

## AFRICA AGAIN EXPOSED BY COVID-19

*Missing, indignation and condemnation for no action face to the imminent, massive and systematic violation of human rights (See original version in Spanish)*

<< Deep appreciation to all the people who contributed with their advice and provided their corrections to this document. From the bottom of my heart: Thank you very much! >>.

### SUMMARY:

*Face to humanity's health emergency caused by the WUHAN SARS<sup>1</sup>, better known as COVID-19, we want to refresh memories, that people living on the African continent should not be considered as the guinea pigs to test or experience the effectiveness of the new vaccines against the WUHAN SARS (hereinafter Covid-19) nor against any other epidemic disease in the world. Today, we all know that achieving an effective vaccine against an epidemic (pandemic in this case) can take decades of research and clinical trials to find the correct medicine/vaccine. Hence the commitment to warn about possible prevention and fight scenarios against Covid-19, resorting to the use of ancestral remedies in combination with modern medications to protect African people from this pandemic. We are facing a situation where past mistakes made towards the African continent through clinical trials of vaccines to combat epidemics (infectious disease) can be repeated. There is a very high (imminent) real risk of contagion and prolongation of the presence of the pandemic on the continent. This human catastrophe can contribute to impoverish more and more the people and countries of the African continent, that is, a truly cruel act by one part of humanity that has been characterized by discriminating against marginalized and weakened groups. That is why we motivate the girls, boys and adolescents of Africa to continue with their studies, to prepare themselves and to excel in order to intervene and transform the current conditions of their societies, and to humanize this world.*

African women and men residing in Mexico, Afromexican women and men and African descendants of Mexico, Afromexican organizations, independent persons and those who belong to private initiative, together with the Congolese community in Mexico, **we express our profound surprise, strong rejection, intense indignation and energetic condemnation for the lack of a strong pronouncement against the imminent, massive and systematic violation of the human rights of the inhabitants of Africa**, in particular to those of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in the context of the measures that are being taken these days at the international level, in order to control the pandemic caused by the deadly new coronavirus, COVID-19.

### EVENTS

On Wednesday, April 1, in a continuous news broadcast on French LCI television (***La Chaîne Info*** in French), two medical researchers discussed clinical trials of vaccines in the context of the new coronavirus, COVID-19, and alluded to Africa with racist expressions --much morbid and unethical-- as a suitable place to test the efficacy of vaccines against tuberculosis (BCG) as some vaccine trail against Covid-19; and then one of them cruelly recalled and expressed a past experience where AIDS vaccines were applied to prostitutes (sic) in Africa, and that was because they are highly exposed people and do not protect themselves; and all this happened, in a context where our medical scientists knew in advance, that in Africa (they

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<sup>11</sup> Watch out! From the start, we miss that the World Health Organization (WHO) has agreed that this SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) pandemic that was first detected in a **Chinese city called Wuhan** (hence: Wuhan SARS), is called COVID-19 (Coronavirus disease 2019), when in the case of the Ebola virus, the name of the ***Ebola river*** is evoked. Ebola is a small river of 250 kms in the northern of the Democratic Republic (DRC). Ebola river is connected to DRC's main river: The Congo river) and is located near a small city named Yambuku, the place where this ***viral hemorrhagic fever*** first emerged in.

refer to exploited, marginalized and discriminated Africa), there is a real context that the corresponding medical care is not available (masks, treatments and resuscitation).

The previous news was transmitted practically in parallel to the statement issued by a Congolese renowned medical researcher who was the key person in the context of the arrest of the Ebola virus. He claimed at a press conference in Kinshasa that the Democratic Republic of the Congo is on the list of candidates (countries) to apply the COVID-19 vaccine tests starting next May 2020;

### **IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCE**

Immediately, numerous publications flooded social networks throughout Europe and West Africa where everyone expressed outrage, condemnation and rejection of the application of COVID-19 (*sic*) vaccine tests on the African continent, just because up to now, the cases of contagion in Africa were lower than those registered in the Asian, American and European continents;

### **PUBLIC FORGIVENESS OF PHYSICIANS INVESTIGATORS**

On Friday, April 4, the three medical investigators: two from France and one from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), were forced to ask for a public apology for their lack of tact while expressing themselves and speaking in public, and because the people of the DRC should not be considered in no way, as a guinea pig for clinical trials of Covid-19 vaccines.

### **OUR CONSIDERATIONS**

Considering that clinical trials vaccines are an integral part of scientific research to save human lives, it follows that there is no valid reason to prevent or avoid some people in Africa from applying them as long as they be carried out bearing in mind the international standards on the matter, in particular the Declaration of Helsinki;

Considering that the clinical trials of tuberculosis vaccines (BCG) that have been applied for decades in Africa and in the world did not conclude with the total elimination of the disease, but that it only has contributed to its attenuation;

Considering that in the 1980s and 1990s clinical trials against AIDS started to be in use in the world, in Africa and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and we all know today that so far, there is still no vaccine to cure this disease;

Considering that clinical trials to corroborate the efficacy of the use of tuberculosis vaccines (BCG) to combat Covid-19 have already been launched in Australia in a sample of 4,000 people that were volunteers, informed, protected and remunerated;

Considering that the Declaration of Helsinki on Ethical Principles for Medical Research on Human Subjects, respectively in its articles 9, 19, 20 and 21, stresses the responsibility of medical researchers to respect the dignity of all human beings, against the instrumentalization of less favored groups, and in favor of the need for them to be volunteers, informed and respected in their rights to physical and mental integrity and to their personality;

## MISSING

African men and women residents in Mexico, Afromexican women and men and Afrodescendants of Mexico, Afromexican organizations, independent people or those who belong to private initiative, together with the Congolese community of Mexico, we express our most energetic surprise, *strong pronouncement* and deep indignation face to:

The fact that in the 21st century, renowned scientists in the field of medical research that are supposed to work in order to save lives or so that human beings have an excellent life quality, propose and/or agree to apply, for reasons of economic and business comfort, clinical trials on the efficacy of vaccines against various diseases, including tuberculosis (BCG), Covid-19 or against any other clinical trials from their own occurrence, to groups of vulnerated, marginalized and discriminated population of Africa, as in the particular case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in breach of the minimum international standards and good practices in the matter, such as to be a volunteer, informed, protected and paid;

The absence of a firm declaration by the United Nations General Secretariat and the international community which defend and protect human rights worldwide, in particular the human rights of groups facing discrimination in Africa and in countries like the DRC. Let us remember you all that for the main organs of the United Nations, the massive and systematic violation of human rights to the detriment of civilians in the DRC is not a new thing today since this International Organization has more than 22 years of presence in that country where its main mission is to "*consolidate peace and protect civilians who are **in imminent danger** of physical violence*". Here, the paradox resides in the absence of a declaration against *the use of racist, unethical, cruel and discriminatory expressions towards the African people (including DRC), which also constitutes an **imminent risk** which can lead to a massive and systematic violation of human rights and the right to the physical and mental integrity and to the personality of Africans;*

The fact that the French government and the European Union have not spoken in favor of the life, liberty and security of all individuals who, in principle, are born free and equal in dignity and rights. We wish they followed the example of the head of the World Health Organization, a specialized body of the UN, who in his speech on Tuesday April 7 (better late than never), said bluntly that **<< the inheritance of the colonial mentality must end >>** and that It will abide by all the rules to test any vaccine or treatment worldwide using exactly the same rules whether in Europe, Africa or anywhere;

The fact that the community of researchers and academics for their part, has also been anesthetized by the lack of professional ethics, morbid, mockery and cruelty in the way of expressing themselves against the African people in this case, but that basically this may well concern any other group that is victim of multiple and intersectional discrimination in the world, as for example in the case of indigenous peoples and the Afrodescendants. They forgot that groups experiencing multiple discrimination are human beings and as such, they must fully enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms, without obstacles or discrimination as established in Article 3 of the ILO Convention (No. 169) on indigenous and tribal peoples in independent countries;

The fact that in the French press, there has been rather "precision" or "clarification" notes, instead of expressing a strong rejection and an energetic condemnation for the inappropriate human behavior of their co-national medical researchers whose speech fits in the context of

hatred, racism, racial discrimination and related forms of intolerance to the detriment of prostitutes (sic) in Africa, as well as other marginalized, weakened and discriminated populations of the continent in question.

### **OUR REASONS TO MOTIVATE**

We motivate medical researchers to always adhere to their ethical principles in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki on medical research for human dignity, and in addition, we motivate them to implement the requirements for the application of clinical trials to those admitted as volunteers, informed, protected and remunerated;

We encourage African governments on the importance of not to delay to make informed decisions at the right time regarding the purchase of clinical trials of vaccines against infectious diseases, including Covid-19, which will be applied to certain people in their countries, respecting the applicable international requirements in the matter, in particular that these people be admitted as voluntary, informed, protected and remunerated;

We encourage women and men on the African continent to take advantage of Covid-19 because it is a pandemic. The Covid-19 does not select people because of their countries, age, social class, or skin color. According to our information on April 3, 2020, there were more than 7,000 Africans had been infected with Covid-19 and there were also more than 280 people who died from this pandemic, which was present in 50 of the 54 countries throughout the continent. We checked the News again today, April 13, 2020. That is exactly 10 days later and we have 14, 000 cases of infected people in Africa and 747 dead. This means that it is time to sharpen hygiene measures, keep healthy social distance, restrictions on entry and exit between African countries and with the respective international connections, in addition to applying quarantine measures where there are outbreaks of infection or contagion due to this viral disease;

We motivate the African people to remember their ancestral strength despite the circumstances they live in due to the lack of transparency and accountability by their local authorities, especially in the context of epidemics that constantly affect them as a marginalized, weakened and discriminated population. Traditional strength that has allowed them to cope with the tragedies caused by malaria epidemics, anemia (sickle cell disease) and Ebola, among others. Remembering to resort to the strength of its traditional medicines, such as the most popular traditional practice of inhaling steam from well-boiled water with medicinal herbs in it. Some people are applying this traditional remedy over there in Africa and have repeated it 3-5 times a day. Their testimony is that it is possible to combat and eliminate the first symptoms of COVID-19 with this ancient remedy. It is important to remember the strength of ancient remedies and combine them with modern medicine to get rid of the Covid-19 virus from the African continent. It is also very important to remember the strength of their predecessors, such as Patrice Lumumba, Kwame Nkrumah, Léopold Sédar Senghor and Nelson Mandela, among others, who, despite reaching the independence of their countries before the "stipulated time" and without any kind of inheritance or material, political and economic reparation as a basis to start building and developing as States, they all managed to lay the foundations of the 54 sovereign nations in the modern sense of this term, which allows us today to proudly say: "I belong to one of the 54 sovereign nations of the African continent."

## FINAL INVITATION

We invite well-intentioned men and women of the world and Africa to remain on alert to prevent that some highly racist, degrading and inhuman visions of the world, do not continue to prolong abominable practices of massive and systematic violations of human rights, particularly the violation of the right to nondiscrimination of weakened populations in Africa, in the context of clinical trials vaccines against Covid-19, without the application of the requirements that warranty their rights to be volunteers, informed, protected and remunerated.

Human being or true scientists, intellectuals, researchers or academics do not take advantage of the discrimination and marginalization situation in which the vast majority of people are immersed in both, on the African continent and outside it, in order to eternalize their history of impoverishment as people and as countries. What paints the picture of a cruel and dehumanized world that promotes social exclusion instead of inclusion and substantive equality in treatment and opportunities, a picture of a ruin world that does not mind causing mourning in other countries and continents because of its need to guarantee its economic gains, to come out as triumphant and only save its people, at best. This is why we invite you: Africans and African descents, particularly girls, boys and adolescents of the African lineage, to continue with your studies to become, in addition to what you already are and can do, professionals in different disciplines of the studies, because in this way, the history of your societies and countries will be written differently and in favor of people who find themselves historically and unfairly discriminated. It is urgent to commit ourselves now, with the permanent task to humanize the world.

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