

Supporting Statement for the African Union 6th Region Assembly Election

Name: **Claudia Webbe**

Home country: **United Kingdom**

Region: **Europe**

Occupation: **CEO| Consultant| Former Independent UK Member of Parliament (2019-2024)**

Education: **MSc, BA (Hons), MSML, MInstLM**

Email: **claudia.webbe@outlook.com**

WhatsApp number: **+44 7973816885**

Telephone: **+44 7973816885**

Introduction

I stand before you as a candidate for the African Union 6th Region Assembly Election, driven by a vision for unity and progress that resonates deeply with the aspirations of the African diaspora. My journey, rooted in over three decades of public service, community development, and policy advocacy, has been shaped by a commitment to social justice, environmental sustainability, and inclusive governance. With a profound understanding of the pressing issues affecting Africa and the diaspora, I seek to harness our collective power to effect meaningful change for our continent and people of the African diaspora. I believe I fit all of the criteria outlined in the Official Applications of ECOSOCC

Vision for Unity and Progress

At the core of my campaign is a vision of unity and progress, reflective of the aspirations encapsulated in Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. My diverse experiences across multiple sectors have equipped me with the tools to forge alliances and build coalitions that transcend geographical boundaries. I envision a future where the African diaspora is not merely a spectator to Africa's development but an active participant, contributing to a prosperous, integrated, and peaceful continent. The lessons learned from my tenure as an elected UK Member of Parliament for Leicester East, where I championed diverse causes and engaged with various constituents, will guide my approach to fostering collaboration among diaspora communities.

Understanding the Power of the African Diaspora

The African diaspora represents a formidable force capable of addressing the multifaceted challenges facing our continent. Our communities are essential in advocating for change, providing resources, and sharing expertise to uplift Africa. My extensive background in grassroots community organising across the UK, alongside my role as a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee in

Parliament, has honed my understanding of the diaspora's potential. I have successfully mobilised communities to advocate for their rights, demonstrated in my work on the exploitation of garment workers in Leicester. By amplifying their voices and ensuring their stories reach decision-makers, I have witnessed firsthand the transformative power of collective action.

Pressing Issues Facing the African Diaspora

The African diaspora faces numerous pressing issues that require urgent and strategic responses:

1. Systemic Racism and Discrimination:

Many members of the diaspora experience systemic racism and discrimination, affecting access to employment, education, and healthcare. I will advocate for policies that promote racial equity and challenge discriminatory practices, ensuring that our communities, particularly young people receive the support and protection they deserve.

2. Economic Disparities:

Economic inequality is a critical issue within the diaspora, with many individuals and families struggling to achieve financial stability. I will work to create economic opportunities through entrepreneurship programs, partnerships with businesses, public sector ownership and initiatives that support skills development, enabling the diaspora to thrive and contribute economically to Africa.

3. Cultural Identity and Heritage:

The diaspora often grapples with maintaining cultural identity in the face of assimilation pressures. I envision initiatives that celebrate and preserve African heritage, fostering cultural exchange programs that connect diaspora communities with their roots, ensuring that our rich traditions and values are passed down to future generations. This includes reclaiming our stolen African heritage and artefacts.

4. Political Representation:

Effective political representation is crucial for addressing the needs of the diaspora. I will advocate for greater inclusion of diaspora voices in decision-making processes, ensuring that policies reflect our collective interests and aspirations.

5. Health and Wellbeing:

The stressors of migration, displacement, and systemic inequities take a toll on the health and wellbeing of the diaspora. I will prioritise clinical, public and mental health initiatives that provide resources, support networks, and access to culturally competent care, addressing the unique challenges faced by our communities.

Professional Background and Leadership

My professional journey has been defined by leadership roles that demanded strategic thinking and the ability to navigate complex political landscapes. As the Executive Member for Environment and Transport in Islington and thus lead for tackling climate change, I managed a substantial budget and spearheaded initiatives that improved community well-being. My experience as Chief Executive of various charities, including the Downside Settlement, demonstrates my capacity to lead large teams and implement impactful programs.

My experience of leading initiatives and programmes for young people of the African diaspora across the UK in Handsworth, Birmingham; the Central Club, Reading; the Chapletown Community Centre, Leeds; Team Resources for Youth, Nottingham; Osaba Black Women's Centre, Coventry and of being the Chief Executive of two independent Race Equality Councils and formerly as Chair of Path (West Midlands) established to tackle housing inequity affecting people of the African diaspora, puts me in a unique position of understanding the power of leadership and change. These roles have not only enhanced my capacity for financial management and strategic planning but have also instilled a deep sense of accountability to the communities I serve.

As a campaigner I have been at the forefront of issues that impact the African diaspora, including as a member of the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Reparations and as one of the founders and Chair of Operation Trident, tackling the disproportionate impact of gun murders on people and communities of the African diaspora.

I have authored numerous articles and letters on Africa and the African diaspora addressing key social issues, including human rights and environmental policies, which have been published in various platforms and media outlets, effectively influencing public opinion and legislative priorities.

I have led parliamentary motions calling for action and change for the betterment of African nations and the people of the African diaspora, such as my primary sponsorship of a parliamentary motion advocating for and addressing UK human rights abuses and land dispossession issues affecting the Talai and Kipsigis people of Kenya, calling on the British government to right the wrongs. I have consistently without compromise campaigned for an end to Neo-colonialism, imperialism, and international debt injustice.

Along with others I signed a motion in 2021 to the African Union Executive Council calling for action to expedite the participation of the African Diaspora within the structures of the Africa Union.

Vision for the African Diaspora

I envision a vibrant and engaged African diaspora that plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of Africa. A diaspora that actively participates in discussions regarding trade, investment, and sustainable development while advocating for policies that prioritise the welfare of our communities. Through my work with organisations such as the African Caribbean Centre in Leicester, I have laid the groundwork for initiatives promoting cultural exchange and economic collaboration, which are vital for the empowerment of our diaspora and, ultimately, our Africa continent.

Why I Am the Right Candidate

I am the right candidate for the 6th Region Assembly because I possess a unique blend of experience, passion, and commitment to the values of Pan-Africanism. My track record of advocating for marginalised communities, coupled with my ability to navigate international politics, positions me as a strong representative of the diaspora's interests. My tenure as a Member of Parliament has equipped me with valuable insights into legislative processes and the importance of advocacy at the international level. I understand the intricacies of policy-making and the necessity of aligning our goals with global frameworks such as Agenda 2063.

Priorities as the 6th Region Representative

As your representative, my priorities will be to:

- a) **Advocate for Inclusive Policies:** I will push for policies that reflect diversity and aspirations of the African diaspora, ensuring that our voices are heard in decision-making processes.
- b) **Foster Sustainable and Economic Development:** I will work to create partnerships between the diaspora and African nations that promote sustainable economic growth, focusing on sectors like infrastructure, agriculture, and technology.
- c) **Champion Human Rights and Social Justice:** My commitment to social justice will drive my efforts to address human rights abuses and inequity in the African diaspora and on the continent, advocating for equitable treatment of all Africans, regardless of their geographical location.
- d) **Promote Cultural Exchange and Education:** I will facilitate initiatives that foster cultural exchange and educational opportunities, connecting the diaspora with African institutions to promote mutual understanding and development.

- e) **Address Health and Wellbeing:** I will prioritise initiatives that support health and well-being within the diaspora, ensuring access to culturally competent resources and fostering supportive community networks.

Commitment to Delivering Results

My commitment to delivering results is evidenced by my extensive history of effecting change within communities. At the Downside Settlement, I led a multi-million-pound refurbishment project that transformed the lives of young people and their families. Similarly, as a political advisor to the first Mayor of London, I contributed to the development of policies that championed arts, culture, and equality. My track record demonstrates that I not only have the vision but the practical skills necessary to implement change.

The Call to Action for Africa

The call to action for Africa is urgent and necessary. The continent faces numerous challenges, including economic disparities, climate change, and political instability, all of which require a unified response. I believe that the diaspora must play a vital role in addressing these issues by leveraging their skills and networks to support Africa's development. By galvanising our communities and advocating for collective action, we can contribute to a future where Africa stands as a global powerhouse, resilient and self-sufficient.

Conclusion

In conclusion, my candidacy for the African Union 6th Region Assembly Election is rooted in a profound commitment to the ideals of Pan-Africanism, social justice, and inclusive governance. I bring a wealth of experience, a deep understanding of the diaspora's potential, and a vision for a united Africa that prioritises the voices of its people. Together, we can build a future that reflects our shared aspirations and the promise of Agenda 2063. I humbly ask for your support in this endeavour, as we embark on a journey towards a brighter, more equitable Africa for all. Thank you.

Claudia Webbe

X: <https://x.com/claudiawebbe>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/claudiawebbe>

LinkTree: <https://linktr.ee/claudiawebbe>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/claudia-webbe>