? Racial Classification and Income Inequality in Brazil.” *Demography* 35(4):465-474; do Valle Silva, Nelson. “Morenidade: modo de usar.” *Estudos Afro-Asiáticos* 30 (Dez. 1996):79-95; do Valle Silva, Nelson. “Uma nota sobre ‘raça social’ no Brasil” *Estudos Afro-Asiáticos* 26 (Set. 1994):67-80.

8. Such changes would include changing the question from “What is your color?” to “What is your race?” and/or changing the possible options from *branca* (white), *parda* (brown or gray), and *preta* (black) to *branca* and *negra* (black).

A Brief History of Counting by Color in Brazilian Censuses⁹

The color question has appeared inconsistently on Brazilian censuses from the first modern census in 1872 up to the 2000 census. The two 19th-century censuses, in 1872 and 1890, had a color question. Of 20th-century censuses, the 1940, 1950, 1960, 1980, and 1991 censuses all asked a color question, although the 1960 color data were never fully released. The 1900, 1920, and 1970 censuses did not have a color question. There were no censuses at all in 1910 and 1930. Categorization has itself been more consistent, with the three color categories of white (*branco*), brown or mixed (*pardo*), and black (*preto*) used in nearly every census. The history of color categorization can be divided into three periods. The first is from 1872 to 1910, when categorization largely reflected elite and popular conceptions of Brazil's racial composition. The second is from 1920 to 1950, when census texts actively promoted and happily reported the whitening of Brazil's population. The third is from 1960 to the present, when categorization methods have themselves been questioned and contested by statisticians within the Census Bureau and by organized groups within civil society.

Brazilian censuses have included a color question for the same basic reason that American censuses have included a race question. Brazilian elites viewed race as a natural component of human identity and as an independent factor in human affairs. Brazilian censuses have not counted by race as such, but by color. The thinking has gone as follows: Brazilians are racially mixed, of different colors. Such racial mixture has made counting by race exceedingly imprecise. However, the census question and categories have themselves organized the fluid boundaries of the very racial mixture presumed to exist. Brazil's intelligentsia, political elite, and census officials have emphasized "racial mixture" with the same vigilance that their American counterparts have emphasized "racial purity." Brazilian social scientists largely accepted the scientific truth of races and their inequality, though not with the same intensity as Americans and Europeans. Like American elites, Brazil's elites, too, were obsessed with racial mixture, but they concluded that Brazilians were becoming a whiter race, not a racially degraded and disadvantaged one.

1872–1910 Censuses

Nineteenth-century Brazilian censuses were not involved in slavery debates, nor did they directly advance racial thought, unlike 19th-century American censuses. Although the 1872 census was conducted one year after the passage of major abolitionist legislation, neither census inquiries nor census data were marshaled for slavery debates. Likewise, although Brazilian intellectual and political elites were preoccupied with the perceived calamity of racial mixture, they did not use the census to examine the problem (unlike their American counterparts). The categories on both censuses were nearly identical: white (*branco*), black (*preto*), brown or mixed (*pardo*), *caboclo* (*mestizo* Indian). The 1890 census included these four categories plus the category of *mestiço* (meaning mixture).

Paradoxically, the census was one of the few late 19th-century undertakings that was not preoccupied with or used to discern the national disaster that Brazilian elites were convinced would accompany racial mixture. As the Brazilian historian Lilia Moritz Schwarz has richly documented, museums, historical societies, law schools, medical schools, and scientists all fixed on racial mixture because it

9. This section is drawn from chapter three of my book, *Shades of Citizenship: Race and the Census in Modern Politics*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2000.

was the key to understanding Brazil and its national possibilities.¹⁰ The silence of the census was likely due to the modest institutionalization of the statistical institute and the underdevelopment of statistical methods. The establishment of the General Directory of Statistics (DGE) accompanied the abolition of slavery in 1888 and the establishment of the Old Republic in 1890. Historians consider all three of the censuses conducted by the DGE (1890, 1900, and 1920) unreliable. Brazil's modern federal census bureau, IBGE, was established in 1938.

1920–1950 Censuses

In the 20th century, the role of the census changed dramatically, as did the Brazilian elites' ideas about racial mixture. In a sharp reversal, intellectuals posited that the disastrous consequences of racial mixture would be averted because Brazilians would become whiter over time. Racial mixture was not degenerative but fortifying for whites and cleansing for nonwhites. Whitening would also be achieved through European immigration.

It is hard to overemphasize the centrality of census data to 20th-century claims of a racially mixed Brazilian people and the political and social arguments that have flowed from such claims. In the first half of the century, census texts happily reported that Brazilians were becoming whiter. The 1920 census included an extended discussion of the whitening of Brazil's population. In a section of the census entitled "Evolution of the Race" (which was later published separately as a book), the social theorist Oliveira Vianna explained that the aryanization of Brazilians was underway.¹¹ Within *mestiço* (racially mixed) groups, "the quanta of barbaric bloods was decreasing while the quanta of white blood increasing," each time refining the Brazilian race. Given the pervasiveness of the elites' belief in whitening, it is not surprising that this belief was communicated in the census text. However, the text is surprising because the 1920 census did not itself include a color question. Therefore, its predictions of whitening were not based on data collected contemporaneously, however unreliable and ambiguous such data certainly would have been. Vianna most likely wrote the whitening text to assure elites that Brazil's future as a white country was certain, thereby making the continued recruitment of European workers unnecessary. By 1920, industrialists and politicians were fed up with the militancy of immigrant workers.

The 1940 census was the first 20th-century census to ask a color question. Census enumerators were to mark either white, black, or yellow. If the respondent did not fit into one of these three categories, the enumerator was to place a horizontal line on the census schedule. These blank lines were later tabulated under *pardo*. Indigenous persons were also included within *pardo*. IBGE excluded *pardo* in response to the rise of European fascism. According to IBGE documents, the category's exclusion would assure Brazilians that census data would not be used for discriminatory purposes. It is important to note also that the meaning of *pardo* was then and remains ambiguous. Portuguese language dictionaries define it as both gray and brown. Its connotations are equally ambiguous because Brazilians infrequently use it in common parlance. Its most significant use is as a census term. Although controversy did not then surround *preto* (black), it has also been a peculiar term for IBGE to use. Brazilians usually use it in the third person, not the first person, as the census requires. Even more illuminating, Brazilians use it most

10. Schwarz, Lilia Moritz. *The Spectacle of the Races: Scientists, Institutions, and the Race Question in Brazil, 1870-1930*.

Translated by Leland Guyer. New York: Hill and Wang, 1999. Originally published as *O espetáculo das raças: Cientistas, instituições, e a questão racial no Brasil, 1870-1930*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1993.

11. Vianna, Oliveira. *Evolução do Povo Brasileiro*. Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio, 1956.

commonly to describe objects, not human beings. Black activists raised the issue of terminology most forcefully as IBGE prepared for the 1991 and 2000 censuses.

1960–2000 Censuses

From the 1950s onward, census texts spoke little about whitening. The profound shifts in scientific racial thought after World War II largely account for this change. Census texts spoke less aggressively and frequently of both whitening and of the regenerative and redemptive powers of mixture. Instead, racial mixture was reported in a matter-of-fact way and was not equated automatically with whitening. However, they still believed in distinct races, if not in their inherent superiority or inferiority, and in racial mixture. Moreover, Brazilian elites have used color data to promote the image of Brazil as a racial democracy. On this view, Brazilian citizenship has been neither enhanced, diminished, nor stratified because of race. Presumed racial differences are not a way of distinguishing among Brazilians because they are racially mixed. Brazilians are simply Brazilians, with their different colors. The census, in counting by color (and not race), has thus been instrumental to the discourse of racial democracy. Moreover, IBGE has been reluctant either to cross-tabulate color categories with socioeconomic variables or to release color data in a timely fashion. Until the early 1980s, the lack of such socioeconomic data made it impossible to test the claim that color was economically inconsequential in Brazil. It also stymied the advocacy efforts of scholars, policymakers, and activists for remedial and positive public policies. It was not until the 1976 Household Survey (PNAD) that IBGE produced data that pegged color to income, health, education, and housing. Since then, there has been a veritable boom in quantitative research, all of which has clearly shown that color is a significant variable in determining levels of educational attainment, employment prospects, and income earned.

The National Census Commission, appointed by the military government, removed the color question from the 1970 census, against the recommendations of two experts, whom the military had itself solicited. In the late 1970s, scholars and black activists lobbied to have the question restored to the 1980 census. It was restored, although the Statistical Institute's president remained opposed and called the question unconstitutional. Since Brazil's redemocratization in the mid-1980s (after 21 years of military rule), activists and scholars have aggressively challenged the discourse of racial democracy. They have also necessarily challenged census methods and terminology. Their efforts have prompted reexamination within IBGE. In the early 1980s, for example, a group of statisticians and analysts within IBGE's Department of Social Studies and Indicators (DIESO) decided to unite *pardo* and *preto* data under the term *negro* (black) in socioeconomic analyses and tables. They decided that uniting data under *negro* was appropriate because both groups had similar socioeconomic profiles and because *negro* is the preferred term of black activists and certain academics.¹²

Activists and academics again raised the issue of terminology through their grassroots campaign around the 1991 census. The campaign, "Don't Let Your Color Pass in White: Respond with Good Sense," urged Brazilians to check a darker color on their census schedules. It publicly raised two fundamental issues. First, the campaign confronted IBGE by asking why the term "color" was used, and not the term "race," and why the terms *preto* and *pardo* were used and *negro* was not. Second, the campaign questioned the preferences of most Brazilians to choose lighter colors, but especially their decision not to self-select black (*preto*) on census schedules.

12. Garcia de Oliveira, Lúcia Elena, Rosa Maria Porcaro, and Tereza Cristina N. Araújo. *O lugar do negro na força de trabalho*. Rio de Janeiro: IBGE, 1985: 9–12.

The 1991 color question was like past questions, with one important exception: the terms *raça* (race) and *indígena* (indigenous) were added. The question was rephrased to ask, What is your color or race? and indigenous was added to the list of colors white, black, brown, and yellow. (Since 1940, indigenous persons had been classified as *pardos*.) These two new terms were linked: race applied only to the indigenous population. Indigenous persons make up one race, and Brazilians make up another. IBGE's decision to include *indígena* was reportedly made after consultations with anthropologists and representatives of FUNAI, the Federal Indian Affairs Bureau. Campaign organizers speculated, however, that it was included at the request of the World Bank, which wanted demographic information for Bank initiatives on the protection of indigenous territories.

In the midst of preparations for the 2000 census, there was growing public and scholarly debate about IBGE methods and terms. In these debates, IBGE has had to explain and often defend its past and current methods. The sources of pressure on IBGE vary: they include demographers, black activists, academics, and politicians. With the unraveling of the idea of racial democracy, the question of who Brazilians "really" are racially has reemerged powerfully. There is a clear reason for this connection. The image of a racially democratic and nondiscriminatory society has hinged on the idea of racial mixture. In fact, a causal link was drawn that was often presented tautologically: Brazilians are racially mixed and therefore there can be no discrimination, or there can be no racial discrimination because Brazilians are racially mixed. The acceptance of discrimination's existence—an existence substantiated by census data—has led unavoidably to the abandonment of the racial democracy idea and to a rethinking of census terms and methods. The discourses of whitening and of racial democracy have resided in census methods and texts as much as they have existed (or not) out in the real world. As Brazilians now consider whether their society comprises distinct racial groups rather than one racially mixed people, the census will undoubtedly be involved in advancing a new racial discourse. However, the terminology on the 2000 census was the same as past censuses: color was used, not race; *pardo* and *preto* were used, not *negro*.

The Comparative Human Relations Initiative

Lynn Walker Huntley (United States)
Director, The Southern Education Foundation

All of the distinguished presenters and discussants who have preceded me today have drawn a compelling qualitative and quantitative picture of widespread and gross disparities in material well-being between persons of African descent or appearance and their counterparts of European descent or appearance in contemporary Latin America. A few years ago, drawing such a picture would not have been possible because of the widespread absence of data related to race and poverty in the region.

The void in data allowed allegations of racial inequality to go unanswered or be submerged in more general discussions. If Afro-Latins were disproportionately numbered among the poor or subject to human rights violations, we were told by governments and most “elites” that it was because Afro-Latins were uneducated and hence disadvantaged. In other words, Afro-Latins are poor because they are poor. Latin Americans of European descent or appearance were quick to distinguish their national experience in relation to Afro-Latins from the experience in the United States with African-Americans, pointing with pride to the blurring of racial identities in Latin America due to miscegenation or the absence of legalized racial segregation. Too often, they ignored the stark poverty and invisibility to which most Afro-Latins are consigned or were silent about the antidemocratic governments in many Latin American states that repressed dissent and activism by Afro-Latins and other disadvantaged groups. Rarely did the response take into account that the nations in which the estimated 150 million Afro-Latins reside have had and continue to varying extents to maintain policies, beliefs, myths, and institutional arrangements that help to create or maintain a color-coded power hierarchy.

Today, as the literature has begun to burgeon, we can now demonstrate with charts and figures what our eyes have always shown us: Afro-Latins are disproportionately numbered among the ranks of the region’s poor and marginalized people and constitute one of its most vulnerable groups. What the researchers, policymakers, governments, and others are increasingly disputing now is:

- Whether the Afro-Latin inequality is a problem that requires attention or should remain subject to allegedly “benign” neglect
- Whether emphasis should be placed on promoting either poverty alleviation or antidiscrimination measures and the role of the state and other sectors in this regard
- How to muster the will and resources needed to focus on the particular needs of Afro-Latins in light of the prevailing culture that still tries to ignore the role of racism and discrimination in creating and sustaining Afro-Latin inequality.

For the last several years, under the auspices of the Southern Education Foundation, I have been involved in a comparative study of relations between persons of European or African descent in Brazil, South Africa, and the United States. We have a four-part series of reports, called *Beyond Racism: Embracing an Interdependent Future*, that has recently been issued to the public. These are available in hard copy or may be downloaded free of charge at our Website, beyondracism.org. The Website is in English and Portuguese. Two of these publications, *The Overview* and *Three Nations at the Crossroads*, have been distributed to you. In the brief time allotted here, I wish to underscore three simple but basic points drawn from this work and suggest some of the questions that I think the

sponsors of this meeting should be asking themselves as they go forward in program development and implementation.

The first point is that the problem of concentrated Afro-Latin poverty will not go away if we simply ignore it. History and common sense teach us that the use of race or appearance as a marker for talent or worth in the allocation of opportunity is deeply entrenched in Latin American culture and practice. The use of race to disadvantage Afro-Latins—whether through indifference or punitive practices and policies—recycles continuously because it is a convenient means by which elites can maintain an unfair competitive edge on access to and control of societal goods and benefits.

People act out of perceived self-interest. In Latin America, the United States, or South Africa, exploiting cheap sources of unskilled labor provided by dependent black and brown people has historically been perceived by many people of European descent or appearance to be in whites' economic, political, and social interest. Although in the global economy there is increasingly less benefit to be derived from having large numbers of unskilled laborers to exploit—and, indeed, having a large, unskilled work force may reduce a nation's global competitiveness—old habits die hard.

The sponsors of this meeting—the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and Inter-American Dialogue—can help to convince powerful Latin American constituencies that inclusionary practices related to Afro-Latins enhance national development and strengthen global competitiveness. The sponsors need to help answer, through research and policymaking and practice, the question of why racially identifiable inequality is a serious problem that governments, multilateral agencies, the business community, and other sectors need to address. The sponsors also need to help make the case for diversity and inclusion of Afro-Latins in the formal economic mainstream. Through programs of research and meetings, the sponsors can help quantify the economic costs of exclusion, identify best practices to promote inclusion, and create incentives for reform activities. For example, I just returned from Brazil, where a group of businesses interested in corporate responsibility and good citizenship were exchanging information and ideas about ways that they could contribute to the well-being of their nations through philanthropic and targeted outreach activities to reform exclusionary work-force practices. They will soon issue a manual on how to promote inclusion in the work force. This is the kind of leadership effort that, on a regionwide basis, the sponsors of this event are well placed to undertake.

There is no better time than now for the sponsors to begin such efforts in earnest. The revolution in technology, demographic shifts, emergent human rights and women's rights movements, and other such transnational forces are changing the paradigm of what is in the elites' best interest. Many Latin American elites see efforts to promote the inclusion of Afro-Latins in the societal mainstream as a zero-sum game. They fear that what others gain, they will lose. However, others are beginning to understand, perhaps for the first time, that engaging in racially exclusionary practices may be a way to fatten the pocketbooks of the few but is no way to achieve the overall development goals of nations. Growing numbers of elite Latin Americans are ready to embrace a new, more inclusionary way of doing business.

One thing seems clear. At this moment in history, propelled by globalization and democratization, there is growing awareness, activism, and militancy by Afro-Latins and their increasing number of allies in the human rights and women's rights arenas. The sponsors of this meeting will have to move beyond arcane discussions of whether it is race or class that marginalize Afro-Latins and acknowledge that both race and class impact Afro-Latins' life chances. In the real world, race, class, place, talent, culture,

timing, gender, religion, and many other factors shape an individual's prospects. As it relates to Afro-Latins, the sponsors can demonstrate that both antidiscrimination and antipoverty measures are needed, in combination, if racially identifiable poverty is to be overcome.

The sponsors of this event can do several concrete things now to respond to the concerns of Afro-Latins voiced so eloquently at this meeting:

- As a matter of commitment to professional excellence, the sponsors should begin their own internal dialogue about how it is that they could have been largely indifferent to the needs of 150 million Afro-Latins for so long. The sponsors should ask themselves what are the institutional practice and culture issues within sponsoring institutions that have resulted in this exclusion of Afro-Latin concerns and what can be done to send a message to managers and staff that such exclusion is inconsistent with the sponsors' commitment to professional excellence. Finding ways to help the sponsoring agencies themselves become more inclusive of Afro-Latins is an important means by which to begin the transformative process.
- The sponsors should consider including in their program review processes an explicit consideration of what the impact of any program activity will be on Afro-Latins. In the same way that the sponsors consider the impact of programs on women and the extent to which gender issues are taken into account by particular loans or projects, they should now also take into account the impact on Afro-Latins. Were the sponsors to begin such a practice, it would not only affect the types of efforts to receive funds, it would also send a powerful message to Latin American governments and other entities that the sponsors are serious about using their resources to promote inclusion.
- The sponsors have mounted efforts related to gender, but too often women of color have not been primary beneficiaries. The sponsors need to remember that women come in all hues, and some are disadvantaged, not only by virtue of gender, but also by race/color and poverty. Without any fanfare, the sponsors need to ensure that every project, whether gender-specific or not, takes the needs of Afro-Latin women, the poorest of the poor, into account and promotes their advancement. This is what real feminism and gender equality are all about.

Finally, I note that in 2001, the United Nations will hold a World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Intolerance in South Africa. This event and the nongovernmental forums that will precede and accompany the official conference will doubtless put a spotlight on the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and other such entities. People around the world are most interested in understanding how multilateral agencies and multinational businesses are addressing global racism and exclusion. The sponsors have an opportunity to use the conference and preparatory events to promote inclusion and the values voiced by their leaders.

We see all around us societies torn by violence and social tensions, where disparities among discrete groups are too pronounced. Many Latin American nations have young and fragile democratic governance. Finding ways to consolidate such governance by helping all groups see their stake in political participation is a matter of grave importance. Likewise, helping governments live up to commitments of "representativeness" and fairness is central to legitimizing democracy and the rule of law.

In an era of record levels of global migration, finding ways to help the increasingly diverse peoples of nations recalibrate laws, practices, and beliefs so that they level the playing field is a matter of

increasing urgency. Finding ways to use the power of the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and Inter-American Dialogue to promote respect for the economic, political, civil, and social rights—the human rights—of all peoples, including Afro-Latins, is a matter, I submit, of the highest importance. I hope that the sponsors of this meeting will rise to the occasion and demonstrate leadership in the best sense of the word.