



Black Liberation Movement Activists Gather in Atlanta

By Ashaki Binta



Jihad Abdulmumit speaking at the opening plenary of the National Black Radical Organizing Conference. Panel from left to right: Jasmine Burnett, Jihad Abdulmumit, Yasmin Forbes, Shafeeah M'Baliala, Ajamu Baraka.

Atlanta, GA: On the weekend of June 23 – 25, 2023, more than 200 revolutionary activists in the Black Liberation Movement gathered in Atlanta for the National Black Radical Organizing Conference. A majority of the participants were young freedom fighters, hungry for the building and advancement of a revolutionary movement and for information on how to get there.

The theme of the conference was “Unity in our Lifetime: Connecting the National Struggle for Self-Determination to Pan-Afrikanism” and was organized by the Community Movement Builders (CMB), a national Black member-based cooperative organization, headquartered in Atlanta, fighting for “economic advancement and collective community organizing.” Pan-Afrikan-

ism is an historic tendency of the Black Liberation Movement that has attracted many young people in this period.

The Conference convened eight plenary sessions and three workshops. For more information on the plenary sessions, check out:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kvX_qb3fkzc&list=PL7_XVeroWRsRQzKrjB74lSx80GCwwKW&pp=iAQB

The three workshops focused on culture, women, and organizing Black workers. The workers workshop, “Organizing the Black Working Class for National Liberation,” was presented by the Black Workers for Justice.

(Continued on page 3)



Table of Contents:

Black Liberation Movement Activists Gather in Atlanta	1
A Personal Tribute to Comrade Brother Dr. Mutulu Shakur	4
Celebrate Leonard Peltier's Birthday: Write to Him!	5
Editorial—The Menacing Climate for Black, Brown, and Indigenous Peoples	7
Poem—Guantanamo	8
Buffalo, NY—New Jail or Social Services? The People Must Decide!	9
Northeast Peoples' Senate Launches with Counter-Genocidal Festivities	10
Southwest Conference on State-Authorized Executions	11
Conference in Trinidad “Rooted Futures: Visions of Peace and Justice”	12
Joining the Peoples' Senate	13
Interview—International Conference in Venezuela Defends Political Prisoner Alex Saab	14
Calendar of Events	16
Links and Resources	16

The Peoples' Senate project is inspired by the work of the **Spirit of Mandela Coalition** and the October 2021 **International Tribunal** at which a distinguished panel of international jurists found the USA to be still “Guilty of Genocide” against Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities.

The **five specific counts** of the indictment were for crimes related to:

- **Police racism and violence**
- **Mass incarceration**
- **Political prisoners and prisoners of war**
- **Environmental racism**
- **Public health care inequities**

For more information, visit spiritofmandela.org/international-tribunal.

Please share the Peoples' Senate Newsletter with your organization and circulate it widely to your friends and comrades.

The goal of this publication is to be an organizing tool to aid in building the Peoples' Senate and other kinds of coalitions or projects on a national, regional, and local level. We are projecting a quarterly publication schedule. We invite members and supporters of the Peoples' Senate to submit articles (with photos if possible), poetry, artwork, letters, thoughts, etc., to help establish a clearer understanding of the organizing being done in particular regions, strengthen our coalitions and our resolve to struggle against genocide, and strategize about next steps. Please email your submissions to Psnewsletter@spiritofmandela.org.

Peoples' Senate Newsletter editorial committee: Ashaki Binta, Steve Bloom, Kathleen Chandler, Sophia Williams. ***Proofreading:*** Betsy Mickel

(Black Radical Conference continued from page 1)



Plenary panel on “Which Way Forward: National Liberation, National Unity, Self-determination, and Socialism.” Left to right are Rafiki Morris of the AAPRP; Ajamu Baraka, BAP; Sah Maat, RNAPG; Makungu Akinyela, NAPO; Jalil Muntaqim, former BLA and political prisoner; panel moderator and organizer, Ashaki Binta, BWL/NBLM.

Another key feature of the Conference was the participation of the National Black Liberation Movement (NBLM) National Unity Initiative in the planning and focus of the conference. Weekly organizing committee meetings were held for several months before the event, led by the CMB. The NBLM organized one of the key plenary sessions of the conference entitled, “National Liberation, National Unity, Self-Determination, and Socialism.” This plenary looked at both Pan-Afrikanism and Revolutionary Nationalism, another of the central, historic political tendencies in the Black Liberation Movement that focuses on the question of National Liberation for the oppressed Black Nation in the US. Revolutionary Nationalism recognizes Black people in the US as an internal colony of US capitalism, imperialism, and patriarchy. The panel made a key presentation on the material roots of Black oppression in the US as one of an oppressed nation fighting for national liberation, self-determination, and socialism. It spoke to revolution in the US based upon organizing the national liberation movement as the path forward for the liberation of Black people.

Speakers on the panel represented historic revolutionary nationalist organizations, including the Black Workers League (BWL), the New Afrikan People’s Organization (NAPO), the

Republic of New Afrika (RNA), and the Black Liberation Army (BLA). These organizations, along with the Black Alliance for Peace (BAP) and the All-Afrikan People’s Revolutionary Party (AAPRP), spoke to an important point: that historically and politically, there is no antagonistic contradiction between national liberation and pan-afrikanism. Both tendencies come out of the historic quest for freedom led by Black people since the end of slavery and should be unified nationally in the fight for Black liberation.

Another goal of the NBLM for the conference was to present the work of the Spirit of Mandela (SofM), particularly its developing organizing program, The Peoples' Senate. SofM leader and Peoples' Senate organizer, Jihad Abdulmumit, spoke on the opening conference plenary panel, "State of the Black Masses—What Is To Be Done and How Are Our People Relating to Empire." After this opening plenary, brother

Jihad held important one-on-one discussions and distributed literature about The Peoples' Senate that proved to be of interest to many of the participants at the conference. A number of those interested signed up to help organize the Senate going forward. Future meetings are being planned for next steps in Atlanta to build a section of the Peoples' Senate there.

A Personal Tribute to Comrade Brother Dr. Mutulu Shakur

by Ashaki Binta



Photo: Mutulushakur.com

August 2023—A number of righteous and worthy memorials have been offered since the death of our dear freedom fighter and brother, Dr. Mutulu Shakur who joined the ancestors on July 6, 2023. I was unable to participate in most of those tributes for one reason or another. But all along I've wanted to express my great respect and love for him and all those, both living and passed on, who have sacrificed and dedicated their lives for the liberation of our people and all of the oppressed in this country and beyond. Dr. Mutulu Shakur was such a man and I loved him.

I did not know Mutulu personally, not really, but I did

meet him as a young freedom fighter at the African People's Party's (APP) third National Party Congress held in Philadelphia in the late fall, early winter of 1977.

We attended some of the same workshops at the congress. Many important revolutionaries gathered at that congress to make a number of momentous decisions about the direction of the revolutionary nationalist movement in that period. Representatives of several historic organizations were present at the APP congress including the Republic of New Afrika (RNA) and the Black Liberation Army (BLA), among others. Amidst the revolutionaries present were Queen Mother Moore (I believe); Muhammad Ahmad (Max Stanford), chairman of the APP; Ahmed Obafemi; Chokwe Lumumba; Saladin Muhammad, secretary general of the APP; and Mutulu Shakur, along with many other historic figures and

dedicated cadre.

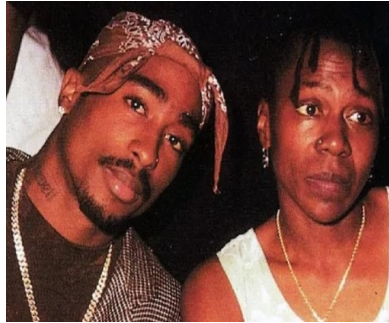
After so many years, the memory starts to fade, but I've never forgotten that major gathering, the key decisions made, or many of the key figures there. Probably the most important of the decisions coming out of the congress was the designation and identity of the Black liberation struggle as both a national and a class struggle at the same time. That is perhaps a discussion for another time.

But in all honesty, while not remembering all the individuals out of the couple of hundred people there, Mutulu stood out and I never forgot him.

In the years that followed, many of us witnessed the significance of his work as a doctor of acupuncture and its role in the care and health of the freedom fighters as well as its role in combating what some call the social control mechanism and scourge of drugs in the Black and other oppressed communities. Mutulu went on to

make his contributions to further our struggle and paid the price for it. Respect.

Also, in the months after meeting Mutulu, I met two other individuals whom I eventually would come to know as his wife and stepson: sister Afeni Shakur and Tupac Shakur who was then only about five



Afeni and Tupac Shakur
Photo: MPmania

or six years old. I counted Afeni as among my comrades and admired her mothering of Tupac at that time.

Asa and Presente Dr. Shakur! Your contemporaries and the new generations will continue our long and historic struggle. And We Will Win!

Celebrate Leonard Peltier's Birthday:

Write to Him!

Longtime Indigenous political prisoner Leonard Peltier turns 79 on **September 12, 2023**. We urge our readers to write to him and join efforts to demand his release. As he puts it: "You need to do what's necessary to stop the exploitation and destruction of our people and our land. The best way to do that is through education. Make sure our children know how to provide for themselves and future generations and this Mother Earth" (see expanded remarks below).

For more information and more of Leonard's artwork, see freeleonardpeltiernow.org. Letters must be in black ink or typed, 16+ font, no gifts. Be sure to include return address on envelope and letter, no staples:

Leonard Peltier #89637-132
USP Coleman I
PO Box 1033
Coleman, FL 33521

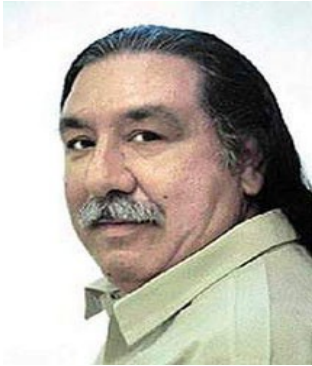


"Bright Eyes" by Leonard Peltier

A few birthday celebrations for Leonard Peltier:

- September 9, 149th Street and Third Avenue, Bronx, NY—2:00 to 5:00 pm
- September 12, Union Square, Manhattan, NY—5:00 to 7:00 pm
- September 12, The Chattaway, 358 22nd Ave S, St. Petersburg, FL. For information, contact Leonard Peltier Ad Hoc Committee: freeleonardpeltiernow.org

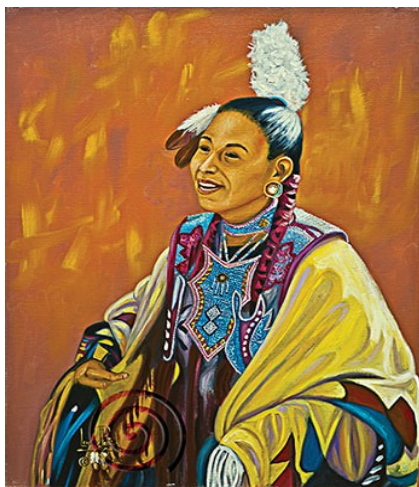
Statement by Leonard Peltier



Leonard Peltier—Native American Prisoner of War



"Bringing Down the Thunder"
by Leonard Peltier



"Kuwanyama butterfly"
by Leonard Peltier

We reprint below a portion of the statement that Leonard Peltier made on the 50th Anniversary of the resistance at the Pine Ridge Reservation in 1973—events in which he participated and was framed by the FBI for doing so. Free Leonard Now!

"In thinking about freedom and thinking about justice, it is very hard to not think about [my case.] When you are imprisoned, when you are in a box, a large coffin, day in and day out, year in and year out, it never ends.

"It's like you are buried alive. At this particular time of my imprisonment, not just me, but other prisoners in this maximum security facility are constantly put on unjustifiable lockdown, where we are confined to our cells day after day. It's like a prison within a prison. We are confined to a 6 by 10 foot space, with barely any room to move and we can't exercise, shower, or get medical attention. This has been happening constantly and it is a form of torture and is basically illegal. [...]

"Every piece of evidence used to convict me has been proven false in court. It is built on lies. They broke all kinds of international laws to get me out of Canada. They have not lived up to the agreements they signed when they extradited me. These things are a matter of court record—not me just saying it with an attitude. Information is still coming to light about two nations colluding to bury me.

"On that day in 1975 I stood against the extermination of our people. Almost five decades later I still stand, undestroyed.

"For almost five decades my life has been a series of tortures. In Canada I was held on death row, in a cellblock with no light, waiting to be executed. In Leavenworth they kept me in the hole for weeks without telling my people, in 130-degree heat. In Marion I was held under complete sensory deprivation. In Coleman 1 I have been locked down for two years in a filthy coffin without medical care, communication, or even a shower, for weeks at a time. Still, I stand in the truth.

"I could have left prison on a lie, but my sacrifice must count for something, or my life counts as nothing. [...]

"You need to do your part. You need to stand up. You need to speak out. You need to not only speak out, but you need to do things. You need to do what's necessary to stop the exploitation and destruction of our people and our land. The best way to do that is through education. Make sure our children know how to provide for themselves and future generations and this Mother Earth."

Editorial:

The Menacing Climate for Black, Brown, and Indigenous Peoples

As we prepare this issue another deadly attack on the Black community takes place. On the afternoon of Saturday, August 26, Ryan Palmeter, a 21-year-old white male, entered a Dollar General store in Jacksonville Florida, shot and killed three innocent Black people, then took his own life. He left behind several manifestos stating that he hated Black people.

An article published in the *Smithsonian Magazine* in September of 2020 highlighted the same findings documented in the Spirit of Mandela Tribunal of October 2021: that Black, Brown, and Indigenous peoples are suffering at the hands of systemic and structural oppression impacting every aspect of their lives.

Structural racism is inextricably intertwined with the political and legal systems in the United States, a legacy that predates the country's founding, through the genocide of Indigenous populations and the kidnapping and selling of millions of Africans into slavery. Today's compounded public health crisis of COVID-19 and police violence have disproportionately impacted Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) and elevated the global discourse around structural racism. . . . This same structural racism is also equally responsible for the elevated rates of COVID-19 infection and death among Black, Indigenous and Latinx people.

[\(Smithsonianmag.com/smithsonianinstitution/why-blacks-indigenous-and-otherpeople-of-color-experience-greater-harm-duringpandemic-180975773/](https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonianinstitution/why-blacks-indigenous-and-otherpeople-of-color-experience-greater-harm-duringpandemic-180975773/) September 15, 2020).

The mass murders in Buffalo, NY, and Uvalde, Texas, reveal only one aspect of the menacing and hateful climate Black, Brown, and Indigenous people in this country are enduring. White supremacist attacks, taking form as political repression and targeted violence, have also emerged in every facet of life, from voting rights to issues

of sovereignty for Indigenous peoples, to reproductive and maternal health care as well as health care costs and rights, to murder at the hands of police, and, sadly, more.

In light of these conditions, the emerging effort to organize a Peoples' Senate is both present and promising. As envisioned, the goal is to create a Peoples' Senate that has a two-fold organizing objective. First, the Peoples' Senate will be a national cohesive network reflective of poor and working-class communities across the United States, its colonies and territories. We encourage participation from individuals, grass roots organizations, and all groups fighting for justice. We are organizing to confront this system with one powerful voice for change. Secondly, we are also working to create a massive unified front among all oppressed nations from the Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities and other peoples of color colonized inside US borders, and those external territories colonized under the thumb of US capitalism, imperialism, and patriarchy such as Puerto Rico (Boricua) and Guam, among others.



Building such a Peoples' Senate will allow all our communities to represent themselves and fight for their own interests from a base of power derived from their massive unity built from the bottom up. The Peoples' Senate will be a vehicle for change and an alternative structure to put decision-making in the hands of the people. Get on board and help us build it.

Poem:

Guantanamera

(The Girl from Guantanamo)

These words were composed originally by the Cuban nationalist poet José Martí. In 1929 Joseíto Fernández set Martí's words to music, and the resulting song has been widely adopted as a protest anthem by movements for peace, human rights, and social justice. There are many stirring renditions available on line. Our choice: youtube.com/watch?v=bIUSVALW_Z4

Yo soy un hombre sincero
De donde crece la palma
Y antes de morirme quiero
Echar mis versos del alma
Guantanamera, guajira Guantanamera

Mi verso es de un verde claro
Y de un carmín encendido
Mi verso es un ciervo herido
Que busca en el monte amparo
Guantanamera, guajira Guantanamera

Cultivo una rosa blanca
En julio como en enero
Para el amigo sincero
Que me da su mano franca
Guantanamera, guajira Guantanamera

Con los pobres de la tierra
Quiero yo mi suerte echar
El arroyo de la sierra
Me complace más que el mar
Guantanamera, guajira Guantanamera

I am a truthful man
from the land of the palm trees
And before I die,
I should like to share my verses with you
Guantanamera, guajira, Guantanamera

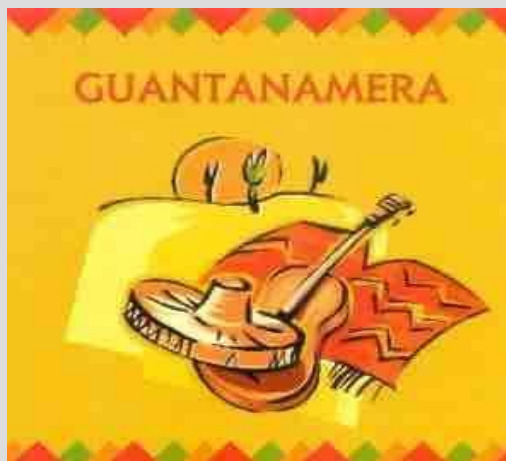
My verses are a clear green,
and they are a flaming crimson
My verses are a wounded deer
which I look for in my beloved mountain
Guantanamera, guajira, Guantanamera

I cultivate a white rose
In July as in January
For a true friend
Who gives me his honest hand
Guantanamera, guajira, Guantanamera

With the poor people of this earth
I will cast my fate
The streams of the mountain
are more pleasing to me than the sea
Guantanamera, guajira, Guantanamera



Statue of José Martí, Havana
Photo by Richard Smith



Graphic: spanishtutorinfo.wordpress.com/2015/02/17/guantanamera/

New Jail or Social Services? The People Must Decide!

By Peoples' Senate Buffalo Committee

The leaflet below is being widely distributed in Buffalo, New York, as part of the efforts of Peoples' Senate, which is working in collaboration with others to block construction of a new jail and bring forward the vision of the people for the needs of the community.



Erie County, NY, is planning to build a new jail at an estimated cost of \$200-250 million using public tax dollars. Even though both the downtown Holding Center and Alden Correctional Facility are currently about half full, the new jail is to have 1500 new beds. Why are so many new beds needed? Is there a plan to increase arrests and racist mass incarceration?

There is no doubt the Holding Center has horrendous conditions, including a high suicide rate. But building a new expanded jail with the same vision and enforcement to unjustly incarcerate and criminalize—not educate and provide for our youth—will solve no problem. Spending \$200 million in public funds on more jailing and racist attacks while doing nothing to target the violence of poverty will worsen the situation in our communities. We say NO! Stop Funding Jails and Fund Our Rights!

At this time, funding for the new jail has not yet been approved. The Erie County Legislature is in the process of doing yet another study, called a

“Community Needs Assessment.” But the community is being left out of the process and blocked from being decision makers on what is needed. Indeed, there is already talk by the county that the “community” will be defined as only the jail and the incarcerated workers they hold. And this is the case even though two well-attended community forums made clear that people do not want a new jail and want funding to meet their needs.

We cannot wait for Erie County to decide what is needed. By calling for a new jail, they have already failed. It is the community, together, that must decide and must ourselves organize to develop a concrete proposal for what is needed.



We are the experts, we are the ones experiencing poverty, lack of housing, lack of health care, lack of job training, of recreation centers, community gardens and more. We have solutions! The Peoples' Senate along with others is organizing to hear the voice of the community and work together to develop our own assessment of community needs and demanding that Erie County support our right to decide!

Join in, let us know what you think!



Performers at July 8 Northeast Peoples' Senate fundraiser and art show, in order of performance (from top left to bottom right): Steve Bloom, Sheree McHenry, Haddy Hadd, Ali Dineen, Farid Bitar, Jalil Muntaqim, Vera Love, Grand Master IRON FiST (Rixaru), Ty Blizzy. Video of the event is available at:

[YouTu.be/K9axTexSvY4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K9axTexSvY4).

Northeast Peoples' Senate Launches with Counter-Genocidal Festivities

by tag harmon

July 8-9, 2023, marked a pivotal phase in the development of the Northeast region's Peoples' Senate organizing project—comprising the states of Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania—as Peoples' Senate Northeast made its public launch with a weekend of activities from the Lower East Side (LES), to Brooklyn, to Harlem.

It started off with two events on Saturday: An art show and performance event starting at 1 pm at the Earth Church in Manhattan's historic Lower East Side on Avenue C. Performers

included poets, singer-songwriters, and hip-hop artists: Ty Blizzy, Ali Dineen, Farid Bitar, Sheree McHenry, Haddy Hadd, Jalil Muntaqim, Vera Love, Rixaru (Grand Master IRON FiST), and Steve Bloom. Continuing government genocide and the importance of joining the work of the Peoples' Senate to building an alternative were addressed by more than one participant. The work to oppose police killings, free political prisoners, and develop a culture of resistance was felt by all.

From there the counter-genocidal festivities continued

across the Brooklyn Bridge, where those who attended the show and others linked with the Resistance in Brooklyn collective for BBQ and camaraderie. RnB holds down anti-July 4th barbecues annually and this year agreed to connect these efforts up with the Peoples' Senate Northeast weekend.

On Sunday afternoon, an in-person/zoom political discussion was held at Freedom Hall in Harlem. Participants, many new to the Peoples' Senate process, reported on a wide range of work—compatible with the struggle against the US genocide targeting Black, Brown,

and Indigenous peoples—occurring on the ground in communities around New York City. A few reports came in from other parts of the region as well, including organizing to oppose a new jail in Buffalo (see article on page 9 of this *Peoples' Senate Newsletter*).

There was a consensus among those in attendance to hold regular monthly meetings, with a date set for the first follow-up meeting of July 30. At that follow up, organizers representing NYC, Upstate, and PA, continued to build, with

those able to make it in person navigating even worse than usual weekend traffic and train delays to do so.



With a couple of dynamic meetings down and some promising activities now in the

works (including a Black August house party on the 26th), this steadily expanding Peoples' Senate region is enthusiastic about its prospects moving forward. Get up with the Peoples' Senate Northeast if you are in the CT-NJ-NY-PA area seeking cooperative self-determination. (See “How to Get Involved” box on this page.)

Video of the political discussion on Sunday, July 9, can be seen here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sVQ7jPoY_YM

How to get involved in the Peoples' Senate in your region:

If you would like to get involved in work to help build the Peoples' Senate in your region or local area, please fill out the form at [tinyurl.com/PS-form](https://www.tinyurl.com/PS-form). We will get in touch with all who submit their completed forms.

Southwest Conference on State-Authorized Executions

by Newsletter Correspondent



Conference panel including Sekou Odinga, Spirit of Mandela/Peoples' Senate; Kofi Taharka, National Black United Front chairman; and Cyril Bullwhip Innes, Black Panther Alumni.

The first major regional gathering in preparation and building for the Peoples' Senate took place in Houston, Texas, from May 28-30, 2023. Because the issue of the death penalty looms so large as a touchstone issue in Texas and through-

out the region, the series of gatherings were billed as “A Southwest Conference on State-Authorized Executions.” The connections between prison abolition work, support for the release of all political prisoners, death penalty reforms, and the

five main verdict areas of the 2021 Tribunal were expertly woven together by numerous speakers and by organizer Tania Saddiqi, a recent graduate of the Dedman School of Law in Dallas and columnist for *Workers World* newspaper. Saddiqi worked closely with the SHAPE Community Center in Houston, whose historic annual Pan-African Cultural Festival opened the weekend with an insightful and inspiring public event featuring former political prisoner and Peoples' Senate organizer Sekou Odinga, activist and professor Joy James, Black Panther Alumni Association affiliate Cyril Bullwhip Innis, National Back United Front Chairman Kofi Taharka, Black Power Media producer Kalonji Changa, and Akwete Tyehimba, CEO of Dallas's Pan-African Connection. SHAPE Community Center representative Trey Legal moderated the session. There was discussion on developing unity and movement-building perspectives across generations, ideologies, and beyond.

The second day of the gathering included stirring testimonies and participation from

families of those on death row, historic and contemporary overviews by professors Dr. Gerald Horne and Dr. Rick Halperin, historians and social justice organizers. Input from regional representatives of the Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition, the Nation of Islam, various former Black Panther leaders, and Spirit of Mandela's own *dequi kioni sadiki*.

A third-day trip to Galveston Island, where the teachers became students as we learned about the origins of Juneteenth in the first place it was celebrated and the long impact of slavery and resistance in this region of the US empire. An internal meeting reaffirmed the ongoing nature of the work needed to build for a full-on, unifying anti-death penalty Tribunal, as well as more regional work on the People's Senate. Side meetings with elders of the Black/African church and supporters of the International Indian Treaty Council ensured that future work in the Southwest will bring together even more diverse people into ever-deepening conversations.

Our International Work:

Conference in Trinidad "Rooted Futures: Visions of Peace and Justice"

by Matt Meyer

It was more than a little dramatic moment when the Bolivian Minister of Traditional Health—a top governmental official in the current progressive government who herself is of Indigenous Quechua descent—picked up the 2021 booklet with the words "We Still Charge Genocide" on the cover. Reading the back cover containing Assasta Shakur's powerful poem "No One Can Stop the Rain" (itself a reference to a key line in the poem "Here in Prison" by Angolan freedom fighter Agostinho Neto), Vivian Tatiana Camacho Hinojosa closed the final plenary of the May 2023 International Peace Research Association (IPRA) conference held in Trinidad and Tobago urging all



Bolivian Minister of Traditional Medicine Vivian Camacho with conference co-coordinator Matt Meyer

participants to remember that “each of you is the seed of the world. The world of racism and violence and capitalism is falling because of you!”



Three Jurists of the 2021 Spirit of Mandela International Tribunal (Haiti's Sherly Fabre, France's Mireille Fanon Mendès-France, and South Africa's Magdalene Moonsamy) and core SofM/Peoples' Senate leaders Jihad Abdulmumit and Luis Rosa Perez.

The international work of the Spirit of Mandela coalition has taken us to a major reparations conference in Barbados, to a Pan-African gathering in South Sudan, to a high-level series of meetings with Venezuelan leaders both in Venezuela and in the US, and much more. The

IPRA Trinidad conference was especially significant in that it brought together three of the distinguished independent Panel of Jurists of the 2021 Tribunal (including two who were prevented from attending the NYC activities in person—France's Mireille Fanon Mendès-France, South Africa's Magdalene Moonsamy, and Haiti's Sherly Fabre—along with SofM Coordinating Committee members Jihad Abdulmumit and myself (Matt Meyer), and key Puerto Rican Spirit of Mandela associate Luis Rosa Pérez, himself a former political prisoner.

The conference, titled “Rooted Futures: Visions of Peace and Justice,” addressed various topics, including human rights, genocide, indigenous resurgence, protecting the environment, all of us in tribute to the birthday anniversary of Minister Malcolm X. It also spotlighted the on-restorative justice, healing from trauma, and many More. The night before Camacho's rousing closing presentation, the plenary on May 19 featured all of us in tribute to the birthday anniversary of Minister Malcolm X. It also spotlighted the ongoing work and plans for the People's Senate and building grassroots national/international capacity within the US and throughout the Americas and beyond.

Joining the Peoples' Senate:

Joining the Peoples' Senate is a formal, but easy process. You do not give up your autonomy or your organizing strategies. Please visit spiritofmandela.org/peoples-senate-recruitment-form. There you can fill in the “Interest Form” so we know who you are. Then click the box that says “Peoples' Senate Membership Agreement” (PSMA), which you can also fill in and sign at the bottom.

Those who sign the PSMA “agree to work with other member organizations and individuals in upholding the Vision & Mission Statement of the Peoples' Senate.” Each signer “also agrees with and supports the political position and outcome of the 2021 International Tribunal which found the US guilty of five counts of genocide against Black, Brown, and Indigenous peoples.”

The Peoples' Senate is a multiracial, intergenerational coalition that welcomes all individuals and organizations prepared to join the work, and our efforts to bring forward the voice and leadership of Black, Brown, and Indigenous peoples.

International Conference in Venezuela Defends Political Prisoner Alex Saab

Interview with **Jalil Muntaqim**, former political prisoner and active participant in organizing for the **Peoples' Senate**, conducted by the staff of the *Peoples' Senate Newsletter*

PS Newsletter: In June you were invited to a conference in Venezuela titled "LawFare Against Venezuela: Three Years Since the Kidnapping of Diplomat Alex Saab." Can you tell us a little bit about the conference, who organized it and what it was trying to achieve?

Jalil Muntaqim: It was more than a conference. In fact, the Venezuela Peoples' Assembly convened for the specific purpose of declaring Alex Saab a political prisoner. Saab is the kidnapped diplomat from Venezuela who was defying the illegal embargo the US imperialist empire has imposed on that sovereign nation, attempting to ensure the Venezuelan people have access to food, clothing, housing, jobs, etc. Camille Sabb, the wife of Alex, has organized an international

campaign to assist and support her husband's release from jail in Florida, very similar to the type of national and international campaigns organized for the release of our own political prisoners and prisoners of war.



Jalil Muntaqim

Newsletter: How were you received by those in attendance? Were they aware of the struggle around political prisoners in the US, the history of the Black Panther Party, and other aspects of the struggle in this country?

JM: I was invited to attend the Declaration by the Peoples' As-

sembly in cooperation with the Alex Saab Freedom Campaign, and they provided escort from the airport to the hotel and other programs organized for the event. It should be noted progressives and revolutionaries were invited from several places around the world including Canada, Germany, Spain, Ireland, Italy, Slovenia, as well as Nigeria, Paraguay, Argentina, Chile, and many more. We all were treated exceptionally well, and many knew the history of the Black Panther Party and other aspects of our struggle. I was provided an opportunity to speak at the reception in Camille Saab's office to a group of these international activists and further explained the socioeconomic and political struggles we are engaged with in this country, including the building of the Peoples' Senate.



Venezuelans march against US sanctions and for the release of Alex Saab
(Photo: Roi Lopez Rivas via Twitter)

Newsletter: Why do you think supporters of the Peoples' Senate should be interested in what's happening in Venezuela?

JM: It's extremely important for the Peoples' Senate to have an internationalist understanding that includes the negative impact of US imperialism. If we do, then the Peoples' Senate will be able to evolve working relationships with progressive forces in opposition to US imperialism and white supremacy in other parts of the world. This will strengthen our capacity to resist genocidal actions by the

corporate settler government.

Newsletter: What are the primary things you take away from this experience?

JM: There is a great need for our struggle to develop diplomats, those trained to understand the political direction of our struggle and able to articulate our issues, struggles and goals, and directions in international solidarity; develop international networks of communications between progressives/activists forging greater anti-imperialist solidarity; ensure the international progres-

sive community is thoroughly aware that our struggle is the principle struggle because we are in the belly of the beast. They will, therefore, need to assist and support our efforts to end this system of capitalist-imperialism and white supremacy from committing harm to us and all peoples around the world.

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A full report by Jalil on his trip to Venezuela can be found here:

popularresistance.org/report-from-venezuela-on-the-case-of-alex-saab/



Demand to Free Alex Saab at Puerto Rican Day Parade, New York City. (Photo: Fuser News)



Rally in Venezuela calling to free diplomat Alex Saab



"United America's" by Hamza

Calendar of Events:

- September 12—**Political Prisoner Birthday: Leonard Peltier** (freeleonardpeltiernow.org). See tribute starting on page 5 of this newsletter.
- September 22-25, Puerto Rico—**Spirit of Mandela, Peoples' Senate, National Jericho, and ex-political prisoner gathering; Aguadilla, San Juan, and Lares, Puerto Rico.** This historic gathering bringing together for the first time in significant numbers former political prisoners/prisoners of war from the Black/New Afrikan, Puerto Rican, and white anti-imperialist movements will serve as a strategic planning space for our movement-building. Included in weekend plans are: building of the Peoples' Senate “external territories” region (with participation from both Puerto Rico and Guam), follow-up of the 2021 Tribunal verdict's international work (with Deputy President Jurist Wilma Reverón Collazo, Oscar López Rivera, and others), retreat space for Jericho organizers, and more.
- Sunday, September 24, 1 pm (and **recurring every last Sunday** of every month)—**Northeast regional organizing meeting**, combined in-person and Zoom. For more information, PSNortheast@proton.me
- October 4—**Political Prisoner Birthday: Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin** (imamjamilactionnetwork.org).
- October 8—**Political Prisoner Birthday: Malik El-Amin** (vi3.org).
- November 1—**Political Prisoner Birthday: Ed Poindexter** (thejerichomovement.com/profile/poindexter-ed).
- November 30 —**Political Prisoner Birthday: Larry Hoover** (newafrikan77.wordpress.com).

The **Spirit of Mandela** website maintains a broad movement calendar at spiritofmandela.org/news-events. If you would like to submit an event for this calendar please do so by filling in the form at tinyurl.com/SoM-calendar.

Links and Resources:

Spirit of Mandela webpage: spiritofmandela.org

Peoples' Senate webpage: spiritofmandela.org/new-page-1

October 2021 International Tribunal verdict and information: tribunal2021.com

Peoples' Senate Webinar video (February 18, 2023): youtu.be/c0bXzBFbYIg