

LCRD Day Three (December 4, 1999)
Reconciliation Act

This Act was read aloud in English and French. Despite being read by an American, the English version sounded like a translation from French by someone whose native language was not English. Therefore, I had the French version translated by my American translator, with better results. That translation follows.

We, Africans of Africa, Africans of the Diaspora, Americans, and Europeans, gathered at Cotonou from the first to the fifth of December 1999 to reflect on the phenomenon of the slave trade and its negative effects on the three continents. In the name of past, present, and future generations, we have agreed on the following:

We, Africans of Africa, recognize the role of our ancestors in the slave trade and take responsibility for seeking the forgiveness of the Africans of the Diaspora, who are victims of the ignoble trade.

We, Europeans, recognize that we are fully guilty in the slave trade because we bought Blacks on the basis of a premeditated system. Therefore, we ask for forgiveness from the Africans of the Diaspora.

We, Americans of European descent, confess that we are guilty of the expansion of the slave trade. We wanted to grow through massive use of Blacks in our agricultural and industrial endeavors. To achieve this, we used Blacks as chattel and forced them to submit to inhuman treatment. We ask for forgiveness from the victims of this shameful and inhuman act.

We, Africans of the Diaspora, descendants of the victims of the slave trade, accept the apologies and forgive the European buyers and resellers as well as those Africans of Africa who were accomplices of this trade.

Together, we undertake to play an active role in all processes of reconciliation that will lead to more fraternity and more love, for a harmonious development of the Black race.