"Once Again"

A PAN Statement on the Killing of George Floyd

June 3, 2020

We are in pain!

We are enraged!

We are tired of the countless acts of barbaric brutality that continue to be perpetrated against Black bodies.

Each feels deeply painful, like losing a family member….over and over again.

It has to stop!

We are already emotionally fatigued by the relentless all-encompassing reality of living in time of COVID. As an organization with a majority Black constituency, we recognize the catastrophic impact systemic police brutality is having on our communities. The killing of yet more Black people at the hands of the police, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmad Aubrey adds to the existing reality of being marginalized, dehumanized and not valued!

Bearing witness to yet another brutal killing and sickened by the sight of George Lloyd gasping for breath as he died, PAN is heartened by the hundreds of thousands of people have taken to the streets we join the ongoing demands for justice for all African peoples in the USA.

Our organization is built on the legacy of struggle against racial injustice, Apartheid in South Africa and we continue to call for justice, in America, and globally. Dozens of diasporic
communities PAN works with, Congolese, Ghanaian, Eritrean, Ethiopian, Nigerian, and Kenyan to name a few, are expressing profound grief through social media, as we struggle with this most overt expression of racism. We ache for our children whom we raise in love, to risk their lives on the streets.

We cannot stand aside and see such historic injustice without condemning it in the strongest terms.

We stand in solidarity with justice-loving groups across the country, committing to fight endemic US racism, a scourge that is only underlined by the pandemic.

We include in closing a poem by one of our board members, Gerald Lenoir.

**Once Again!**

Once again, a brother lies dead in the street

Once again, he screams, “I can’t breathe” with no relief

Once again, policemen stand idly by while

Once again, a man in blue condemns a Black man to die.

Once again, Black lives really don’t matter

Once again, a Black body is crushed and shattered

Once again, Black lives are under attack

Once again, a man dies because he’s Black

Once again, we pray, we march, we dissent

Once again, we rage, we cry, we vent

Once again, we ask: how can this still be?

Once again, we answer: white supremacy.

America has never paid for its original sin

Not for what is or what has always been

So, we continue to pay for the color of our skin

Not once, but again, and again, and again.