“Reparations and Human Rights Obligations to Ensure Racial Justice”
Side Event – 74th session of the United Nations General Assembly
10:00am to 12:00pm, 30 October 2019
Conference Room 12, United Nations Headquarters, New York
Organized by the Mandate of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance

BACKGROUND
In her 2019 report (A/74/321) to the General Assembly, E. Tendayi Achiume, the UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, addresses the human rights obligations of Member States regarding reparations for racial discrimination rooted in slavery and colonialism. Her report emphasizes that the racial injustices of these historic atrocities not only continue to shape our present but also entail moral, economic, political, and legal responsibilities. The Special Rapporteur condemns States’ continuing resistance to reparations and the entrenchment of colonial dynamics in international law. Her report ultimately underscores that reparations for historical atrocities are integral to eradicating structures of inequality and realizing Member States’ international human rights legal obligations, including those obligations enshrined in the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

OBJECTIVES
The side event aims to promote engagement with the Special Rapporteur’s report and to promote awareness of UN Member States’ human rights legal obligations regarding reparations for discrimination rooted in slavery and colonialism. The side event will also be an opportunity to share relevant practices, experiences, and advocacy strategies that help ensure respect for human rights, non-discrimination, and racial equality. Particularly pertinent to this side event will be stakeholder contributions regarding reparations, racial justice and equality, and the decolonisation of international human rights law.

SPEAKERS AND FORMAT
Opening Speaker and Moderator
Tendayi Achiume UN Special Rapporteur on Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance

Panellists
Ahmed Reid Chairperson, UN Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent
Craig Mokhiber Director, New York Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
Vasuki Nesiah Associate Professor of Practice, New York University, Gallatin School
Justin Hansford Associate Professor of Law, Howard University School of Law, and Executive Director, Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Center

At the conclusion of the panelists’ presentations and discussion, Special Rapporteur Achiume will engage side event attendees, soliciting their input on her report’s themes and responding to their inquiries.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE
This event is open to all Member States, civil society representatives, and the general public.
For those individuals who wish to attend the event but who do not possess a UN-issued badge, an RSVP message to the mandate’s official email (racism@ohchr.org) will be necessary to ensure entry. The mandate must receive these RSVPs no later than 11:59pm (NY time) on 27 October 2019. In your RSVP, please enter “SR Racism Side Event, 30 October 2019” in the email subject line and include your name, job title, organization, and contact details in the email body.