**DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. TASK FORCE, INC.**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

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 **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 5 2021: Southfield, Michigan, USA

**Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Task Force Establishes the Costa Chica Fund**

**To Benefit of Afromexicans**

In commemoration of Black History Month, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Task Force, Inc., of Southfield, Michigan, USA, has established the “Costa Chica Fund” as part of the economic development project planned for that area of Guerrero, Mexico.

The Costa Chica region of the state of Guerrero, Mexico, has the largest percentage of Afromexicans in the country. Afromexicans were categorized and counted in the 2020 Census for the first time in the country’s history.

The [Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Task Force](https://www.mlktaskforcemi.org/), is a, 501 (C) (3) volunteer organization dedicated to peace, justice, and equality for all. [Mexico Negro, A.C.](https://imagine-mexico.com/mexico-negro-a-c-gets-national-recognition-for-human-rights/) (civic association), located in Cuajinicuilapa in the Costa Chica region of Guerrero, is a leading civil rights organization for Afromexicans.

Per a Memorandum of Understanding, recently signed by Tracey Payne-Tellis and Lic. Sergio Peñaloza Pérez, the presidents of both organizations, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Task Force will act as the fundraising entity in the United States on behalf of Mexico Negro, A.C. This arrangement will allow US citizens to make tax-deductible donations to support economic development projects in the Costa Chica region.

 Barbara Seldon, Co- Chair of International Relations and Programs Committee stated: “The relationship between these organizations began in 2011, when members of the foundations collaborated, under a grant by the Michigan Humanities Council, to investigate and develop the [“Pathways to Freedom/ Las Rutas de Liberdad” website](https://www.mlktaskforcemi.org/pathways-exhibit) and traveling exhibit about the shared experiences in the struggle for social, political, and economic parity for African descendants in both countries.”

Many Afromexican communities’ are rural, geographically isolated, and lack sufficient infrastructure – schools, hospitals, roads, etc. The first phase of this project is to assess the immediate needs of the community, following the COVID crisis, an earthquake in the area last year, and the country’s transition to remote education. People need food. Many homes lack mobile phones, computers, etc.

Tracey Payne-Tellis, President, stated: “The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Task Force will establish a “Go Fund Me” account to accept donations to help with this relief and recovery effort. “

The “Costa Chica Fund” is part of an economic initiative is to develop and sell culturally-relevant products or services, produced/provided by the people of the Costa Chica region to consumers within Mexico and throughout the world – hair care products, traditional fashions, books, calendars, artwork, masks, dance classes, cooking classes, tour services, etc.

Again, the Costa Chica Fund can be used to collect donations to buy sewing machines, to provide training classes, or for other items specifically approved by members of the charity foundations.

You can donate now by sending your check (Memo: Costa Chica Fund) to:

Dr. MLK, Jr. Task Force, Inc.

P. O. Box 3189

Southfield, Michigan 48037

Members of the International Committee of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Task Force are: Barbara E. Talley, Chair; Barbara Seldon, Co-Chair; Dorothy Dean, Esq.; Rev. Rosemerry Allen; Dr. Talia Weltman-Cisnero, Angela Enoch; and, in Mexico, Professors Patricia Ann Talley and Donají Mendez Tello, the co-founder of Mexico Negro, A.C., who will direct this project.

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