



**ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
REPARATIONS SUPPORT COMMISSION**

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.....towards reparations

03 July 2019

**Hon. Minister for Sports, Culture, National Festivals and the Arts,
Ministry Headquarters,
Cassada Gardens,
St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda**

Dear Minister,
RE-NAMING INITIATIVE

We understand that the subject 'Reparations' did not appear on the agenda of the Heads of Government Conference although a number of issues were ready for presentation.

However we note that the 36th Meeting of The Council for Human and Social Development (**COHSOD**) on Culture *'supported the proposal [from the CARICOM Reparations Commission (CRC)] for a coordinated regional renaming project of monuments, streets and public spaces that bear names linked with the history of slavery and colonialism and recommended that National Reparations Committees take the lead on the initiative'*. The CRC suggested that announcements be made for Emancipation Day 2019.

ABRSC has given thought to this initiative which it fully supports. We see public spaces/monuments as potential communicators of a public information/education programme designed to instill national pride in the present generations and pay homage to those who helped shape our past.

We call for a national approach to the implementation and continuation of the initiative and recommend that the Ministry of Culture appoints a national committee which includes the representation of history teachers and students, media, NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs) to make recommendations for renaming. ABRSC is eager to participate.

The Committee should be tasked with – over the next six months:

- Present to the Minister of Culture recommendations for the re-naming of at least ten 'monuments, streets and public spaces'. Documentation must include, inter alia, the history of the 'public space/item', the history of the name it bears, its value and potential as an educational tool, the main streams of public/community opinion etc.
- Recommendations for new name(s) should be fully supported through written or oral documentation.

The above notwithstanding, we urge that immediate consideration be given to the re-naming of the Victoria Park [Botanical Garden] to jump start the initiative. Controversy can be avoided by simply re-naming it 'St. John's Botanical Gardens'.

We envision you at the 'Watchnight Gathering/31st July' announcing the establishment of the 'Re-naming Committee' and also the change of [or intention to immediately change] the name of the space.

Sincerely yours,

Dorbrenne E. O'Marde (Mr.)
Chairperson / Antigua and Barbuda Reparations Support Commission
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cc: Prime Minister/Minister of Finance