

UN chief honours those who suffered shameful Transatlantic slave trade, urges respect for dignity of every human being

Honouring those who suffered the brutalities of the Transatlantic slave trade, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres said the International Day set aside to remember this “epically shameful” chapter of human history is an opportunity raise awareness about the dangers of racism and prejudice today.

“More than 15 million men, women and children from Africa were enslaved,” Mr. Guterres pointed out in a video message for the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, explaining its *raison d’être* “[to acknowledge a brutal chapter](#) in human history, and to raise awareness of the dangers of racism and prejudice today.”

Every year on 25 March, the Day of Remembrance offers the opportunity to honour and remember those who suffered and died at the hands of the brutal slavery system, borne of the largest forced and legally sanctioned movement of people in human history.

“As we mark the 70th anniversary of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) this year, let us honour those who perished or suffered under slavery,” the UN chief continued.

To permanently honour the victims, the United Nations in 2015 erected a [memorial](#), *The Ark of Return* by Haitian-American architect Rodney Leon, at its Headquarters in New York.

The Ark of Return, the Permanent Memorial to Honour the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, located at the Visitors’ Plaza of UN Headquarters in New York. UN Photo/Rick Bajornas

Also, from 5 to 28 March, UN Headquarters will host a temporary exhibition entitled [Remember Slavery: Say it Loud](#). It features the work of 11 male and 11 female architects of African descent, whose perseverance, creativity and unique perspective have given them a voice on how public spaces are presented and utilized.

Again this year, the Day is being commemorated during the [International Decade for People of African Descent](#), which runs from through 2024.

“Let us celebrate the gains of people of African descent,” Mr. Guterres

concluded, "and let us press, every day and everywhere, to defend the dignity of every human being."