



## **Kwame Nkrumah Pan-African Intellectual & Cultural Festival**

### **Final Communique of the Second Kwame Nkrumah Pan-African Intellectual and Cultural Festival at the Institute of African Studies University of Ghana in Accra, Ghana**

“In what way can Ghana make its own specific contribution to the advancement of knowledge about the people and culture of Africa through past history and contemporary problems? ... Your work must also include a study of the origins and cultures of the people of African descent in the Americas and the Caribbean, and you should seek to maintain close relations with their scholars so that there may be cross fertilization between Africa and those who have their roots in Africa’s past.”

Kwame Nkrumah, 25<sup>th</sup> October, 1963 on the occasion of the Opening of the Institute of African Studies

The 2nd Kwame Nkrumah Pan-African Intellectual & Cultural Festival was hosted by the Kwame Nkrumah Chair in African Studies under the auspices of the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana from 25<sup>th</sup> June to 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017.

The theme “Global Africa 2063: Education for Reconstruction and Transformation” reflected the foundations of Kwame Nkrumah’s intellectual and cultural ideologies of a united Africa. This gathering examined and critically investigated the role of African centered education and knowledge production for shaping the development agenda. This approach challenged the destructive and dominant education and knowledge system which supports neo- colonialism. The conference used the African Union Agenda 2063 as the foundation for recuperating and popularizing Pan-African ideas and ideals.

The Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, established by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah was the founding Institute that focused on Africa and African people. As the trailblazer, Institute of African Studies over its tenure, has served as the nucleus for discussion and study of Africa, Pan-Africanism and Global Africa. This conference and festival provides a foundation for Pan-African Intellectual and activist activity in Global Africa. The Institute of African Studies led the academic community to debate on the way forward and interrogated the challenges of bringing Global Africa closer with the peoples at differing parts of the planet.

## **The Institute of African Studies**

The Institute of African Studies was established in 1961 at the University of Ghana, and formally opened by Osagyefo D. Kwame Nkrumah, the first President of the Republic of Ghana on 25th October 1963. Kwame Nkrumah set a visionary agenda for the Institute with the mandate to conduct research in, and teaching on, all aspects of the social and cultural life, and the arts in Africa. Over the years, this mandate has included research and teaching in African History and Politics; African Societies and Cultures; Gender and Culture in African Societies; Family Studies; African Languages, Literature and Drama; African Religions and Philosophy; Media and Visual Arts as well as Music and Dance. The Institute offers postgraduate training in all these areas, as well as an introductory programme in African Studies that all students of the university are required to pass before graduating. The Institute has a library, a museum, the Publications Unit and the J.H. Kwabena Nketia Archives. It manages the Manhyia archives of the Ashantehene's palace in Kumasi, and is home to the Ghana Dance Ensemble, the original National Dance Company. There is also research, teaching and other cultural links with several institutions in Africa, Europe and North America.

## **Kwame Nkrumah Chair**

In 2005 the University of Ghana established a Kwame Nkrumah Chair in African Studies. The chair was established with a two-fold aim: 1) to honour Nkrumah for his significant intellectual contributions to African thought, and for his vision and commitment to the liberation and development of African people on the continent and in the Diaspora; and 2) to promote research, teaching and the public promotion of African Studies. The Chair, which was formally launched on Friday, September 21, 2007 at the Institute of African Studies, Kwame Nkrumah Complex, received substantial core funding from AngloGold Ashanti Ltd. Several other corporate and individual donors also provided seed money.

The Kwame Nkrumah Chair in African Studies provides a platform, albeit a modest one, for some of the unfinished business of the reconstruction for African peoples to occur. This endowed academic Chair recognises Nkrumah's foresight, personal interest and commitment to academic excellence in Ghana and Africa through the establishment of the Institute of African Studies, the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences (formerly the Ghana Academy of Learning), the National Research Council (now the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research and its associated institutes) and the Encyclopedia Africana project. For Nkrumah, all these formed part of the crucial task of African self-assertion, knowledge and confidence to be harnessed in the interests of African people. Drawing on African intellects in the Diaspora and on the continent, Nkrumah contributed significantly towards the creation of an intellectual and political ferment in Ghana that encapsulated African hopes and resolve to create a better life for African people everywhere and to put Africa on the world map.

Nkrumah also spent time reflecting and writing on the African condition and the impediments to true liberation and development. His books, *Toward Colonial Freedom; Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah; Africa Must Unite; Neo-colonialism the Last Stage of Imperialism; Consciencism; Class Struggle in Africa, Revolutionary Path* chronicle his personal intellectual and political journeys to consciousness and political activity, as well the depths of the challenges facing Africa. In his speech, *The African Genius*, delivered at the formal opening of the Institute in October 1963, Nkrumah charged the Institute to make its own specific contribution to the advancement of knowledge about the peoples and cultures of Africa by re-interpreting and providing new assessments of the factors which make up our past, to inspire our generation and succeeding generations, with a vision of a better future.

## **University of Ghana Law School**

The School of Law of the University of Ghana is the premier centre for legal education for legal education in Ghana and continues to lead the way in preparing students for the legal profession. It was first established as a department of the Faculty of Social Studies in the 1958/59 academic year, becoming a Faculty in 1960/61 then eventually a full-fledged school in the 2014/15 academic year.

## **2017 Festival Background**

Since the start of the new century there have been numerous efforts to re-ignite the ideas of Kwame Nkrumah with respect to the unification of Africa. The ideas communicated by Kwame Nkrumah at the founding conference of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) continue to find resonance among a new generation who are seeking to understand the changed international situation. In 2013, the African Union (AU) launched Agenda 2063 where there was a rededication to the vision of “an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa driven by its own resources and representing a dynamic force in the international arena.” In laying out the aspirations of the Africa we want, the AU Commission called upon African institutions of higher learning to embrace its ambitious goal of deepening research and study in the task of making the dream of Kwame Nkrumah a reality. It is in this spirit that the Festival joined the call in Agenda 2063, which stated:

"In this new and noble initiative, past plans and commitments have been reviewed, and we pledge to take into account lessons from them as we implement Agenda 2063. These include: mobilization of the people and their ownership of continental programmes at the core; the principle of self-reliance and Africa financing its own development; the importance of capable, inclusive and accountable states and institutions at all levels and in all spheres; the critical role of Regional Economic Communities as building blocks for continental unity; taking into account of the special challenges faced by both island and land-locked states; and holding ourselves and our governments and institutions accountable for results. Agenda 2063 will not happen spontaneously, it will require conscious and deliberate efforts to nurture a transformative leadership that will drive the agenda and defend Africa's interests."

The Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana has been at the forefront in nurturing a new intellectual cadre that will drive the agenda of transforming Africa. In 2010, the Institute of African Studies launched a biennial *Kwame Nkrumah Pan-African Intellectual & Cultural Festival* as a major event on the University of Ghana calendar. The festival was organized under the auspices of the *Kwame Nkrumah Chair in African Studies*, in honour of Dr. Nkrumah's dedication to vigorous and liberating Africa-centered intellectual and cultural activity. African people in all parts of the world and Ghana, have greatly benefited as a result of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's comprehensive vision of a transformative agenda founded on strong intellectual foundations.

The Institute of African Studies is seeking to join the conscious and deliberate efforts of the AU in realizing Agenda 2063. The theme of the 2017 Kwame Nkrumah Intellectual and Cultural Festival therefore was *Global Africa 2063: Education for Reconstruction and Transformation*. The transformation agenda involves African people on the continent as well as those dispersed throughout the world. It was the goal of the festival to offer an ideal platform for a review and critical re-assessment of urgent tasks necessary to deepen the technical and intellectual skills needed for training the next cadre of thinkers and practitioners. The conference and festival served as a vehicle for reflection and a springboard for new research efforts to promote Pan-Africanism and structural transformation of the African world.

The festival is the catalyst for the integration of the multi-disciplinary field of Africana Studies. It offered opportunities for involvement of cultural artists, academics, community members, international and local Pan-Africanists, students and institutions from over twenty countries on four continents and the Caribbean seeking to be part and parcel of the process of re-energizing Pan-Africanism amongst academics, organic intellectuals and activists.

The conference and festival featured activities included an International Symposium, a Book Fair, Dance Productions, Film Shows, Traditional Story Telling, a Musical Concert, a Play, Tours and Debates.

The Planning Committee included the following academics, staff and community representatives: Dr. Irene Appeaning Addo – Chairperson, Professor Esi Sutherland-Addy, Professor Kofi Anyidoho, Professor Horace Campbell – Kwame Nkrumah Chair, Dr. Godwin Adjei, Dr. Edem Adotey, Dr. Mjiba Frehiwot, Dr. Obadélé Kambon, Dr. Benjamin Kwansa, Dr. Samuel Ntewusu, Mr. Akunu Dake, Ms. Beatrice Nyamekye-Biney, Mr. Emmanuel Ekow Arthur-Entsiwah, Mr. Samuel Abokyi, Mr. Peter Bembir, Mr. Fred Adu-Asare, Ms. Nelly Gyebi, and Ms. Afua Konadu.

## Conference and Festival Objectives:

The conference and festival had the following four core objectives.

1. Reflect on the goals of the specialized committees of the African Union with respect to the kind of education that must be set in motion to realize Agenda 2063
2. Renew efforts to reclaim Kwame Nkrumah's original agenda modified as required in the light of contemporary realities.
3. Provide a critical impetus for the promotion of a major international thrust to popularize and update Pan-African thought and action.
4. Serve as an impetus to bridge the gap between academic, cultural and community based Pan-Africanists.

Around these main  
objectives:

- Over 400 academics, government representatives, former government members, community members, international and local Pan-Africanists, and students of Africa convened in Accra, Ghana under the auspices of the second Kwame Nkrumah Pan-African Intellectual and Cultural Festival to interrogate the relevance of Pan-Africanism today and devise appropriate mechanisms and networks beyond language and ethnicities that will enable the deliberations to be widely shared with relevant communities.
- Solidarity statements from the Commission for Pan African Affairs (Barbados), Nahas Angula, former Prime Minister, Namibia, diplomatic representative of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, Luthuli Family Foundation and Museum (South Africa), Walter Rodney Foundation (United States), Delegation of Students from Burkina Faso, and Samia Nkrumah on behalf of the Nkrumah family were shared with the participants during the opening ceremony.
- Throughout the proceedings there was awareness of the intellectual and cultural ideologies of a united Africa developed and promoted by Kwame Nkrumah as participants understood that there are multiple systems of oppression faced by people of African Descent across the world.
- A strong motivation for the festival to succeed was the need to strengthen unity and foster solidarity across borders, within and outside of Africa amongst the global African family under an expanded African Union Agenda 2063 as the foundation for recuperating and popularizing Pan-African ideas and ideals.
- Participants came prepared to critically investigate the role of African centered education and knowledge production for shaping the development agenda due to the destructive and dominant education and knowledge system which supports neo-liberalism.

- Throughout the deliberations there was an appreciation for the values of community, co-operation, social collectivism and altruism versus individualism, self-interest and competition which underscored the need for Africa to unite through a common framework that unites all regions that have significant African populations.
- In his opening call the Kwame Nkrumah Chair reinforced the need for greater collaboration between scholars in Africa and the dispersed African family. In particular, the Kwame Nkrumah Chair alerted the Festival to the fragility of the current capitalist system. In this instance, Professor Campbell called on scholars and activists to engage the processes towards unity to accelerate the unification process. He also called for vigilance so that the imperial adventures do not plunge the world into a global conflagration.
- We warmly welcomed Professor Sir Hilary Beckles as the keynote speaker. He provided a stimulating analysis of the development of grassroots support for reparations and a critique of the role of African leaders in government in failing to stand in solidarity with their constituencies. He also called for greater cooperation between African Institutions of Higher learning to expose the crimes of enslavement against African peoples.

In addressing the conference objectives, the participants agreed as follows.

**Reflect on the goals of the specialized committees of the African Union with respect to the kind of education that must be set in motion to realize Agenda 2063**

- Failure to incorporate a global Pan African critical pedagogy, curricula and system for all educational levels based on an African worldview and narrative, experiential knowledge, and cognitive interest has hindered the development of Pan Africanism in practice.
- External conditions for a substantial number of youth in the global African family substantially inhibit their ability to access basic education as required by their countries of origin or residence. Such practices include, but are not limited to, financial constraints, lack of physical access, cultural practices that deny access (especially for girls and young women), the school to prison pipeline and the resulting loss of statutory rights and privileges.
- Existing Programmes of Action from the World Conference against Racism, Xenophobia and Other Related Intolerances as well as the International Decade for Peoples of African Descent both provide direction on how to ensure that education is addressed as a fundamental right for all members of the global African family.

- Progressive African history and Pan African Cultural Studies for youth can focus on initiating educational practices that are practical based, solution oriented and reinforce the value and richness of their history and potential. Current examples that can be replicated for each community resilience and abundance include the GEN-Ghana (Global Ecovillage Network), Youth P.L.A.N.T. Organic Moringa School Gardens (Ghana), the Center of Awakening and Stimulation for Children (CEVASTE) (Benin), and Ecological Organic Agriculture Platform of Ghana.
- Progressive Pan African academics are encouraged to develop within their disciplines but also to consider ways in which they could add value as administrators and in developing their students.
- The Festival registered solidarity with the movement of the students of South Africa who are calling for free tertiary education in the call for Fees must Fall. The Festival also registered support for the Rhodes must fall campaign and a call for the curriculum to expose the genocidal activities of colonial plunderers such as Cecil Rhodes and Leopold of Belgium.
- All African universities must become part of a 'Global Pan African University Network' to ensure that the core values of the respective institutions are undergirded with the values of Pan-Africanism and that mechanisms are established to the development of an appropriate agenda, tools and processes where necessary. They are furthermore encouraged to support the Institute of Reparations Research, to be launched 12 October 2017 at the University of the West Indies (Mona).
- It was agreed that there be convened a Summit on Reparations among universities in Africa to identify and develop a common and unified approach on the reparations question
- Intellectuals and government actors should creatively investigate the incorporation of African languages within existing and future educational systems.

**Renew efforts to reclaim Kwame Nkrumah's original agenda modified as required in the light of contemporary realities.**

- Reconceptualising existing paradigms for defining global African inclusion due to the failure to recognize the complexity of geography, language and culture differentiations
- Knowledge production was a central tenet of Nkrumah's policies and a concerted effort needs to be made to ensure that information about, on and of Pan Africanism is developed, produced and disseminated appropriately. To that end, attention should specifically be directed to stimulate the research agenda to strengthen on-ground efforts by the people to integrate and unify Africa, the research work necessary for the expedition of the process of establishing Encyclopaedia Africana, the African currency and the African Monetary Union
- Support the right of African Descendants, especially in Latin and South America, to promote their cultural resources, indigenous knowledge systems and human potential to live as fully realised, dignified human beings within the majority cultures.
- Re-examine Nkrumah's independence and Pan-African project, to assess its current applicability to contemporary challenges, to assess its strengths and weaknesses and to chart a way forward towards 2063
- The meeting examined and discussed existing expressions of neo-colonialism, imperialism, patriarchy and racism, and called on the African Union (AU), Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOC), CARICOM and the global Pan-African movement to forcefully condemn the acts of aggression and dehumanisation against African Americans, the people of Palestine, Haiti, Iran, Venezuela, Cuba, West Papua and remaining colonial dependencies. The meeting called on African scholars to intensify support for the peoples of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic and to oppose the occupation of this territory. There was strong support for the strengthening of the Decolonization Committee of the United Nations to end all current forms of colonial domination.
- The festival registered its support for the call of the African Union (AU) to silence all guns by 2020. In this regard there was a call for the AU to take seriously its responsibility for the demilitarisation of Libya and for the removal of external military forces. There was also the call for the progressive groups to forcefully support the demilitarization of the Central African Republic, Somalia, South Sudan and the regions of West Africa now ravaged by violent extremists.

**Provide a critical impetus for the promotion of a major international thrust to popularize and update Pan-African thought and action.**

- In order to advance the conference agenda, and the 2063 agenda, it was resolved that a Standing Committee be established to ensure the practical pursuit of the conference decisions to avoid the pitfall of previous conferences, as well as to capture, tap and channel the tremendous energy of the conference towards achieving the concrete objectives outlined
- There was full consensus that all African governments and civil society organisations must by necessity, declare their full and uncompromising support for the global Reparatory Justice Initiative of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and for all African and global African communities in respect of the crime against humanity represented by chattel enslavement and trade in human bodies, and demand that the governments of Europe who were and are criminally enriched by this evil enterprise participate in the negotiations leading to the payment of reparations as set out in the Ten Point Plan of the CARICOM Reparations Commissions.
- That there be convened a Summit on Reparations between the AU, CARICOM, the North American Reparations Commission, and other reparations bodies in other sections of the global African family and supportive civil society groups to identify and develop a common and unified approach on the reparations question.
- Equally supported is that all African governments should join with civil society in Africa and establish Reparations Commissions with a view to seeking dialogue with the governments of Europe, towards the payment of reparations as specified by the mandate of the CARICOM Reparations Commission.
- It was additionally agreed that this acceptance would provide the foundation for the reparations demands by global Africa to be fully resolved and satisfactorily met by the offending governments of Europe and North America.
- Due to the centrality of the Democratic Republic of the Congo within Africa, there was a clear call for total demobilization and demilitarization, awareness building of the oppressive civilian situation and for pursuing concrete action for the democratization process in the Congo. There was the call for the release of all intellectuals arrested without trial in both the Republic of the Congo and the DRC.

- The meeting recognised that Pan-African unity cannot be advanced without the reality of people to people interaction and exchange, and therefore called for the pursuit of immediate action which would result in the establishment of direct air-links between Africa and the Caribbean, more efficient links between Latin America and Africa, greater and more effective inter-country waterway, air, land, sea and telecommunication linkages on the African continent.
- Given the urgency of Pan-African unity, there was a clarion call on all African people and the global African family to read, learn and internalize the ideas and opinions of past great Pan-Africanists like Kwame Nkrumah to help facilitate the Pan-African agenda. Walter Rodney's quest for Pan-Africanism in the Caribbean as a multicultural region and the activism of Tajudeen in especially West Africa were also highlighted.

**Serve as an impetus to bridge the gap between academic, cultural and community based Pan-Africanists.**

- The conference acknowledged that the spirit of Pan-Africanists like Walter Rodney continued to demand that efforts be made to develop a consensus against xenophobia, the acceptance of cultural differences and building a future around the acceptance of diversity as an asset rather than a weakness.
- Culture as a bridge between different ethnicities, languages, ideologies and countries of origin was ably demonstrated throughout the conference and should serve as a model for future engagements for Pan-Africanists of all ages
- Nkrumah's agenda called for the integration of Pan-Africanists from different countries of origin and that call still rings true today. Systematic efforts must be made by individuals and organizations to ensure the integration of visitors and repatriates to the African continent and of visitors abroad to resident African communities.
- Grassroots women and their roles in Pan Africanism have historically been relegated to oral history and conference participants acknowledged the need to be rigorous in reinvigorating former structures such as the Pan African Women's Liberation Organization (PAWLO) and incorporating their historic roles while ensuring that practices that have strengthened sex-segregated environments be incorporated across the board.

- Youth have unique ways of learning that need to be recognized to bridge the information gap with respect to Pan-Africanism. Structured, intergenerational dialogue that leads to age appropriate interactions should be encouraged within academia and the community. Models such as Mabalazi in Barbados can be explored for replication in other communities.
- The meeting noted the resolute struggles of South African youth and students for democratising access to education and call for their support for universal free access to higher education in Africa as manifested in the “Fees Must Fall” Campaign
- Traditional (indigenous) knowledge, such as the application of African fractals, environmental practices, social collectivism, were recognized as an increasingly untapped resource around questions of food sovereignty, organic farming, environmental sustainability, and community empowerment especially with respect to organic farming, fishing and wellness practices. Food sovereignty, food desserts and the development of genetically modified seeds have decimated the lives of ordinary people in African communities worldwide.
- The conference noted its gratitude and appreciation to the Government and people of Ghana, the University of Ghana, and the Institute of African Studies.