

Lift Every Voice

The election of Barack Hussein Obama as the first person of African heritage to hold the office of President of the United States of America is indeed something we can celebrate, and if not for him, certainly for those who came before him, our noble ancestors (e.g., Malcolm X, Zenzile Miriam Makeba...) who not only wished for an African President, but for basic freedom and human dignity. Thus, this issue of *JPAS* is dedicated to all the good the presidency of Barack Obama can bring to United States of America, and the world community.

To start the celebration, we can do four things, first, begin with Kwanzaa, the African American and Pan African cultural holiday which celebrates family, community and culture, celebrated from December 26 thru January 1 annually; created in 1966 by author and scholar-activist Dr. Maulana Karenga. Second, we can observe the life and struggle of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (January 15) before the official inaugural of the first family. And third, we can strategically move into African world history month in February (celebrating), and then march through the remainder of the year with a newly energized purpose, determination, recommitment, and divine guidance.

By doing the above, everyone can lift their voice, and thus everyone can sing their song without fear in Africa, the U.S. or anywhere in the world.

In this issue of *JPAS*, I have again saved a space for people and ideas to lift their voices and sing: John M. Lipski introduces us to the African contribution to the Spanish and Portuguese languages via Afro-Paraguayan language; I interview African centered community scholar and activist Kwaku Person-Lynn; Kemi Rotimi of Obafemi Awolowo University and Olukoya Ogen of the Centre of African Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies (University of London, UK) argues that contrary to popular belief, the anti-colonial resistance of King Jaja and Nana were basically meant for the protection of their personal economic interests, rather than to liberate Nigeria; we receive an exclusive presentation by The Honorable Salim Ahmed Salim via the 2008 Global Peace Leadership Summit sponsored by The African Diaspora Foundation (www.theadf.com) held at the University of California, Los Angeles addressing overcoming conflicts in Africa; a lecture by Paul Von Blum of UCLA on Paul Robeson as a public intellectual; a report/resolution from the November 19-23, 2008 Institute of the Black World 21st Century conference held in New Orleans, Louisiana; and last, three book reviews examining Afrocentricity, the political incorrectness of Black conservatives, and the politics of globalization in the economic community of West Africa.

I sincerely hope you enjoy (this issue, and) the celebrations (lifting your voice and singing), and remember to 'keep hope alive' as the Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr. told us, as we challenged the odds against us.

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Editor