

## WORLD NEWS

# MIPAD Highlights Black People in Hopes of Advancing Global Black Power

By Alyssa Wilson 

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 MIPAD CEO Kamil Olufowobi giving an award on behalf of the organization. (Photo Credit: Most Influential People of African Descent)

## IN SUMMARY

MIPAD is on a mission to unite Black communities on a global scale to improve the life of people of African descent around the world.

When enslaved Black people were taken from Africa, separated and forced to be laborers in other nations, it became a catalyst for years of racism they would face for centuries.

Although their descendants emerged into new cultures with African roots, their connections to Black people with similar origin stories were severed. Those broken connections continue to cause lags in the advancement of Black people around the globe, according to [Kamil Olufowobi](#), the CEO of the [Most Influential People of African Descent \(MIPAD\)](#).

The United Nations launched a commitment to advancing the lives of Black people globally with the [International Decade for People of African Descent](#). The decade, set to be observed from 2015 to 2024, aims to improve the quality of life for these individuals.

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“Whether as descendants of the victims of the transatlantic slave trade or as more recent migrants, they constitute some of the poorest and most marginalized groups,” the [United Nations said](#). “Studies and findings by international and national bodies demonstrate that people of African descent still have limited access to quality education, health services, housing and social security.”

The decade is built on the three pillars of recognition, justice and development. “So the pillar of recognition is to recognize the contributions of people of African descent to human societies across the world, both historical and also in the present day,” Olufowobi said. “Now the pillar of justice is to give us access to justice for the historical injustice that has been committed to people of African descent, while the third pillar of the decade is development and that is to develop our people as a collective.”

As the head of MIPAD, he works to make sure the organization assists the U.N. with meeting those goals and adhering to the pillars. “So the big idea for MIPAD is to mobilize the most influential people of African descent in each country in each U.N. member state,” he said.

He hopes that representatives from each of the 193 member states can work together to create plans that will protect the human rights and civil liberties of Black people in each of the countries.

When asked what the greatest threats are to people of African descent, Olufowobi said there’s a lack of visibility. “We are not even recognized as a people. As citizens of that country and yet we are, you know, contributing right to the development of each and every one of these countries,” he said. “And then when you recognize our contributions to your societies, legally, politically, legislation-wise and policy, that is when we can now begin the conversation.”

Another point that’s important to address for the global advancement of people of African descent is the disconnection that exists between African Americans and other Black people in other countries. Olufowobi said the disconnection is “a very America-centric approach to the world,” signaling that African Americans are partially to blame for the disconnection. “It’s a fact that America believes it’s the center of the world. The Black people here also approach the world from that standpoint.”

While Black people exist and live in every country on the planet, Olufowobi wants a better connection to exist between them. “It’s okay for us as a people to be dispersed around the world. What is not okay is our disconnection as a people,” he said.

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Olufowobi believes a better connection would help Black people in multiple countries tackle their prospective issues. “We’re fighting reparations around the world and we’re not even coordinated on it. The [Namibians got reparations](#) from the Germans. The [Caribbeans are fighting for reparations](#) from Europe,” he said. “The Black Americans are fighting for reparations from the U.S. government, but it is all disconnected,” he said.

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One of the countries he shouted out for getting it right was Canada, calling them the gold standard. “It is the only country at the moment in the 10 years of this decade where the president of the country, Trudeau himself, officially recognized the decade.” Trudeau also announced [a list of initiatives](#) to help Canada reach those goals.

Part of MIPAD’s work includes highlighting people of African descent who contribute to Black people’s well-being globally. More than 800 honorees from more than 80 countries were selected for the honor. The [2021 honorees](#) include Manhattan U.S. attorney Damian Williams, former football player and television host Emmanuel Acho, filmmaker Ava DuVernay and musician Burna Boy.

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This photo shows the covers of various MIPAD publication materials used at events and meetings.

MIPAD's most popular list is the 100 most influential people under 40. The categories include politics and governance, business and entrepreneurship, media and culture and humanitarian endeavors. To be recognized by MIPAD means that one understands the power of their influence. "There are many influential people of African descent who are not using their influence to do anything for our collective," Olufowobi said. "... being a MIPADian is a lifestyle of standing up for equity, justice and inclusion."



This photo shows the covers of various MIPAD publication materials used at events and meetings.

Olufowobi and MIPAD would like to see Black people understand the power of the collective. "Remember, power is more effective concentrated," Olufowobi said. He also hopes to see a rise in Black ownership. "If Tyler Perry wanted to buy another studio, we should all be able to put the money in a collective pool," he said. While he thinks it is okay for Black people to consume products, he wants us to be leaders in production as well.

Although there are only a few years left in the decade, there is still time to get involved. Olufowobi recommends getting institutions you're a part of to recognize the decade and its initiatives. "Get your city to officially recognize it," he said. "Just the awareness to know and officially recognize this decade is a first step in the right direction. Tell every Black person you know that there is a decade."

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MIPAD is also accepting nominations for people of African descent who are already doing the work and using their influence to stand up for equality. Lastly, the organization is accepting donations to continue its work to enhance the quality of life for Black people around the globe. The organization also offers training programs to help people who want to get more involved in enhancing the lives of Black people globally.

“So those are the three things I would love to see. Number one, awareness that people know the decade exists. Number two, is for you to nominate people who are doing the work because they’re MIPADians, meaning they’re already standing up and using their influence for us as a people,” Olufowobi said. “And third, is for you to become the best version of yourself. Sign up for our training program so that you can also one day make the list once you begin to operate at your own highest possibilities.”

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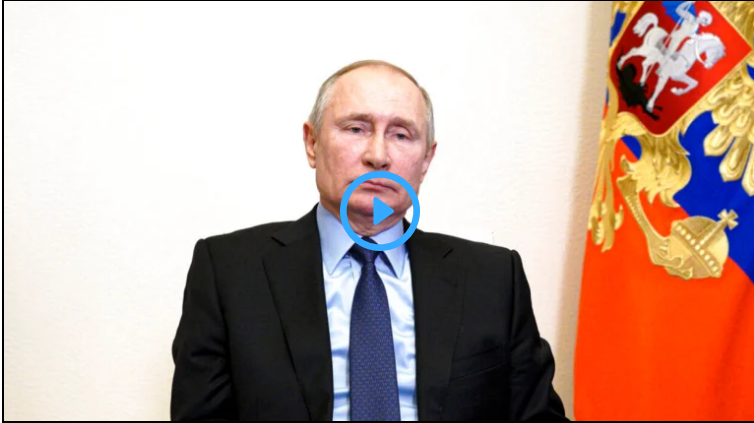
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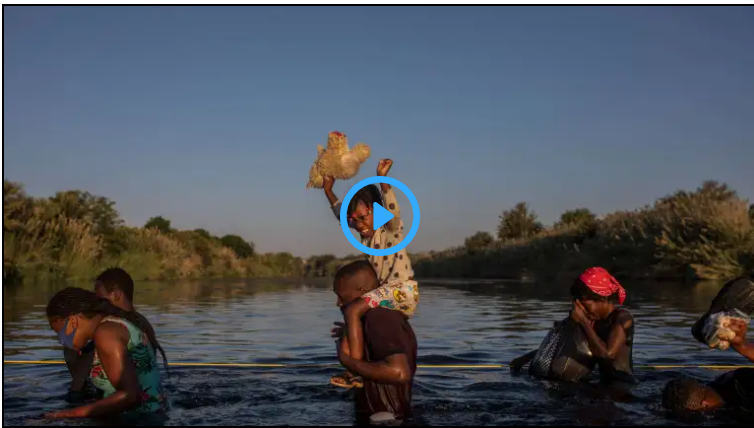
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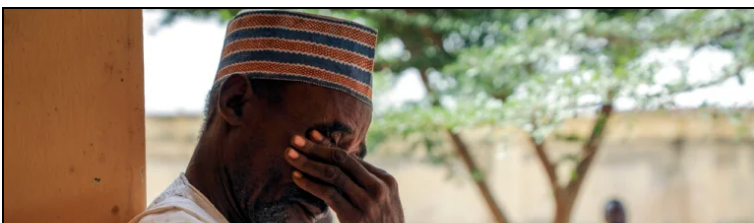
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