

Key timeline of eight ‘R’s and restitution events

1919	Marcus Garvey launches the Universal Negro Improvement Association to create a continental African State where Africans in the diaspora could physically return
1947	Following Ethiopian requests, Italy signs a pledge to the United Nations to give back all property plundered from Ethiopia
1948	Emperor Haile Selassie makes land available for Africans in the diaspora who contributed to Ethiopia’s war effort against the invading Italian forces
1976	Nigeria requests the return of the FESTAC '77 emblem
1987	ENCOBRA reparations group formed in the USA
1989	US House of Representatives member John Conyers introduces HR. 40 – a bill that he would subsequently introduce annually until his retirement in 2017, to establish a commission to examine the institution of slavery in the US and recommend appropriate remedies
1992	The Organisation of African Unity establishes its African Reparations Committee
1993	African Reparations Movement is established by Bernie Grant MP in the UK. ARM demonstrates outside the British Museum, demanding the return of the Benin Bronzes
1995	African Remembrance Day is formed in the UK, the first Remembrance Day event, with Bernie Grant MP as keynote speaker
1996	Lord Gifford QC initiates a debate in the UK House of Lords concerning African reparations
1998	Ghana establishes Emancipation Day
2001	UN Conference against Racism and Xenophobia held in Durban, South Africa. Slavery is declared a crime against humanity
2002	Return and burial of the body of Sarah Baartman to South Africa
2003	The Association for the Return of the Maqdala Ethiopian Treasures write to Edinburgh University, seeking the return of looted manuscripts, held in the University Library
2005	1,700-year-old granite obelisk returned home from Italy to Ethiopia, 68 years after it was looted by Benito Mussolini
2007	British state launches a year-long commemoration of the Abolition of the Slave Trade
2008	Restitution of the bust of Marcus Aurelius from the US to Algeria
2008	France returns more than 260 stolen archaeological items to Burkina Faso
2013	CARICOM governments issue reparations call and establish 10-point reparations plan
2014	Coalition of diaspora groups begin annual reparations petition marches to Downing Street
2014	UN Decade of People of African Descent is launched
2018	Senegal’s president Macky Sall opens the Musée des Civilisations Noires (the Museum of Black Civilisations) in Dakar, a new focal point for restitution activists
2018	The Ethiopian government calls on the British Museum to follow the example of the Victoria and Albert Museum and offer to return the Maqdala treasures on long-term loan
2018	Several major European institutions, including the British Museum, agree in principle, as part of the Benin Dialogue Group, to return artefacts to Nigeria on loan for a new museum, to be built by Sir David Adjaye, and set to open in 2021
2019	Egyptian government calls on the National Museum of Scotland to certify its Egyptian antiquities after a row over plans to display a casing stone from the Great Pyramid of Giza
2019	The Sarr-Savoy Report recommends the return of all African artefacts in French institutions to their countries of origin
2019	Glasgow and University of the West Indies reach a £20m reparations settlement
2019	Open Society Foundations announces \$15 million of funding to support restitution campaigns in Europe and Africa
2020	On the sidelines of the 33rd African Union Summit led by Mali, 12 heads of state commit themselves to play the role of leadership, advocacy and facilitation for arts, culture and heritage. They include the presidents of Cape Verde, Ghana, Nigeria, Equatorial Guinea, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Morocco, Egypt, Kenya, Ethiopia, South Africa and Namibia
2020	The killing of George Floyd triggers a resurgence of the global Black Lives Matter movement that protests against the legacies of slavery, colonialism and structural racism. Issues of restitution and reparations are again high on the agenda