



## **All-African Peoples' Conference @ 60**

**5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> December 2018**

**University of Ghana**

### **“Revisiting the 1958 All-African Peoples Conference: The Unfinished Business of Liberation and Transformation” Conference Report**

#### **Introduction**

The 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the All-African Peoples' Conference held from the 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> December 2018 at the University of Ghana was organized by the Institute of African Studies, Trades Union Congress of Ghana, Socialist Forum of Ghana, Lincoln University and the Third World Network Africa. The conference was a Pan-African gathering of academics, activists, students, community members, workers and policy makers (men, women, elders and youth). The conference was under the theme, “Revisiting the 1958 All-African Peoples Conference: The Unfinished Business of Liberation and Transformation,” which was the foundation for the cultural events, plenaries, parallel sessions, recommendation workshops, as well as the opening and closing keynote speeches. The conference was chaired by Professor Akilagpa Sawyerr, one of Africa's leading pan Africanist public intellectuals, and former Secretary-General of the Association of African Universities (AAU).

#### **Pan-African Participation**

The conference was attended by pan-africanists from Africa and its diasporas with over three-hundred (300) registered participants who attended the entire conference. Over nine-hundred and fifty (950) people participated in the opening ceremony and opening reception that was held on the 5<sup>th</sup> of December 2018 at 5pm. The participants were from four continents (Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe), 34 countries including but not limited to: Algeria, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, France, Gambia, Ghana, Haiti, India, Jamaica, Japan, Lebanon, Namibia, Nigeria, Kenya, Saharawi, Sierra Leone, South Africa, St. Lucia, Tanzania, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, United Kingdom, United States of America, Virgin Islands and Zimbabwe. There was a strong representation of students from across Global Africa. The conference provided travel, lodging, registration and feeding assistance for seventy-two (72) students. The students came from Côte d'Ivoire (25 students), Nigeria (20 students), Burkina Faso (18 students), Benin (6 students), Kenya (2 students) and USA (1 student).

The demographics of the conference were balanced specifically regarding gender with a slightly higher representation of men than women but an overall balance of presentations in plenaries, panel speakers and cultural performers. The partnership with the Trades Union Congress of Ghana ensured that there was a strong representation of workers across Africa and the work of the Socialist Forum of Ghana and Third World Network Africa ensured that we had Ghanaian representation of the progressive and Pan-African community. Lincoln University brought a delegation of 7 people from the Historically Black University and College that Kwame Nkrumah and other key freedom fighters attended in the USA. As a partner they along with the plenary speaker

from Howard University's African Studies Department reinforced the institutional connections between African Universities and Historically Black Universities and Colleges in the USA.

The conference was attended by long-time students of Pan-Africanism such as Professor Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja from the Congo and professor at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill who was the opening keynote speaker, Professor Horace Campbell from Jamaica and a full professor at Syracuse University and the most recent Kwame Nkrumah Chair in African Studies at the University of Ghana, the closing keynote speaker, Mr. Joseph Butiku, Executive Director of the Nyerere Foundation and former assistant to Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, and Mr. G.A. Balogun, the only participant who had taken part in the first AAPC in 1958.

## **Publicity and Marketing**

Given the importance of the Conference, the secretariat run a robust publicity and marketing campaign to both inform about the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and to remind Global Africa about the resolutions of the first All-African Peoples' Conference. The publicity and marketing team organised a press conference on Thursday the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2018 at the International Press Centre in Accra. The press conference was the launch of the AAPC @60 and was chaired by Professor Akilagpa Sawyerr with opening remarks from the Director of the Institute of African Studies, Professor Dzodzi Tsikata. The press conference yielded fruit through print and social media coverage, and live radio and television interviews. The conference opening and closing ceremonies and all plenaries were also livestreamed for online participation. The link to the opening ceremony is: <https://youtu.be/5IiD-zyCLaU> where can watch the opening ceremony and find links to the closing ceremony and plenaries. The conference is also trending on google with a quick search one can find the links to the streaming, media appearances and editorials about the importance of the APPC.

## **Conference Highlights:**

The following section of the report will outline the important components of the conference with highlights from each section. More information about the full programme can be found on the official programme on the website: <http://ias.ug.edu.gh>.

### ***Opening Ceremony***

The opening ceremony was attended by over nine-hundred and fifty (950) people who represented a cross section of Global Africa. With a registration of over 300 conference participants, the organisers were able to mobilise six-hundred and fifty (650) more people from the larger Ghanaian community. This demonstrates a rise in collective consciousness around Pan-Africanism in Ghana and Global Africa. The opening ceremony included a welcome address from the Chair Professor Akilagpa Sawyerr where he encouraged everyone present to re-dedicate themselves to the vision of Pan-Africanism. He challenged the participants of the conference to take this message home to re-ignite the global movement for the liberation and unification of African people. The Director of the Institute of African Studies addressed the crowd with a speech that reminded the gathering of the purpose of the 1958 All-African People's Conference and charged participants to chart a new path for Global Africa. The Provost of the College of Humanities at the University of Ghana Professor Samuel Agyei-Mensah delivered greetings and a speech on behalf of the Vice Chancellor Professor Ebenezer Oduro Owusu.

The partners of this event extended greetings to the conference from their constituencies. Deputy Secretary General, Joshua Ansah representing the Trades Union Congress of Ghana highlighted the need for workers of Africa to unite to ensure the survival of working peoples and their families. The Socialist Forum of Ghana was represented by Mr. Kwesi Pratt Jnr who delivered a speech about the need to build a new Africa where Africans do not feel inferior to any other people. He challenged the collective to remember that the 1958 conference coupled Pan-Africanism with Socialism. The delegation from Lincoln University was represented by Dean Lynette Lee who reminded the delegates about the role of Lincoln University in educating the first president of Ghana Kwame Nkrumah. She reminded the participants that Africans in the diaspora played a significant role in the development of the Pan-Africanist Movement. Student representatives also gave greetings Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire and Benin. There were also fraternal greetings from Dr. Godwin Murunga (CODERSIA), Professor Issa Shivji (Director, Nyerere Resource Centre, Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH) and His Excellency Thabo Mbeki (Former President, Republic of South Africa).

The highlight of the opening ceremony was the keynote speech delivered by Professor Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja who not only outlined the independence movement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the important role of Patrice Lumumba who attended the 1958 All-African People's Conference. He outlined the important role of the Congo then and now and how the control of the Congo has been a contending struggle in Africa since 1880. Prof Nzongola-Ntalaja took the room on a journey around Global Africa where he highlighted the war against African descendants in Brazil, the police killings of African descendant men and women in the United States, the wars in places such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo over resources that have resulted in the killings of millions of African people. He challenged African states to stand up to the oppression and exploitation of African people worldwide. He reminded us that we need to break all of the remnants of colonialism in Africa and beyond.

### ***Opening Reception***

The opening reception immediately followed the opening ceremony and featured a performance from a Blues musician Professor Arthur Flowers who did a solo performance specifically composed for the celebration of the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the All-African Peoples' Conference. The reception also included the opening of a photo exhibition dedicated to African women in the Pan-African Struggle titled, "re\_sisters: emancipation of women Global Africa" curated by Allotey Bruce-Konuah. The reception was an opportunity for participants to network and engage with people of Africa and African descent from all over Global Africa.

### ***Plenaries***

The plenary sessions for the conference represented a wide breadth of issues and challenges facing Global Africa. The speakers on the conference wide plenaries challenged delegates to create sustainable solutions to the challenges that Global Africa is facing. Each day hosted two plenaries with each day symbolizing a sector of the African world. While the first plenaries focused on diagnosing current challenges, and second plenaries were devoted to offering strategies and solutions for building the Africa of the future.

### ***Day 1-Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2018-Youth and Women***

**Being Youth in Africa Today** (Chair: Esi Sutherland-Addy) Speakers: Chy McGhee; Kafui Tsekpo; Simukai Chigudu;

**The Youth, Transformation and African Futures** (Chair: Audrey Gadzekpo) Speakers: Msia Clark; Michael Kpessa-Whyte, Mshai Mwangola

*Day 2- Thursday 6th December 2018-Workers*

**Neoliberalism, Africa's Economies and the Living Conditions of Africans** (Chair: Sylvester Akhaine, Lagos State University) Speakers: Gyekye Tanoh; Kojo Amanor; Chambi Chachage, Anita Nayar)

**Ending Imperialist Domination and Transforming Africa's Economies** (Chair: Sarah Mukasa) Speakers: Adotey Bing-Pappoe; Yao Graham; Donna Andrews

*Day 3- Friday 7th December 2018-Academic/Activist*

**Pan-African Epistemologies for Knowledge Production** (Chair: Akosua Adomako-Ampofo) Speakers: Oyeronke Oyewumi; Zizwe Poe; James Dzisah; Amina Mama

**Building a New Politics for Substantive Democracy and Security** (Chair: Joseph Butiku) Speakers: Lyn Ossome; Ismail Rashid; Rosebell Kagumire

*Day 4- Saturday 8th December 2018*

**Where do we go from here: The Future of Pan-Africanism.** (Chair: Yao Graham)  
Speakers: Womba Nkanza, Evelyn Davis-Poe, Student Representatives from Cote D'Ivoire and Burkina Faso.

The plenary sessions set the foundation for the parallel sessions and for the larger recommendations from the delegates. All of the plenary sessions can be viewed on the University of Ghana YouTube account for research, discussion and further use by scholars, community members, activists and students. The links to the plenaries is below:

### **Day 1**

Plenary Session I: Being Youth in Africa Today-<https://youtu.be/RYLtFhyT3Jc>

Plenary Session II: The Youth, Transformation and African Futures

**Streaming Address:** <https://youtu.be/hA5SBTLDMzY>

Opening Ceremony-<https://youtu.be/5IiD-zyCLaU>

### **Day 2**

Plenary Session I: Neoliberalism, Africa's Economies and the Living Conditions of Africans- **Streaming**

**Address:** <https://youtu.be/-lhWERTvT7o>

Plenary Session II: Ending Imperialist Domination and Transforming Africa's Economies

**Streaming Address:** <https://youtu.be/FoHwCziYUqI>

### **Day 3**

Plenary Session I: Pan African Epistemologies for Knowledge Production

**Streaming Address:** [https://youtu.be/QnUY2HpG\\_ro](https://youtu.be/QnUY2HpG_ro)

Plenary Session II: Building a New Politics for Substantive Democracy and Security

**Streaming Address:** <https://youtu.be/VIfvCy3q250>

### **Day 4**

Plenary Session I: Where do we go from here? The Future of Pan Africanism

**Streaming Address:** <https://youtu.be/krD7TABen14>

#### **13:30– 15:00**

Closing Ceremony

**Streaming Address:** [https://youtu.be/3p\\_T2efjCCY](https://youtu.be/3p_T2efjCCY)

#### ***Parallel Sessions:***

The parallel sessions were robust workshops aimed at encouraging dialogue between participants particularly those who would not often interact based on the space and time that they occupy. The conference hosted a total of 30 parallel sessions with over 100 papers presented from a cross section of delegates who represented institutions, organisations, communities and NGO's and government official across Global Africa. The presentations were delivered by scholars and activists such as Njoki Wamai of the United States International University in Kenya, Joseph S.D. Tennyson of the University of West Indies in Cave Hill, Barbados, Genevieve Nrenzah of the University of Ghana, Timothy Adivilah Balag'kutu of University of Massachusetts Boston, USA, Tariq Mehmood of the University of Beirut, Lebanon and a special conversation between Professor Horace Campbell and G.A. Balogun, one of the few remaining delegates of the 1958 All-African People's Conference.

The workshop on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> of December titled, "Emancipation of Women" focused on women's emancipation as a key to the socio-economic transformation in Africa & Beyond. The workshop on Pan Africanism and Popular Participation on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> December raised questions about how to engage the larger African community on the ground in Pan-African activities.

#### ***Trades Union Congress of Ghana Lecture:***

The second day of the conference was dedicated to the working people of Africa and was organised under the direction of the TUC of Ghana. There were two plenary sessions in the afternoon and a lecture by the Secretary General presented on his behalf by the Deputy Secretary General of the TUC. The lectures were as follows:

1. TUC Lecture: "A Brief History of Development Initiatives in Africa"
2. TUC Panel Discussion: "The State of Unions in Africa and the quest for economic emancipation" Chair: Joshua Ansah (Deputy Secretary General, TUC – Ghana).
  - a. Discussants: Hannah-Owusu-Koranteng  
Kwabena-Nyarko-Otoo

Noble Wadzah (Co-ordinator of Oilwatch - Ghana, and member Public Interests and Accountability Committee - PIAC)

### ***Cultural Activities:***

The AAPC @ 60 recognized that artistic expression has played a pivotal role in the conscientization of the African masses in the struggle against oppression and exploitation. The organizing committee to the conference recalled the contributions of great artists such as Bob Marley, Miriam Makeba, Fela Kuti, Peter Tosh, Sembene Ousmane, Halie Germina, the Last Poets and many more, who through their artistry, inspired generations of African people to participate in the Pan-African Movement. In this spirit, a decision was taken to create a full programme of cultural activities to support the academic/activist events but also to bridge the gap between these two important sectors of the Pan-African world.

The cultural activities consisted of a Pan-African Film Festival where throughout the conference seven (7) films were screened that highlighted important themes in the struggle for the emancipation of Africans world-wide. The films were followed by a discussion by the audience both about the content of the films and how they relate to our conference theme. The films were 1) 1804 by the producers of Hidden Colors, 2) the Battle of Algiers by Gillo Pontecoryo, 3) Amandla by Lee Hirsch 4) Sankofa by Halie Germina, 5) Selma by Ava Duvernay 6) His Majesty Sergeant by to Ato Kwamina Yanney and 7) Camp de Thiaroye by Sembene Ousmane.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> night of the conference hosted the signature ***Palm Wine Night*** where the participants were introduced to local Palm Wine and other brewed beverages such as *asana* and *pito*. The Palm Wine Night took place on the spot where Dr. Kwame Nkrumah delivered his African Genius speech at the Institute of African Studies. There was also Palm Wine Music. Two Palm Wine Bands namely the “Palm Wine Tappers Band & Atentenben Band” entertained the audience and provided the ambience for an enjoyable informal evening activity of conversations and networking that is common to many African cultures.

The ***1 Africa Musical Concert*** was held in collaboration with the national association of Ghana’s musicians (MUSIGA) on Friday the 7<sup>th</sup> December 2018 at the Efua Sutherland Drama Studio. The studio not only holds Pan-African activities, but the person for whom the place is named is one of the most accomplished Pan-African Ghanaian women who was both an advocate for children and an arts activist, deeply connected to Global Africa and instrumental in the creation of the School of Performing Arts and in 1963, joined the then embryonic Institute of African Studies as a Research Associate.

The concert featured the President of MUSIGA Ahuma Bosco as the MC and was comprised of a diverse line up of artists, with the Ghana Police Band as the backing band for the concert. The concert featured spoken word artists such as Trudy from Ghana, Anne Philogene from the USA/Haiti and Reggae Poet Mykal Belle from Jamaica. There were also a number of talented reggae artists including Blacka Tee, Kojo Kombolo, Ras Appiah Levi, Xali Hali and Osagyefo. The concert was headlined by two top Ghanaian artists namely M.ANIFEST and Dr. KNII LANTE. M.ANIFEST is an international hip hop artist who won Best Artiste, Duo or Group in African Hip Hop at the All-Africa Music Award 2018. He has worked with Damon Albarn, Flea, Tony Allen, Erykah Badu, and is featured on five songs on the *Rocket Juice and The Moon* album. He has a direct connection to the Institute of African Studies as he is the grandson of Africa’s foremost ethno-musicologist and composer J.H. Kwabena Nketia, who was the first African director of the Institute. Dr. KNII LANTE is a reggae, soul and Afro pop artist who is also a songwriter and a medical doctor. He performed at Felabration organised in Lagos, Nigeria

at the *The Shrine and at Freedom Park*. He released his second album *True Feelings* at the Redbones Blue Cafe in Kingston, Jamaica. His international Pan-African performances include his performance at Rebel Salute in Jamaica, MASA 2018 in Côte d'Ivoire, and the Chale Wote, Kuchoko and Accra Jazz Festival in Ghana.

### ***Closing Ceremony and Recommendations:***

The closing ceremony speaker was the former occupant of the Kwame Nkrumah Chair in African Studies at the University of Ghana, Professor Horace Campbell. Professor Campbell reminded the meeting of the need for restorative justice and reparations for Africa and African descendants. He challenged the conference to re-commit to global Pan-Africanism including anti-capitalism, which he argued was dialectically opposed to Pan-Africanism. Professor Campbell reinforced the call to “Green Africa” and the importance of using Pan-African education to develop a new African personality starting at the primary school level. He challenged the room to embrace a new Pan-Africanism; one that does not tolerate patriarchy and homophobic rhetoric. Prof Campbell challenged the conference to manage our own affairs through embracing Ubuntu and to view the struggle for Pan-Africanism as a struggle to be human.

Professor Dzodzi Tsikata spoke on behalf of the organisers and reminded participants about the aims of the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the All-African Peoples’ Conference, some of its highlights and noted that the aims had been largely fulfilled. She also offered a thank you to the entire conference. Dr. Mshai Mwangola then performed pieces from three poets, Micere Mugo, Kofi Anyidoho and Ngwatilo Mawiyoo to exhort and inspire participants to take up the important challenge of making a difference. Finally, the Chair of the conference, Professor Akilagpa Sawyerr summed up the conference as successful and pushed everyone present to go back home and carry the Pan-African Movement to the next level.

### ***What’s next?***

The conference held six small group discussions focused on the six sub-themes of the conference on the last day to collectively develop a statement of issues and recommendations for the conference. This approach was to ensure that conference participants would fully own the statement once it has been completed. A revised and finalized statement should be going out in the coming days.

There will be several scholarly and popular publications to put on record the papers presented at the conference and the debates and discussions that ensued. The plenary sessions and keynote addresses that were recorded are available on YouTube and our cultural activities have been recorded and are available at the Institute of African Studies Media and Visual Arts Sections. Finally, we hope to work with collective organizations and movements to continue the legacy of the All-African Peoples’ Conference.



UNIVERSITY OF GHANA



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