

African Scientific Institute (ASI) participates in historic Global African Diaspora Summit

Communique of the Global African Diaspora Summit, 25 May 2012, Sandton, South Africa

by African Union Commission (AUC)

JOHANNESBURG, South-Africa, May 28, 2012/African Press Organization (APO)/ -- The first ever Global African Diaspora Summit was held in Sandton, South Africa beginning on 23 May 2012, and concluded on Africa Day, 25 May 2012. The meeting was attended by Heads of States or representative of the 54 Member Countries of the Africa Union, Governments of the Caribbean Community, North America, South and Latin America.



Some of Africa's leaders participating in the Summit.

The Summit began with welcome remarks by the Host, President Jacob Zuma which was followed by the remarks of Dr. Jean Ping, the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Honorable David Dinkins, former Mayor of New York, an Eminent person from the Diaspora, Honorable Arnold Joseph Nicholson, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Honorable Samuel Hins, Prime Minister of the Republic of Guyana, on behalf of CARICOM, Mr. Esteban Lasto, the Vice President of the Republic of Cuba and President Nguema of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea. The opening session was concluded with the opening remarks of President Boni Yayi, President of the Republic of Benin and Chairperson of the Union.

In his opening Statement, President Zuma expressed the gratitude of his Government and the people of South Africa to Heads of States and Governments that have taken the time from their busy schedule to attend the event and acknowledged the sterling work of the AU Commission in preparing for the Summit. He linked the historic event to the impetus that led African leaders to create the Organization of African Unity and the centenary celebrations of the ANC as the first African liberation movement. He further acknowledged the vision and commitment of the first generation of African leaders and their vision to see

Africa taking its rightful place, with respect and dignity in global affairs.

In turn, the Chairperson of the AU Commission, H.E. Dr. Ping, thanked the Host President, President Jacob Zuma for his hospitality. In similarity with President Zuma, H.E. Ping traced the historical Global Diaspora Summit to the vision and agenda of the first generation of African leaders. He then provided a detailed overview of the events and processes that culminated in the Draft Declaration presented to the Summit. He observed that the Declaration offers a basic law and a working document that will support the objectives of rebuilding the Global African family. He concluded on the note that Member States and all other stakeholders must recommit themselves to the implementation agenda by providing necessary resources for the program and sustaining focus and interest in its consolidation and advancement. He pledged the dedication of the African Union Commission to this process and appealed to African leaders to ensure that the Declaration will be a living document that generations after us will come to applaud, respect and continue to implement.

Subsequently, the addresses of the Minister of Jamaica, Eminent Representative of the Diaspora, the Prime Minister of Guyana and the Vice President of Cuba, expressed their support for the AU's Diaspora Initiative. Each recalled the involvement of their people in the struggle for African liberation and pledged to work with the AU to ensure realization of its objective.

Finally, President Boni, Yayi, the Chairperson of the Union, noted that processes of Regional Consultative conferences developed and consolidated the views, desires and objectives of Africans over all the world into the Draft Declaration that is now before the Assembly. He observed that the Summit was initially supposed to be held in 2008 but that the period since then had been put to good use in order to refine and consolidate the documents. He expressed gratitude for the work of the AU Commission and the South African government in preparing for this Summit and urged all leaders and Ministers to rededicate themselves to implementation of Summit outcomes and to provide necessary resources for this process.

Subsequently, a closed session of the Assembly considered and approved the Draft Declaration that was formally presented by Ms Maite Nkoana-Mashabane Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa. The integrated Draft Declaration that was adopted had four basic elements. The first was a political declaration embodying vision, purpose and objectives. The second was a Program of Action that highlighted areas and programs required to support the implementation agenda. Third were implementation and follow-up mechanism embodying the instruments that would be employed to facilitate implementations of the outcomes and fourthly, five legacy projects that would give immediate, urgent and practical meaning to the Declaration.

The meeting ended with closing remarks by the Host, President Jacob Zuma and President Boni Yayi, the Chairperson of the African Union.

Lee O. Cherry, one of the representatives from the African Scientific Institute, not only assisted in providing input to the "Civil Society" Declaration of the Global African Diaspora Summit, he also participated in the Science and Technology Program for the Diaspora Seminar, sponsored by South Africa's Department of Science and Technology. Several of the focal points of this seminar were presented during sessions held among Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of State to be included in the final Declaration of the Civil Society document.

About 50 Global Delegates worked on the Declaration of the Civil Society document during the pre-summit gatherings and during the Summit itself. Notables such as Mel Foote of CFA, Amb. Erieka Bennett of the African Diaspora Forum, Amb. Vincent Okobi, Oscar Brathwaite, Barryl Biekman, David Horne, Alfred Sears, James Early, Sidney Martin, Prof. Gus John, Roland Ndirp and others all contributed to the success of this vital and historic Summit.

We thank Amb. Mbulelo Rakwena of South Africa and Dr. Jinmi Adisa of the Africa Union (Director, CIDO-AUC) for their dedication and hard work towards coordinating affairs of this great Summit.

FINAL DECLARATION OF THE GLOBAL AFRICAN DIASPORA SUMMIT -

SANDTON, JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

25 MAY 2012

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WE, the Heads of State and Government of the African Union, the Caribbean and South America

RECOGNIZING the important presence of Heads of State and Government from the Caribbean Community, South and Latin America and representatives of the African Diaspora;

EXPRESSING our appreciation to His Excellency, President Jacob Zuma, the Government and People of the Republic of South Africa and the African Union for the warm reception and for hosting and conducting this Summit;

TAKING COGNIZANCE of the dialogue carried out between Africans on the Continent and representatives of the African Diaspora in various regions of the world, including North America, South and Latin America, Europe and elsewhere;

RECALLING the Constitutive Act of the African Union that is guided by a common vision of a united and strong Africa based on a partnership between governments and all segments of society in order to strengthen cohesion and solidarity among its peoples;

RECALLING the struggle of the Founding Fathers and combatants for Panafricanism in Africa as well as in the Diaspora;

ALSO RECALLING the Protocol on Amendments to the Constitutive Act of the African Union adopted by the First Extra-Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in January 2003, and in particular Article 3(q) which invites the African Diaspora to participate as an important component in the building of the African Union;

FURTHER RECALLING relevant African Union Decisions including Decision EX.CL/Dec. 5 (III) on the Development of the Diaspora Initiative adopted by the Third Ordinary Session of the Executive Council in Maputo, Mozambique, in July 2003, Decision EX.CL/Dec. 221 (VII) on the Africa-Diaspora Process adopted by the Eighth Ordinary Session of the Executive Council in January 2006 and Decision EX.CL/Dec. 406 (XII) on the First African Union Diaspora Ministerial Conference adopted by the Twelfth Ordinary Session of the Executive Council in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in January 2008 on the modalities for Diaspora participation in the organs and activities of the Union and Decision Ass/AU/Dec.205(XI) adopted by the Eleventh Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, in July 2008 on the Africa Diaspora Summit, Decision, Ass/AU/Dec 354 (XVI) of the Sixteen Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in January 2011 on the Roadmap for the Diaspora Summit, including the convening of a Technical Experts meeting in Pretoria, South Africa in February 2011 and Decision Ass/AU/Dec 367 (XVII) of the Seventeenth Ordinary Session of Assembly of the Union on the convening of a second Ministerial Conference on the margins of the

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United Nations General Assembly in New York in September 2011 as well as Decision Assembly/AU/Dec. 393(XVIII) endorsing the outcome and conclusions of the Second Ministerial Conference held in New York in September 2011.

RECALLING the commemoration in 2007 of the bicentennial of the trafficking in Africans, an

obligation to remember the legacy of history, particularly the era of slavery and colonialism and the enforced separation of African people as a result of that experience, as well as the Declaration of the United Nations of 2011 as the year of the of people of African descent.

ENDORISING the initiative led by Member States of the African Union, the Caribbean community and other States in the International community for the establishment of a permanent memorial at the United Nations to honour the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade in fulfilment of paragraph 101 of the 2001 Durban Declaration;

EXPRESSING appreciation for contributions made to the voluntary Trust Fund established in this regard;

TAKING INTO account the need to put African history in its proper perspective and harness this towards rebuilding the global African family.

RECOGNIZING the need to build sustainable partnerships between the African continent and the African Diaspora through sustainable dialogue and effective collaboration with governments and peoples of different regions of the World in which the Diaspora populations are located;

COGNIZANT of the fact that culture and identity inform all facets of development;

ACKNOWLEDGING the need to celebrate and preserve the shared heritage between Africa and peoples of African descent in the Diaspora;

BEARING IN MIND that the African Diaspora represents a historical and evolving experience which calls for an approach that is sensitive to the specificities of the different regions;

AFFIRMING the need to promote South-South Cooperation as a framework for enhancing mutual development as well as Pan-African Solidarity;

REAFFIRMING the importance of women and youth as important pillars of our society that should be mainstreamed in all Diaspora discourses and actions;

LAUDING the efforts undertaken thus far to support Africa and African Diaspora process including organizational efforts, measures and strategies pursued by the African Union;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the First and Second Conferences of Intellectuals of Africa and the Diaspora (CIAD I&II) held in Dakar, Senegal and Salvador de Bahia, Brazil in 2004 and 2006 respectively, the outcomes of the First AU-South Africa

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Caribbean Conference held in Kingston, Jamaica in 2005 and the various Regional Consultative Conferences held in different regions of the world in 2007 to consolidate the results;

NOTING with appreciation the work of the Ministerial meeting which took place in Midrand, South Africa from 16-18 November 2007 and the Technical Experts meeting held in Pretoria in February 2011 and the second Ministerial Conference held in New York, USA on 24 September 2011 as well as the Third Ministerial Conference held in Pretoria, South Africa on 23 May 2012;

CONVINCED of the need to build on these efforts and outcomes as the basis for establishing a solid foundation for the rejuvenation of the global African family as an instrument of wider renaissance;

REALIZING the imperative of a sustained and coordinated approach and ownership of the African Diaspora related programmes and projects so as to promote their effective implementation and impact;

COMMIT to cooperate in the political, economic and social areas outlined in this Programme of Action, and implementation and follow-up modalities.

PROGRAMME OF ACTION

I. POLITICAL COOPERATION

In the area of political cooperation, we commit to the following:

A. Intergovernmental Cooperation

- a) Enhance South-South Cooperation through closer collaboration between the African Union (AU) and all inter-governmental entities in regions in which African Diaspora populations are part of;
 - b) Leverage the collective efforts of the African Union and all inter-governmental entities in regions in which African Diaspora populations are part of to promote and advance issues of critical importance to Africa and its Diaspora;
 - c) Encourage AU Member States to establish more formal relations with the Caribbean and Latin American nations and vice versa; and where practicable, the opening of more Missions in the respective regions;
 - d) Continue to support the role of the AU as the focal point and the coordination hub of all Diaspora initiatives in the Continent. To this end, Diaspora issues should be a standing item on the programmes and agenda of AU Summits, and the AU's Directorate tasked with Diaspora matters should be strengthened and capacitated in financial and human resource terms;
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- e) Take necessary measures to promote and create effective synergies between national and continental Diaspora programmes;
 - f) Create platforms for closer interaction, solidarity and effective collaboration between and amongst governments and civil society of Africa and its Diaspora including continuation of Regional Consultative Conferences and creation and consolidation of Regional Networks as partners and interlocutors for the implementation of the outcome of the Global Diaspora Summit;
 - g) Encourage and intensify the participation of the African Diaspora in conflict prevention, management and resolution as well as post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation and disaster mitigation in Africa and the Diaspora regions;
 - h) Strengthen the participation of the Diaspora population in the affairs of the African Union so as to enhance its contributions towards the development and integration agenda of the continent;
 - i) Encourage and support the development of an African Union Diaspora Volunteer programme as a framework for associating the Diaspora directly with the development of the continent
 - j) Encourage African Union Member States to urgently ratify the Protocol on the Amendments to the Constitutive Act, which, inter alia, invites the African Diaspora, an important part of our continent, to participate in the building of the African Union;
 - k) Encourage the Diaspora to organize themselves in regional networks and establish appropriate mechanisms that will enable their increasing participation in the affairs of the African Union as observers and eventually, in the future, as a sixth region of the continent that would contribute substantially to the implementation of policies and programmes.

- l) Continue to integrate the African Diaspora agenda in its engagement with international partners
- m) Encourage AU and CARICOM to create a conducive environment for the African Diaspora to invest, work, and travel on the African continent and the Caribbean;
- n) Support efforts by the AU to accelerate the process of issuing the African Union passport, in order to facilitate the development of a transnational and transcontinental identity;
- o) Explore the possibility of establishing a Pan-African Secretariat in Dakar, Senegal for the Conference of Intellectuals of Africa and the Diaspora (CIAD) as recommended by CIAD I;

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- p) Encourage and support the adoption and implementation, in different Diaspora countries, of policies that will facilitate the elimination of racism and the promotion of equality among races.

B. Mobilization of Support

- q) Encourage the civil society in the Diaspora and in Africa to support, advocate and mobilize resources for the development of Africa and its Diaspora;
- r) Express mutual support and solidarity between Africans on the Continent and in the Diaspora in circumstances of violation of human and peoples' rights;
- s) Encourage the full implementation of United Nations General Assembly resolutions on the Permanent Memorial to and remembrance of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, express appreciation for contributions made to the Trust Fund in this regard and urge other countries to contribute to the Fund;
- t) Campaign for the ratification and full implementation of all relevant instruments that enhance the protection of women, youth, children and other vulnerable groups, in particular, the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination, the United Nations Convention against all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, and the UNESCO Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions;
- u) Encourage the ratification and full implementation of the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime as a means of stemming trans-border criminality;
- v) Encourage Africans in the Diaspora to campaign against the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Africa especially in countries where they are domiciled and in those that are arms producers;
- w) Encourage the contribution of the Diaspora in the strengthening of International partnerships of the African Union;
- x) Affirm the Principles of International Law and the Charter of the United Nations that preclude unilateral measures that would create obstacles to trade relations among States, impede the full realization of social and economic development and hinder the well-being of the population in the affected countries;

II. ECONOMIC COOPERATION

In the area of economic cooperation, we commit to the following:

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A. Government Action to Foster Increased Economic Partnership

- a) Develop effective regional integration mechanisms that would enhance closer interaction between the African Union and the Diaspora;
- b) Take concrete measures that would promote and sustain linkages between AU and the Diaspora in the following priority areas: trade and investment, science and technology, travel and tourism, communication and transportation infrastructure, energy, information and communication technology and cultural industries;
- c) Create an environment conducive for the growth and development of Small, Medium and Micro-Enterprise and promote entrepreneurship in Africa and the Diaspora;

B. Mobilization of Capital

- d) Use financial instruments focusing on investments to facilitate the mobilization of capital that would strengthen links between Africa and the Diaspora;
- e) Explore the possibility of creating a Development Fund and/or African Diaspora Investment Fund to address development challenges confronting Africans in the continent and the Diaspora.

C. Partnership in Business

- f) Enhance partnership between the African and Diaspora private sectors through efforts such as regular meetings of Chambers of Commerce and listing in African Stock Exchanges and vice-versa;
- g) Build on Africa's and the Diaspora's comparative advantages in culture to translate them into economic gains through collaborative programmes that would facilitate the strategic development and marketing of their cultural goods and services.

D. Science and Technology

- h) Promote coordination and development of institutions in Africa and the African Diaspora, dedicated to innovation and invention for social and economic development of Africa and the Diaspora;
- i) Examine the merit of using the decisions of the Tunis phase of the World Summit on Information Society, particularly the Tunis Commitment and the

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Tunis Declaration, as well as the Digital Solidarity Fund as a means of creating e-linkages between Africa and the Diaspora.

E. Knowledge Transfer and Skills Mobilization

j) Promote the utilization of African and Diaspora expertise on economic development issues at regional and continental levels, and explore the possibility of creating a Diaspora Advisory Board(s);

k) Encourage the use of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for Migration for Development in Africa programme to work in concert with the AU Commission to mobilize the skills and resources of the Diaspora to enhance the institutional capacities of national and regional institutions;

l) Promote trade and investment opportunities linked to indigenous knowledge systems, while ensuring that the related intellectual property rights are secured for the benefit of Africa and the Diaspora;

m) Promote the establishment of a comprehensive and all-inclusive database that will match the expertise of African professionals in Africa and its Diaspora to African developmental needs;

n) Adopt and promote the 'Development Market Place for the African Diaspora Model' (DMADA) as a framework for innovation and entrepreneurship that would facilitate development.

F. Infrastructural Development

o) Support the development of Africa related undersea cable and terrestrial fibre optic connectivity initiatives; and

p) Harmonise regulatory structures related to infrastructure, such as telecommunication and transportation.

G. Information Gathering and Dissemination Capacity

q) Develop an overarching communications strategy for disseminating information on Africa Union programmes (including NEPAD) and Diaspora initiatives;

r) Support the development of an updated and reliable census and statistics on employment, unemployment and entrepreneurship in Africa and the Diaspora with special focus on the Youth.

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H. Climate Change

s) Work closely to advance the international agenda on climate change in international for a given its devastating effects particularly on Africa and the Caribbean.

III. SOCIAL COOPERATION

In the area of social cooperation, we commit to the following:

A. Knowledge and Education

- a) Design and develop platforms for African and Diaspora educators and scholars to address the developmental agenda of the Continent and the Diaspora. These would include, among others, the establishment of African-centred institutions and programmes and increased collaboration efforts between academic and research institutions in Africa and the Diaspora regions;
- b) Ensure the harmonisation and implementation of regional and international protocols protecting indigenous knowledge systems and intellectual property rights;
- c) Emphasize the importance of education as a basic condition of achieving human development and the need to promote literacy campaigns.
- d) Support the creation of linkages between Diaspora Academic, Research and Development Institutions and those in Africa;
- e) Ensure the participation of Diaspora Experts in the development and implementation of AU-Diaspora initiative.

B. Arts and Culture

- f) Promote the coordination and funding of cultural exchange programmes between Africa and the Diaspora;
- g) Further encourage and disseminate information to all Member States on African-Diaspora projects which are being implemented such as the Museum of Black Civilisations, an African Remembrance Square, the African Renaissance Monument, the Joseph Project and slave route;
- h) Support, encourage and promote the celebration of global observance days as symbols of solidarity for the commemoration of the common heritage and vision of Africa and its Diaspora, in order to strengthen Pan-African unity and identity, in particular, Africa Day, African Union Day, Black History Month and Emancipation Day;

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C. Media and Image Building

- i) Coordinate efforts of the existing media and promote new media to re-brand Africa and to counter stereotypes about Africans and people of African descent;
- j) Explore possibilities of creating Africa News Network Service to enhance image branding and imaging of Africa;
- k) Promote national and continental initiatives that aim to enhance good governance and rule of law, so as to strengthen a positive image of Africa among the African Diaspora and the international community at large.

D. Immigration

- l) Engage developed countries with a view to creating favourable regulatory mechanisms governing migration; and to address concerns of African immigrants in Diaspora Communities;

E. Human and People's Rights

- m) Work for the full implementation of the Plan of Action of the United Nations World Conference Against Racism;
- n) Engage developed countries to address the political and socio-economic marginalisation of Diaspora communities in their countries of domicile;
- o) Strengthen the implementation of legislation and other measures aimed at eradicating child trafficking, human trafficking, child labour, exploitation of children and women in armed conflicts and other modern forms of slavery;

F. Social and Cultural Issues

- p) Allocate more resources on social spending programmes such as health, education and housing;
- q) Cooperate, in order to make social security institutions more efficient in protecting Africans and members of the Diaspora;
- r) Ensure expansion of access to the Internet for social, health, business and development and trade;
- s) Coordinate with the African Diaspora regarding the question of the illegally acquired cultural goods that exist outside the African continent, with the aim of speeding their return to their countries of origin in Africa;
- t) Ensure the promotion of sports and sports exchange between the AU Member States and the Diaspora;

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IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP

We adopt the following implementation and follow-up mechanism/strategy:

1. Host rotational AU Diaspora Conference in Africa and in the Diaspora to review the implementation of this Programme of Action.
2. Involve Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in the implementation of this Programme of Action.
3. Request the AU Commission to develop mechanisms to ensure that the experiences of women, youth and vulnerable groups are taken into account in the implementation of this Programme of Action.
4. Continue communication efforts to popularize the African Diaspora initiative and promote positive images of Africa that will create a conducive environment for investment opportunities on the continent.
5. Take necessary measures to ensure the establishment of an AU-Diaspora Foundation/Trust to support the AU-Diaspora initiative;

6. Agree to establish multi-stakeholder working groups comprising the AU, CARICOM and representative from the Diaspora in the following priority areas: Economic Cooperation (including infrastructure, sea and air links, trade and investment, and travel and tourism); Science And Technology (including the establishment of Low Earth Orbit satellite, and research in agriculture, biotechnology, renewable energy technologies, infectious and non-infectious a diseases);

7. Consider the possibility of setting up a mechanism, such as a Diaspora

Consultative Forum that would support closer collaboration between the AU and the Diaspora community;

8. Agree to set up a Diaspora Advisory Board, which will address overarching issues of concern to Africa and its Diaspora such as reparations, right to return and follow up to WCAR Plan of Action, amongst others;

9. Further agree, in principle that the structures and institutions envisaged in this Declaration are established and operate in a streamlined manner, in order to achieve efficiency and value for all Africans on the Continent and the Diaspora;

10. Explore various innovative and practical sources of funding for the Diaspora Programme, to ensure its sustainability.

LEGACY PROJECTS

We further agree to adopt five legacy projects as a way of giving practical meaning to the Diaspora programme and in order to facilitate the post-Summit implementation programme. These are: a) the production of a Skills Database of

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African Professionals in the Diaspora; b) the establishment of the African Diaspora Volunteers Corps; c) the African Diaspora Investment Fund; d) a programme on the Development Marketplace for the Diaspora, as a framework for facilitating innovation and entrepreneurship among African and Diaspora; and e) The African Remittances Institute.

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