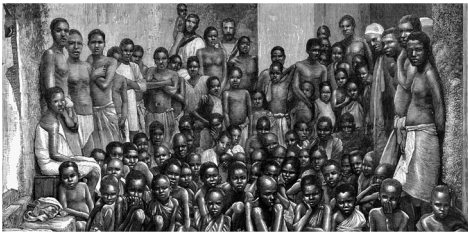


INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE REMEMBRANCE OF THE SLAVE TRADE AND ITS ABOLITION

23 AUGUST 2024

23 August has been designated by UNESCO as the International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition.



In 1555, John Lok became the first English person to bring enslaved people to England. However, it is John Hawkins who is acknowledged as the pioneer of the slave trade since his voyages starting in 1562, were the beginnings of the triangle slave trade between England, Africa, the Caribbean and Americas.

From 1562 when slavery began to 1865 when the transatlantic slave trade was abolished, between 10 and 28 million African men, women and children were enslaved, persecuted and their human rights denied. By the end of slavery millions had lost their lives.

The transatlantic trafficking of enslaved African labour resulted in brutal economic exploitation and inhumanity towards humankind.

This abominable and shameful period of time was unprecedented and unique in the way that these terrible acts and crimes against humanity took place on an industrial scale and was enforced by European Law, which involved and was supported by many major establishments and institutions.



We pay tribute to all those who campaigned – black and white – to abolish the trafficking of enslaved African labour, particularly the enslaved African men and women themselves, former African slaves such as Olaudah Equiano and Ignatius Sancho, white working class groups, parliamentarians such as William Wilberforce and many others. Also, Mary Prince who was the first black woman to publish an autobiography of her experience as a slave.



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The legacy of the Slave Trade continues to manifest itself through colonialism, apartheid, racism, fascism, poverty, economic and social deprivation, unfair trade agreements and huge debts owed by some African and Asian countries to the rich nations. The ongoing disgraceful treatment of the Windrush generation is a prime example of this legacy.

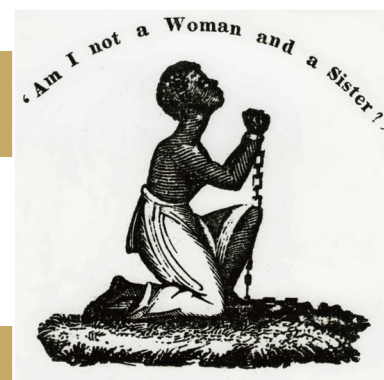
Nations affected by this should be compensated through aid, cancellation of debt, a change in trade agreements to benefit poorer nations and workers within them.

The slave trade is a part of our history that must be condemned and never forgotten. Therefore, we fully support the call for a National Day of Remembrance.

Unite calls on the government to support the organisation of an annual Remembrance Day that includes educational resources and awareness raising.

The disproportionate impact of the high cost of living and lack of workers' rights including the two-tier employment status has exposed the reality of BAEM people's daily lives.

We demand that the Labour government abolishes all the existing racist legislations and policies designed to create a 'hostile environment', and once and for all, stamp out the emergence and unrelenting occurrence of racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia in all its forms and manifestations by advocating unity and equality for ALL.



We recoil at the racist bile shouted by the far right parties and individuals such as Tommy Robinson and Nigel Farage, the continual discrimination faced by black and Asian workers and worst still, the shocking normalisation of racist language and attacks which continue to blight our society.

Their language of 'invasion', 'assimilation' or 'illegal immigrant' with 'migrant hunters' violently attacking refugee accommodations, threaten not only the safety of displaced people but the safety of us all.

Years of decline in our industries and public services, attacks on living standards, the destruction of communities as well as anti-immigration poison from politicians has created a fertile ground for racist and fascist riots we witness on our streets today.

We demand a government industrial strategy that delivers for workers.

We, in the labour movement have taken urgent action to mobilise against this rise of fascism and racist hatred to defend our communities and our rights that are currently under vicious attack.

We would continue to ensure rights and dignity of black people, and our collective challenge against all forms of racism and discrimination. Unite's Unity over Division campaign is one of the avenues to progress this.

We must all unite, Black and White, in solidarity for the rights of all workers, regardless of race or immigration status and stop employers divide us and drive down pay and conditions as Racism Hurts Everyone.