



“WHADN NEWS”

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Connecting Back — Moving Forward

1st African Congress for Scientific Technology and Drug Industry



The Honorable Ambassador H. E. Mrs. Gutrude Mongela, President of the Pan African Parliament with Dr. Sarah E. Moten, Chief, USAID Africa Bureau Office of Sustainable Development, Education Division.

The President of the Pan African Parliament. H.E. Getrude Mongela was recently in Washington D.C. to receive an award from O.I.C. International. During her visit, she was hosted by Dr. Sarah Moten, Chief, USAID, Africa Division.

The Pan African Parliament is the African Union's mechanism of bringing continental unity and building a strong and prosperous African Union. The Parliament will help unify the continent politically, economically and socially, and according to the protocol establishing the parliament, it will also provide a common platform for Africans and their grassroots organizations to be more involved in discussions and decision making on the problems and challenges facing the continent.

The 1st African Congress for Scientific Research, Technology & Drug Industry



H.E. (Dr.) Prof. Nagia Essayed, Commissioner for Human Resources, Science & Technology, African Union Commission speaking at the opening ceremony of the Congress.

organized by the African Society of Scientific Research & Technology (ASSRT), The Foundation for Democracy in Africa (FDA) African Union Commission (AUC), National Research Center (NRC) of Egypt and Egyptian Society of Health Awareness, took place from December 13-15, 2004 in Cairo, Egypt at the National Research Center of Egypt and the Mena House Oberoi hotel.

Participants from government and civil society organizations from Egypt, Algeria, Libya, Nigeria, Cameroon, Togo, Kenya, Uganda, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Democratic Republic of Congo, Senegal, Congo Brazzaville, Sudan, Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Bahamas, Jamaica and the United States of America (the FDA representing the Diaspora in the Western Hemisphere) attended the congress, including H.E. Gerard Kamanda Wa Kamanda, Minister of Science & Technology of the Democratic Republic of Congo; Honorable John Otim, Senior Presidential advisor, the Republic of Uganda; H.E. Abdel Kadar Hagag, Ambassador of Algeria to Egypt and; H.E. Yahaya M Madi, Ambassador of Malawi to the Arab Republic of Egypt among others.

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WHADN and African Union presentations at University of California, Los Angeles

At a forum organized by the African Studies Center of the University of California, Los Angeles on October 22, 2004, the African Union and WHADN were invited to speak.

Professor. Omatayo Olaniyan, permanent representative of the African Union to the United Nations, gave a comprehensive presentation on the African Union; the work the A.U. is doing on agriculture, conflict resolution, science and technological development, economic development and on HIV/AIDS. He also gave a presentation on the Mission & Vision of the African Union Commission.

Mr. Fred Oladeinde, President, The Foundation for Democracy in Africa,



Professor. Omatayo Olaniyan, Permanent Representative of the African Union to the United Nations.

the Secretariat for WHADN spoke on the historical perspective of the A.U. Diaspora initiative, the amendment of the Constitutive Act of the African Union, article 3q which states that the AU "invites and encourages the full participation of the African Diaspora as an important part of our continent, in the building of the African Union." Mr. Oladeinde also gave a broad overview of WHADN, its mission,

objectives and goals, and gave details on what WHADN has achieved since its formation as well as WHADN's short term, medium term and long



Mr. Fred Oladeinde speaking on the panel.

term plans and the time frames in which these plans will be implemented. Mr. Oladeinde also said that WHADN's visit to U.C.L.A. is part of its outreach program to further 'spread the word' about WHADN.

Mr. Malcolm Beech, representing the National Business League, a member of WHADN, gave an overview of the N.B.L. and its role in working within WHADN to engage the African Diaspora Business community in the United States. Mr. Beech also spoke on how the African Diaspora Business Community, can use its resources and experience in Africa to its benefit.

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The Congress, as the moderator of the opening session—Dr. Amany Asfour, Secretary General of ASSRT—mentioned was as a result of brainstorming sessions organized by the African Union Commission, in which H.E. Alpha Konare, Chairperson of A. U. Commission stressed on the need to join efforts of all African countries as one voice in all aspects to achieve the development of our beloved African continent.

The conference brought out presentations and discussions on: creating enabling environments for investment in Scientific Research and overcoming obstacles regarding legal and economic systems of African countries; the establishment of a network of Science & Technology Centers and institutes all over the African Continent; the impact that the increase in the use of Science & Technology in Africa will have on reducing the devastation from diseases such as HIV/AIDS, TB, and Malaria and in the efforts to reclaim desert areas for agriculture and resettlement; the need for Africa to manufacture its own drugs and make use of its resources instead of importing medicines which are a burden on foreign exchange reserves and also more expensive options; the need for public private cooperation and the engagement of the Diaspora in the Scientific Research work in Africa that is mutually beneficial - and other topics of discussion.

Mr. Fred Oladeinde, on behalf of WHADN pledged the commitment of the members of WHADN to the social, political and economic development of Africa, while urging the governments of African nations to invest in Scientific Research that provides the knowledge assets necessary to address the needs of their citizens in all

areas, stressing that the only way Africa can become developed is to invest in Research, Scientific Research that will provide the knowledge assets that is critical to adding value to products and services that are needed by the citizens of Africa, thereby decreasing the crippling unemployment rates for the growing population of unemployed youth in the continent. He also urged the government and the private sector to use the talent and discipline of Africans living in the Diaspora to assist in advancing development in Africa and reversing the phenomenon known as the “brain drain” on African countries.

Dr Gershwin Blyden, Executive Director, The Institute for Democracy in Africa made a presentation on The Role of the Diaspora in the Science & Technology agenda for Africa, and emphasized that the accomplishments of scientists in the Diaspora should be used to assist in the development of scientific infrastructure of Africa through networks, exchange programs, collaborative research and continuous education. Finally he emphasized the critical need to concentrate on science education at the elementary level.

Dr. Wole Soboyejo of Princeton University said Science & Technology needs to be used in Africa to add value to primary products, to generate economic activities that will create employment and a tax base. He argued for the financial support by government to the private sector to provide the required venture capital to convert scientific knowledge into products for the market place to satisfy citizen's needs and expectations. He provided an overview of the Afri-

can Scientific Committee, and particularly the dual representation per field, with African-based scientists and representative from the Diaspora working together to contribute to knowledge acquisition and promotion of excellence in science and engineering in Africa. He also highlighted the research agenda of the African Scientific Committee and a number of activities being undertaken by African scientists to support the establishment of the African Institute of Science and Technology. He also shared preliminary data on research work he is doing with other African scientists to treat cancer using biological and engineering techniques to develop potentially targeted approaches to the treatment of cancer.

Dr. Hipolyte Fofack of the World Bank Institute provided a historical overview of how other nations have advanced development through concerted efforts by governments to create enabling environments that encourage the study of science at a very young age in school while also using centers of excellence to ensure that top notch scientist and engineers graduate and are prepared to serve the needs of both government and industry.

The complete report on the congress along with recommendations from the working groups can be accessed by clicking here.



Mr. Apollo E. Muhairwe, Executive Secretary, National Drug Authority, Uganda, Mr. Hippolyte Fofack, World Bank Institute, Dr. John Joseph Otim, President and Senior Advisor to H.E. the President, Uganda, Ms. Leanne Smith Nurse, H.E. Gerard Kamanda Wa Kamanda, Minister of Science & Technology of the Democratic Republic of Congo and Dr. Madara Ogot, Penn State University on the second day of the Congress.

WHAT IS WHADN?

The Western Hemisphere African Diaspora Network (WHADN) is an African Union (AU) initiative and was launched during the First African Union Western Hemisphere Diaspora Forum held in Washington, DC from December 17—19, 2002. This historical event was convened by AU and coordinated by The Foundation for Democracy in Africa.

MISSION

To encourage and facilitate the utilization of the collective talents and resources of the African Diaspora in the Americas, the Caribbean and Latin America to support economic development and sustainable growth on the continent. To this end, WHADN was established to function as the coordinating network, linking the Diaspora and the AU for the purpose of achieving the common goals of social and economic development.

OBJECTIVES

- ★ To encourage and facilitate the enduring cultural, social and economic ties to Africa within the Western Hemisphere Diaspora communities
- ★ To develop and identify funding for capacity building projects by Diaspora civil society organizations in the Western Hemisphere Diaspora and the African Union
- ★ To work with the African Union to create mechanisms to represent the views, concerns and interests of the African Diaspora within the African regional organization

PROGRAM & ACTIVITIES

- ★ Democracy, Governance and the Rule of Law
- ★ Health and Environment
- ★ Peace and Security
- ★ Education
- ★ Trade and Economic Development
- ★ Science, Research and Technology
- ★ Communications
- ★ Arts and Culture

GEOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION

- ★ Latin America (including Mexico and Central America)
- ★ The Caribbean
- ★ Brazil (given its language, size, and historical disconnect with the rest of Latin America)

The United States, Canada (not grouped with the United States given the often different interests of the Diaspora of the two countries, as reported by members of the Working Group)



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