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Follow-up to the commemoration of the two-hundredth anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade

Programme of educational outreach on the transatlantic slave trade and slavery

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 69/19, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report on continued action to implement the programme of educational outreach on the transatlantic slave trade and slavery and the steps taken to enhance public awareness of the commemorative activities and the permanent memorial to honour the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade.

The Department of Public Information selected the theme “Women and slavery” for 2015 to pay tribute to enslaved women who succeeded in transmitting their African culture to their descendants, notwithstanding the many abuses that they had to bear, and those who made efforts to combat slavery.

The Department, in the context of its “Remember slavery” programme, organized a series of activities throughout the year, including the annual observance of the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade on 25 March with the unveiling of the permanent memorial, *Ark of Return*, educational briefings in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and other partners, film screenings, discussions, cultural events and an exhibition. The Department also mobilized its network of United Nations information centres, used social media platforms and strengthened partnerships with Member States and civil society actors to raise awareness of the programme, the International Day and the permanent memorial.

* A/70/150.



I. Introduction

1. On 17 December 2007, the General Assembly, in its resolution 62/122, designated 25 March the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade.
2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to collaborate with and build on the work of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), including its Slave Route Project, to establish a programme of educational outreach to instil in future generations an understanding of the causes, consequences and lessons of the slave trade and to communicate the dangers of racism and prejudice.
3. In its follow-up resolutions, including resolution 69/19, the General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to report on continued action to implement the outreach programme and the steps taken to enhance world public awareness of commemorative activities and the permanent memorial to honour the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade.
4. The present report is submitted pursuant to those requests.

II. Background

5. Taking place over a 400-year period, the transatlantic slave trade was the largest forced migration in history. The extensive exodus of Africans to many areas of the world was unprecedented in human history. The legacy of that migration remains evident today in the large populations of people of African descent living throughout the Americas. In the past few years, efforts have been made to raise public awareness regarding the slave trade and its lasting consequences on societies throughout the world. As part of those efforts, it is essential to recognize the contributions that enslaved people and their descendants have made to the societies that forced them into bondage. The International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024) also affords an opportunity to showcase those contributions and recognize that people of African descent represent a distinct group whose human rights must be promoted and protected.

III. “Remember slavery” programme

6. Through its programme of activities, the “Remember slavery” programme, managed by the Department of Public Information, is aimed at honouring the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade and raising awareness of the dangers of racism and prejudice. Working closely with the States members of the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) and the African Union, the programme organized a series of events throughout the year. In addition to the annual observance of the International Day during the week of 25 March, the worldwide commemorative and educational activities included cultural events, student briefings, panel discussions, exhibitions, film screenings and media relations.
7. The Department also partnered with UNESCO to observe the twentieth anniversary of the Slave Route Project in September 2014 and worked closely with

UNESCO throughout the process that led to the unveiling of the permanent memorial.

8. In 2015, the “Remember slavery” programme selected “Women and slavery” as the theme in order to pay tribute to the many enslaved women who endured unbearable hardships, as well as those who fought for freedom from slavery and advocated for its abolition. The theme also celebrates the strength of enslaved women who succeeded in transmitting their African culture to their descendants.

IV. Permanent memorial

Unveiling of *Ark of Return*

9. In preparation for the inauguration of *Ark of Return*, the Department of Public Information organized a series of activities in 2014 to garner support from Member States and civil society and raise the profile of the process led by the Permanent Memorial Committee:

(a) It showcased the architectural design of *Ark of Return* in an exhibition that was on display in the Visitor Centre at Headquarters from 10 July to 28 September 2014;

(b) The “Remember slavery” programme held a high-level ceremony on 28 September in the exhibition area to acknowledge financial contributions of Member States to the construction of the permanent memorial. Representatives of the Netherlands, New Zealand and Qatar, as well as ministers from Senegal and Spain, participated in the event. Ministers from Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Grenada and Jamaica also attended the event, as did the Secretary-General of CARICOM and the Director General of UNESCO. A similar event was organized on 22 September with the Boris and Inara Teterev Foundation and the Permanent Representative of Latvia to the United Nations;

(c) On 10 December, the Department facilitated, in partnership with the Office of the President of the General Assembly and the Permanent Memorial Committee, the organization of a high-level luncheon to raise awareness of the Memorial. The “Remember slavery” programme produced a series of banners to present the design of *Ark of Return* and explain its purpose.

10. In cooperation with the Office of the President of the General Assembly and the Permanent Memorial Committee, the Department organized the unveiling of *Ark of Return* in the Visitors Plaza at Headquarters on 25 March. Speakers included the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General, the Prime Minister of Jamaica, the Director General of UNESCO, the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations speaking on behalf of the contributors and Rodney Leon, the architect and designer of the permanent memorial. The event concluded with a performance of African music and a procession accompanied by live drums leading to the General Assembly Hall for the solemn commemorative meeting.

Raising awareness

11. Through the permanent memorial, the “Remember slavery” programme conveys to visitors the lessons and legacy of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade.

12. The Department promoted media coverage of the unveiling of the permanent memorial through its social media accounts and multimedia services. These included Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, United Nations Television and Video, United Nations Radio, United Nations Web TV, UNifeed, *Africa Renewal* and the United Nations News Centre. Photos, B-roll and press releases were made available to international media. A News Centre article that had been posted on the English website on 24 March was rated the top story of the year. On 25 March, the News Centre posted a news story, a photo story and a special feature on the unveiling of the permanent memorial, which received a record 33,489 page views. The “Remember slavery” programme also published articles on iSeek and deleGATE to help to raise awareness of the permanent memorial among United Nations staff members and the diplomatic community.

13. The Department produced videos, radio programmes and feature stories on the permanent memorial in the six official languages, as well as in Kiswahili and Portuguese. In addition, the “Remember slavery” programme provided support to two United Nations Television productions on the permanent memorial: *UN in Action* and *21st Century*, documenting the process and explaining its significance.

14. The “Remember slavery” programme is working in close partnership with the Visitor Centre to increase the number of visitors to the permanent memorial. The Visitor Centre website features *Ark of Return* prominently and offers briefings on slavery and the transatlantic slave trade for school groups. The programme conducted weekly briefings for students and the general public at the permanent memorial throughout the summer, during the height of the tourist season. The permanent memorial is promoted on the social media accounts of the United Nations, the Visitor Centre and the programme. A small replica of the permanent memorial and a poster will be sold in the United Nations Bookshop.

15. The “Remember slavery” programme also developed promotional materials, including a multilingual poster and brochure, to encourage visits to the permanent memorial. Posters and postcards were disseminated to the United Nations information centres and schools. Visits were also promoted through traditional, social and tourism media.

V. Annual commemoration

16. The Department of Public Information worked in close collaboration with the Office of the President of the General Assembly, the United Nations Office for Partnerships and States members of CARICOM and the African Union to organize a series of events during the week of 25 March in observance of the International Day.

Solemn commemorative meeting of the General Assembly

17. Following the unveiling of the permanent memorial, a solemn commemorative meeting of the General Assembly was held on 25 March. Remarks were delivered by the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General, representatives of

the regional groups, the host country and individual Member States. All speakers welcomed the unveiling of the permanent memorial.

18. Sylviane Diouf, a historian and director of the Lapidus Center for the Historical Analysis of Transatlantic Slavery at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture of the New York Public Library, delivered the keynote address on the theme of “Women and slavery”. Ms. Diouf emphasized that the theme reminded the international community that no history, no present and no future could be written without recognizing the vital role of women. She added that the contribution of enslaved women was too often ignored, glossed over or even denied. Enslaved women were more likely to be subjected to physical abuse than men and were the victims of sexual abuse, harassment and rape. They fought back through overt manifestations of insubordination such as poisoning, secret abortions and even uprisings. She emphasized that enslaved women were immense contributors to a new world, using their skills, knowledge and work to transform the land by building cities and towns and fighting for their freedom and for the independence of the countries that had enslaved them. She said that their creativity, energy, resourcefulness and fortitude would not be forgotten.

19. Following the solemn meeting, the Djoniba Dance & Drum Centre gave a performance that included music and dance, the origins of which can be traced to the African continent.

Cultural and culinary event

20. The “Remember slavery” programme organized a cultural and culinary event on the evening of 25 March to celebrate the heritage and traditions that enslaved Africans had brought to Europe and the Americas. Chef Pierre Thiam presented a wide range of food to illustrate the impact of the Middle Passage on culinary traditions in the countries that had participated in the transatlantic slave trade.

21. The following 19 Member States contributed in kind to the culinary event, showcasing national dishes and specialties: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Cameroon, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Suriname, Ukraine and Uruguay. The United Nations Staff Recreation Council Society for Promotion of Indian Culture and Experience also contributed to the event.

22. The event included a performance by the Djoniba Dance & Drum Centre, celebrating the journey of the African diaspora.

Global videoconference for students

23. On 27 March, some 600 students and educators participated in the “Remember slavery” programme’s global videoconference that linked Headquarters to secondary schools in Brazil, Trinidad and Tobago and the United States of America. The students made presentations and engaged in a live interaction on the “Women and slavery” theme. The event was organized with the support of the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network. It was available as a live webcast and a study guide was distributed to the students.

24. The conference was moderated by Eola L. Dance, Programme Manager, North-East Region, for the Underground Railroad Network to Freedom of the National Park Service. Margaret Washington, Professor of History at Cornell

University, gave a presentation on women and resistance from a diaspora perspective. A video produced by the Department on *Ark of Return*, featuring Mr. Leon, was also screened at the event.

Briefing for non-governmental organizations and panel discussion

25. On 26 March, the Department organized a briefing for non-governmental organizations on the theme “Women and slavery: its impact on women’s rights today” that was available as a webcast. Panellists included Françoise Vergès, an expert on the Memorial to the Abolition of Slavery in Nantes, France, and Consulting Professor at Goldsmiths College, University of London; Ms. Washington; Ms. Dance; and Elizabeth Maurer, Director of Programmes at the National Women’s History Museum.

26. The panellists discussed the impact of slavery on women, their role as freedom fighters and how slavery had influenced the movements for women’s rights and gender equality. The briefing was moderated by Gaynel Curry, Gender and Women’s Rights Adviser, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in New York. Ms. Curry provided useful insights into the latest session of the Commission on the Status of Women, held in March, and the plan of action of the International Decade for People of African Descent.

VI. Other educational activities

27. The Department of Public Information and UNESCO organized a round-table discussion entitled “The general history of Africa: learning and teaching about African heritage” on 10 July at Headquarters. The purpose of the event was to raise awareness of the importance of teaching the history of Africa at all levels within the educational system to combat racial prejudice and stereotypes of people of African descent and to highlight the importance of Africa in the history of humanity. The discussion focused on how the General History of Africa project of UNESCO could be incorporated into national curricula and how it could contribute to the implementation of the action plan for the International Decade for People of African Descent. Moderated by the Department, participants included the Director General of UNESCO, the Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations, the Deputy Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations, a Senior Adviser to the Permanent Observer Mission of the African Union to the United Nations and several experts involved in the project.

28. Recognizing the power of film as an educational tool, the Department continued its multilingual film series related to slavery and its legacy. The “Remember slavery” programme engaged with a number of partners, including Paramount Pictures, Black Entertainment Television and the Departments of Education of the states of New Jersey and New York. Screenings and discussions took place in New York, with the sponsorship of Member States, and in 16 countries around the world through the United Nations information centres. Interviews were conducted with producers and artists who attended the screenings, which were publicized on United Nations media and social media accounts to raise awareness of the issue. The films included:

(a) *Tula, the Revolt*, directed by Jeroen Leinders, which was screened on 9 September 2014 at Fordham University, New York, followed by a discussion with

the actor Danny Glover, Yuko Miki, Assistant Professor of History at Fordham University, and Natasha Lightfoot, Assistant Professor of History at Columbia University. Stephanie James Wilson, Executive Director of the New Jersey Amistad Commission, Department of Education, moderated the discussion;

(b) *They Are We*, by Australian director Emma Christopher, shown at the American Museum of Natural History in New York on 27 December 2014 in observance of Kwanzaa, a celebration of the influences of African heritage on African-American culture;

(c) *Selma*, screened in New York on 7 January for high school educators. The screening was followed by a discussion with the director, Ava DuVernay. The film was also shown at the United Nations for the diplomatic community, staff members and students representing schools from the New Jersey and New York areas on 23 April. A discussion with the director was moderated by National Public Radio journalist Michele Norris. The event was co-sponsored by the United States Mission to the United Nations and organized in partnership with Paramount Pictures and the “Selma4Students” project;

(d) *The Book of Negroes*, screened at Headquarters on 11 February in observance of Black History Month in the United States. The event featured one of the six episodes in the series and included a discussion with the director and executive producer, Clement Virgo, and actors Aunjanue Ellis and Louis Gossett, Jr. The event was co-sponsored by the Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations.

29. The Department and UNESCO organized two other events to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Slave Route Project:

(a) The first, which was held on 4 September 2014, was a round-table discussion on the representation of slavery in film, with the participation of film scholars and representatives of the motion picture industry;

(b) The second, held on 5 September 2014, included a panel discussion for educators featuring the UNESCO publication *The Transatlantic Slave Trade and Slavery: New Directions in Teaching and Learning*. The two editors of the publication discussed the psychological consequences of the slave trade and slavery and shared their experiences incorporating the subject into high school curricula.

VII. Educational and promotional materials

Exhibition

30. The “Remember slavery” programme produced the exhibition entitled “Women and slavery: telling their stories”, which was on display in the Visitors Lobby at Headquarters from 10 March to 9 April. The exhibition was created in partnership with the Nantes Memorial to the Abolition of Slavery, which published an extensive account of women and slavery in connection with its exhibition entitled “Dix femmes puissantes”. The exhibition featured the personal stories of enslaved women and freedom fighters. It was produced in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish and made available to the global network of United Nations information centres. Twelve centres displayed it around the world.

31. Registered as one of the side events planned during the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the exhibition was opened on 12 March. The Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, the Permanent Observer of CARICOM to the United Nations and a representative from the African Union delivered remarks. The keynote speaker was Michele Mitchell, Associate Professor of History at New York University.

Film package

32. In 2015, the “Remember slavery” programme partnered with the director of *They Are We* to make it available to the United Nations information centres with a student guide. The English version of the film was subtitled in French and Spanish. Sixteen centres also screened it to students. Other centres also screened the UNESCO documentary *Slave Routes: A Global Vision*.

Website

33. The Department updated the “Remember slavery” website in the six official languages to provide information on the programme’s activities, educational resources on the transatlantic slave trade and the permanent memorial. The “Remember slavery” website experienced a 15 per cent increase in visits in 2015, owing mainly to the traffic driven by interest in the new permanent memorial page.

Print

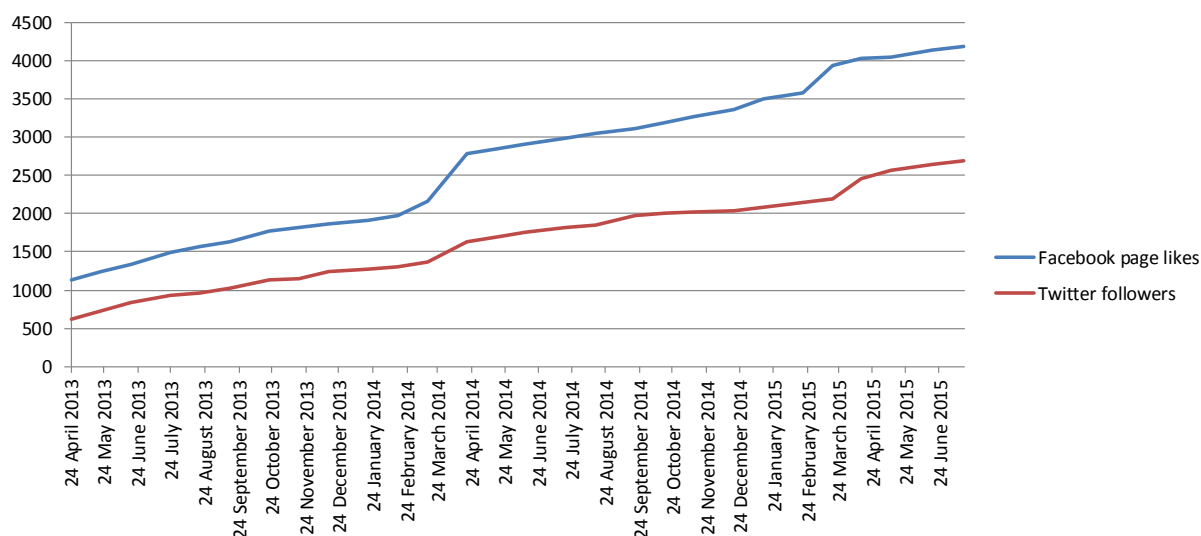
34. The “Remember slavery” programme continues to develop traditional media and multilingual print materials such as flyers, posters, postcards, banners, bookmarks, pins, folders and press kits. Posters and postcards have also been made available in digital format to the United Nations information centres in the six official languages, as well as in Kiswahili and Portuguese.

Multimedia

35. The Department facilitated media coverage of the activities held throughout the year through its multimedia and social media services. “Remember slavery” activities and the unveiling of the permanent memorial were promoted through Facebook, Twitter and the main United Nations social media accounts, including YouTube. It is estimated that more than 5 million Twitter accounts received content from the United Nations on the commemorative events and the permanent memorial.

36. The organization of activities throughout the year has resulted in a significant traffic increase on the social media accounts handled by the “Remember slavery” programme. The number of likes registered on the Facebook account have tripled in two years, while the number of followers on the Twitter account have quadrupled (see figure I).

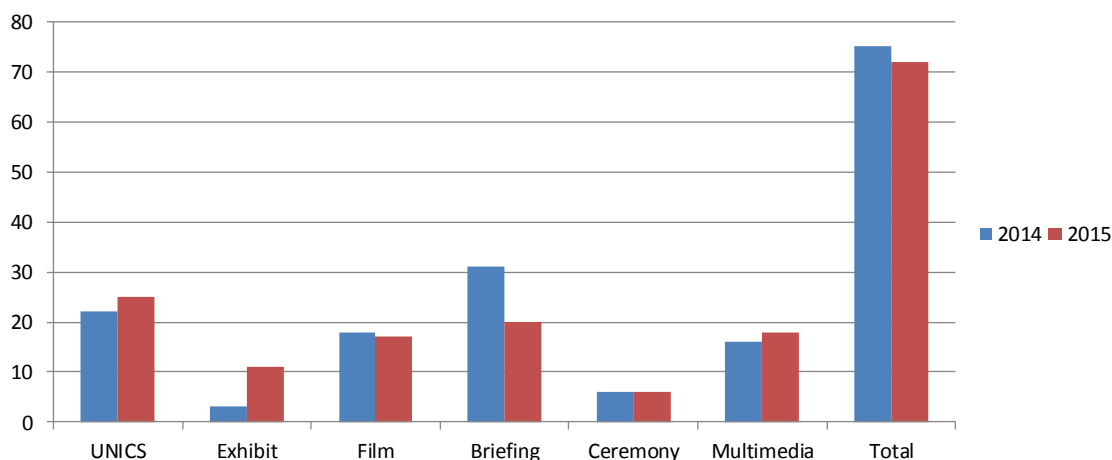
Figure I
“Remember slavery” social media followers



VIII. Activities of the United Nations information centres

37. More United Nations information centres, services and offices around the world participated in the 2015 commemoration than in 2014 (see figure II). In total, 26 field offices organized activities, representing an increase in exhibits and multimedia outreach as a result of the products and support provided to them by the “Remember slavery” programme. More than 70 educational activities were organized by the United Nations information centres in each year, and most of them were held in Africa and Latin America. For the first time, activities were organized in Guinea-Bissau and at the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti.

Figure II
Number of United Nations information centre “Remember slavery” activities per year



38. Through an innovative approach initiated in 2014 by the Nations Information Centres Service, eight centres were paired to organize videoconference exchanges across duty stations between students, following the screening of *They Are We*. That interaction allowed them to compare their understanding of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade with their peers. Offices in the following locations participated: Accra and Port of Spain; Antananarivo and Brazzaville; Dakar and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti; and Lusaka and Lagos, Nigeria.

39. Other activities undertaken by information centres for the commemoration included the following:

(a) On 25 March, the Centre in Accra organized, in partnership with the Ghana Museums and Monument Board and UNESCO, the screening of *They Are We* for 500 students. The “Women and slavery” exhibition was on display for six days at an international school. The Centre also arranged a live broadcast of the ceremony to unveil the permanent memorial in New York;

(b) On 23 March, the Centre in Ankara displayed an exhibition on slavery at the Yildirim Beyazıt University;

(c) On 25 March, the Centre in Antananarivo organized a ceremony and conference at the André Resampa high school in partnership with the United Nations Club. They also mounted the “Women and slavery” exhibition that was seen by 2,300 visitors. On 31 March, an educational briefing was given at a local university;

(d) On 30 March, the Centre in Bogota opened its doors to 39 students from Gustavo Rojas Pinilla public school who viewed a screening of *They Are We* and participated in a debate on the impact of slavery and its consequences;

(e) On 25 March, the Centre in Brazzaville hosted an educational briefing featuring a drum performance;

(f) On 25 March, the Centre in Bujumbura and Marien Ngouabi University hosted a series of activities. More than 300 students participated in an educational briefing, viewed a screening of *They Are We* and visited the “Women and slavery” exhibition;

(g) On 25 March, the Centre in Canberra organized, in partnership with Anti-Slavery Australia, a screening of *They Are We* at the University of Technology in Sydney with the director and a photographer, Sergio Leyva Seiglie. Photos of the film were on display;

(h) On 25 March, the Centre in Dakar organized several events in partnership with the country team. A round-table discussion on the “Women and slavery” exhibition was broadcast live on the national public radio station. The “Women and Slavery” exhibition was shown at the National Gallery of Art of Senegal, in partnership with UNESCO and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. The Portuguese version of the exhibition was presented in Guinea-Bissau in May, with assistance from the Information Centre and the United Nations Development Programme office in Dakar;

(i) On 25 March, the Centre in Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, organized a briefing on slavery and the transatlantic slave trade for 100 young people, followed by a screening and discussion of *They Are We*. The “Women and slavery” exhibition was also on display;

(j) On 31 March, a screening of *They Are We* was organized by the Information Service in Geneva for members of the international community, non-governmental organizations and staff members;

(k) On 1 April, the Centre in Harare screened *They Are We* for students from six high schools. The screening was followed by a discussion;

(l) On 25 March, the Centre in Lagos, Nigeria, organized a walk through the historic town of Badagry, which is part of the UNESCO Slave Trade Route and known as an important port used in the exportation of slaves to the Americas. A number of activities were organized in partnership with the African Renaissance Foundation, which included the “Women and slavery” exhibition, a screening of *They Are We*, a briefing for students, a rally to raise awareness, performances and visits to two museums on slavery;

(m) On 25 March and 7 April, the Centre in Lima screened *They Are We* and mounted the “Women and slavery” exhibition for students as part of an interactive educational briefing on the influence of African people in Peruvian culture and the impact of slavery. The students received a guide to the film and participated in a contest. “Women and slavery” will be shown in public libraries, universities and other appropriate locations throughout the year, including in the context of the International Decade for People of African Descent;

(n) On 25 March, the Centre in Lusaka organized a screening of *They Are We* for students, distributed campaign materials and coordinated a discussion on Twitter, Facebook and through text messages. Two bulk messages reached some 10,000 people throughout the country;

(o) The Centre in Nairobi invited university students to attend a round-table discussion and to visit the “Women and slavery” exhibition, both of which were organized in collaboration with UNESCO. The discussion was chaired by the Director General of the United Nations Office at Nairobi;

(p) From 25 to 28 March, the Centre in Ouagadougou organized a series of lectures in 10 high schools in Burkina Faso under the theme “Remembering victims of slavery and modern forms of slavery: prostitution and girls’ sexual exploitation”, reaching out to some 2,000 students and teachers. The Centre also organized on its premises an exhibition of brochures, posters, photos, booklets, films and international texts related to slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, which was seen by 6,347 visitors;

(q) The Centre in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, translated the “Women and slavery” exhibition into Portuguese, published a print version of it and shared it with the Information Centre in Dakar so that it could be mounted in Guinea-Bissau. In addition, the director of the Centre in Rio de Janeiro gave an interview to the Portuguese service of United Nations Radio on the International Decade for People of African Descent, which was broadcast on 25 March. It also published story online, as did the Information Centres in Pretoria and Washington, D.C.;

(r) The Centre in Yaounde organized, in partnership with UNESCO, a panel discussion on the “Women and slavery” exhibition following the screening of *Slave Routes: A Global Vision* and *They Are We*. The event was covered by the local media;

(s) On 25 March, the United Nations Office in Yerevan organized the screening of *The Slave Route* for high school students.

IX. Activities of Member States

40. In General Assembly resolution 69/19, Member States were requested to provide information about their national educational programmes designed to educate and inculcate in future generations an understanding of the lessons, history and consequences of slavery and the slave trade. The contribution received by the Secretariat in 2015 is summarized below.

41. Jamaica continued to undertake a number of activities to attract the attention of the public on the issue of slavery and its legacies. One highlight in the annual cultural calendar is the celebration surrounding Emancipation Day, which is marked annually on 1 August. In addition to solemn vigils held around the country, there were also re-enactments of the reading of the Emancipation Proclamation. These activities serve to honour the memory of those who suffered, fought and overcame the oppression of slavery. Events associated with the annual National Heritage Week celebrations in October, culminating with National Heroes Day, are aimed at enhancing the appreciation of Jamaicans of their history, engendering national pride and promoting understanding of the role that slavery and the resistance played in making Jamaica what it is and Jamaicans who they are today. The education curricula in the primary and secondary schools also include in-depth treatment of the issues of the slave trade, slavery and emancipation.

42. Jamaica also played a leading role in the efforts at the international level to bring greater attention to this important subject. The Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations chaired the committee that oversaw the plans for and the erection of *Ark of Return*. The Prime Minister of Jamaica took part in its unveiling. Jamaica is also an active participant in the planning of the annual series of activities in support of the “Remember slavery” education outreach programme run by the Department of Public Information.

X. Contribution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to the programme of educational outreach on the transatlantic slave trade

43. UNESCO has continued its efforts to enhance awareness of the history and consequences of the transatlantic slave trade and slavery through its Slave Route Project. It has stepped up its involvement in developing routes of memory and memory tourism by finalizing the methodological guide for managers of sites and places of memory, which will be published online in late 2015; creating a “Slave Route Site” marker to encourage countries to set up routes of memory on the subject of slavery; creating an Internet portal to publicize routes of memory throughout the world and virtual collections from museums of slavery; and activating the international network of managers of sites of memory, established in Brasilia in 2012, to enable memorial heritage professionals to exchange information and good practices and to form partnerships.

44. With regard to its contribution to the International Decade for People of African Descent, UNESCO has drawn up an agenda for the Decade providing information on its various themes and on important dates in the history of people of African descent. The agenda will be published in French, English, Portuguese and Spanish and in various countries, in close cooperation with OHCHR.

45. To mark the twentieth anniversary of the Slave Route Project, UNESCO held a special event at its headquarters in Paris on 10 September 2014. The event consisted of four parts: a discussion of the actions and activities to be carried out as part of the International Decade for People of African Descent; an exhibition entitled “Africans in India: from slaves to generals and rulers”, prepared by the New York-based Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture; the release of doves around the UNESCO Symbolic Globe; and a commemorative ceremony bringing together political, artistic and intellectual figures to report on and attest to their support for the Project. That event, which attracted more than 1,500 people, afforded an opportunity to highlight the Project’s accomplishments and future prospects, as well as its impact in helping to mainstream the issue of slavery on the international agenda. The event received a level of media coverage unprecedented in the history of the Project. A number of other events were held throughout the world, reflecting the results achieved. In addition, for this anniversary, a brochure entitled “The Slave Route: 1994-2014 — The Road Travelled” was published in three languages and distributed to all partners involved.

46. A partnership was established with United Nations information centres to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Slave Route Project by means of various activities (symposiums, exhibits, film screenings, artistic performances, publications and audiovisual programmes) in various countries, including Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, France, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Morocco, Paraguay and the United States.

47. To share its experience, its information materials and its proposals for the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent, UNESCO took part in a number of commemorative activities held in various countries to mark international days (the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade and the International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition) or relevant national days.

48. The International Scientific Committee for the Slave Route Project met in Mexico City in November 2014, with generous support from the National Institute of Anthropology and History of Mexico. The participants assessed the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the Project and proposed actions and activities for the Decade, partnership-building and mobilization of extrabudgetary resources.

XI. Future activities

49. During the remainder of 2015 and throughout 2016, the Department will continue to collaborate closely with Member States to promote the annual observance of the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, the “Remember slavery” programme and the permanent memorial.

50. Building on the positive momentum gained in 2014 and 2015, the Department will continue to organize events throughout the year. Such activities make for better opportunities for outreach and partnerships, for planning events more effectively within existing resources and for creating a sustained and effective educational programme.

51. The Department will also continue to support efforts to raise awareness of the permanent memorial, in cooperation with States members of CARICOM and the African Union.

52. The Department will dedicate special attention to strengthening its multilingual websites and the involvement of academics and institutions of learning in the programme. It will also aim to publish appropriate educational materials on slavery and the transatlantic slave trade for students in order to fulfil its mandate.

53. A number of activities will be held in the coming months, including:

(a) A presentation at the annual conference of the Association for African American Life and History in September;

(b) The world premiere of the new documentary *Queen Nanny: Legendary Maroon Chieftainess* at Headquarters in October, in partnership with the Permanent Mission of Jamaica to the United Nations and with the presence of the director and producer, Roy T. Anderson.
