

## **RIAFRO recognizes the role of Costa Rica in the adoption of the International Day of People of African Descent at the UN**

In a November 2020 pronouncement, the Inter-American Network of High Authorities on Policies for Afro-descendant Population (RIAFRO) of the Organization of American States (OAS) urged UN member states to strongly support Costa Rica's proposal to celebrate August 31 as the International Day of People of African Descent.

The proposal was promoted by the Vice President of Costa Rica, Epsy Campbell, through the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the UN in New York, within the framework of the celebration of the hundred years of the Declaration of the Rights of Negro Peoples of the world.

In December 2020, the resolution to proclaim August 31 as the International Day of People of African Descent was adopted by acclamation by the UN General Assembly, where it was co-sponsored by 52 of the Organization's member States, including all the RIAFRO member states.

RIAFRO recognizes the role of Costa Rica in the adoption of this resolution and invites all OAS member States and the international community to carry out activities every August 31 to celebrate this important recognition of millions of people in the world.

Likewise, in the context of this tribute to Afro-descendant population and given the current situation of the pandemic, RIAFRO invites the governments of the region to take the necessary measures to include the Afro-descendant population as a priority population in the vaccination process against the COVID-19. This is due to the fact that the people of African Descent have been overrepresented among those who have been hospitalized and died as a result of the coronavirus in the region due to their greater socioeconomic vulnerability. High rates of poverty, inequality in access to health services, less access to safe drinking water and sanitation, greater overcrowding and a high proportion of essential workers, are all elements that negatively impact the chances of infection and death of people of African Descent.

In turn, RIAFRO urges that the Afro-descendant population be taken into account in the processes of economic recovery after the impact of the pandemic and the severe natural disasters that affected Afro-descendant communities in the Americas in 2020.

RIAFRO is the OAS inter-American network that promotes dialogue, coordination, and permanent collaboration between national authorities, with the aim of seeking the implementation of policies for the Afro-descendant population, in accordance with international and regional obligations in the Americas.

The Technical Secretariat of the Network is managed by the OAS Secretariat for Access to Rights and Equity, with the support of the Institute for Afro-Latin American Research Institute of Harvard University (ALARI) and the Gender and Diversity Division of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).