



30 January 2009

President Barack Hussein Obama  
President of the United States of America  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

The Emancipation Support Committee of Trinidad and Tobago, which serves as the Secretariat for the Caribbean Pan African Network, wishes to join those voices from around the globe who have expressed congratulations to you, President Barack H. Obama, on your assumption of the highest office in the United States. We stand among the countless millions whose hopes give energy to the historical momentum for a world that is based on social justice, equality and respect for the dignity of each human being, hopes that you have come to symbolise at this moment in history.

Mr. President, although our organisation is based in a small region of the world which comprises some of the smallest states in the world, we represent a people with a significant history who have fought injustices since Africans were forced into enslavement in the Caribbean in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century. Our ancestors are among those who struggled and triumphed against enslavement and colonialism to form the first free nation in the Western hemisphere, Haiti. This courageous past has helped to define our present day abhorrence for social injustice and our commitment to end inequality, which we have demonstrated in our struggles through all available national and international fora against the inhumanities of colonialism, apartheid and military occupation.

Mr. President, in congratulating you, we promise our full support for programs which are designed to eradicate the most abominable abuses that mar our world today. As Caribbean people our thoughts are always with Haiti and Cuba, both of which have been long-standing victims of misguided US Foreign policy, and the territories which are still colonies of European powers.

Your approach to international issues gives us reason to believe that we will soon see an end to the blockade on Cuba which is denounced by almost every country in the world. A new environment will strengthen the pleas of those suffering the indignity of disguised colonialism. Your campaign and victory have raised our hopes that you will make the transformation of American foreign policy towards Haiti one of the missions of your historic presidency, putting an end to the destabilizing interventions which prevent the Haitian people from freely shaping their future, impoverish them, create insecurity and force them, in desperation, to flee their beloved homeland. Our intention is not to stand back but to be involved in the process of development partnership which will be greatly facilitated when, for example, you undertake full and unconditional cancellation of Haiti's bilateral debt to the USA, and deploy your country's influence with other bilateral and multilateral creditors, including the World Bank, to do the same.

Mr. President as part of those peoples in the world who are weary of the endless bombs destroying the sleep and lives of too many children of the world, we look forward to your initiatives that will bring peace and development to those who have known only suffering, hunger and violence. We look forward to programmes that will ease the suffering of families, and bring improved life chances to young people whether they are found among the marginalised Indigenous or Afro Descendant populations of Latin America, the people of Palestine, the Middle East, Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, or the inner cities of the United States of America.

May we take this opportunity Mr. President to express our best wishes to you and the first lady, Mrs Michelle Obama and your children Sasha and Malia , and thank you for the positive images which you have given to the world, and in particular the world of African people, on your assumption of the presidency of the United States of America. Wherever Africans reside, on the continent or in the Diaspora, your victory created an avalanche of collective pride and renewed self-confidence which we hope to see maintained with every step you take along a challenging path in turbulent times.

Respectfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Khafra Kambon', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Khafra Kambon  
Chairman