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**Ms. Cecile Johnson, Acknowledging and Leveraging the Power of Women**

***"If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom, and yet depreciate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters. This struggle may be a moral one; or it may be a physical one; or it may be both moral and physical; but it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will."***

— Frederick Douglass

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In order for Black people—people of African descent to move forward, we must understand the need for a collective purpose. We are unified as one body, one people, and one spirit. As we move forward, our collective consciousness, epistemology and will, must align itself in order to reconstruct our destiny. This Black Agenda is birthed out of the necessity of a powerful people to reclaim its freedom from the oppression of those who wish to do us harm. With one voice we say no more—as we move onward in the struggle, we are on the cusp of a great victory.

To those who have contributed to the authorship of this document, to our children, to our families, to future generations, the memory of our forebears, and the countless others who have died in the struggle, we say thank you. We acknowledge your sacrifices and applaud the great victories. We are resilient people, we are overcomers, we are committed to this work, and with the power of God—we will finish the course because this is our time.



The NBAC Chicago Board of Directors wishes to first acknowledge those that have come before us and developed a Black Agenda ; we build upon the work of those that stretch back to the first National Black events held in Cincinnati, Ohio in the 1820's and the first National Black Political Convention held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1830 (followed in 1832, 1833, 1835 and 1855).

At key junctures in American history, African American communities have hosted political conventions as a means to organize, focus on important issues, and demand effective action. Outstanding among them are conventions in 1840 in Albany, NY; 1875 in New Orleans, LA; 1905 in Niagara, NY; 1972 in Gary, IN; the 2004 National Black Agenda Conference held in Boston, Mass; and the 2012 National Black Agenda Convention – Virtual Conference in Chicago, Ill.

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And lest we forget, the NBAC Chicago Board of Directors acknowledges the work of Board Member Paula Green as Contributing Editor and Board Member Craig Wimberly as Digital Editor, for the Black Agenda 2016.

**Latest Revision:** Sections covering *Women'* and *Veterans* issues were added , along with updates to *Health and Wellness*, January of 2017.