

RUFORUM Annual General Meeting 2019

Reawakening the African Dream

A public Lecture Concept note

Tuesday 3rd December, 2019

Contact person: Prof. Adipala Ekwamu, Executive Secretary RUFORUM;
Email: e.adipala@ruforum.org

Background

Africa is at cross-roads in a rapidly evolving world that is competing with itself and against itself. In this global race, the set pacers are far remote than in the past decades and in the 19th-20th century where colonial powers operated freely across the continent without abandon. The current age is marked by turbulence and rapid technological transformation which is affecting social life in new ways. This technologically and information propelled transformations dubbed 'globalisation' is also causing conflicts, wars and social disintegration in almost all regions of the world and at the same time it is also leading to the construction of new identities and the reinvention of old ones¹. In the projected global trends 2025, many African countries will fall further behind economically. Sub-Saharan Africa in particular, will remain the continent's region that is most vulnerable to economic disruption, population stresses, civil conflict, and political instability. This, despite increased global demand for commodities for which Sub-Saharan Africa will be a major supplier, local populations will unlikely experience significant economic gain. It is observed that significant profits arising from sustained increases in commodity prices might further entrench corrupt or otherwise ill-equipped governments in several regions, diminishing the prospects for democratic and market-based reforms².

Discourse on the place of Africa in the current and future competitive global space has been on-going for some time now. Conversations of a renewed African renaissance have equally been discussed and for some time now have been associated with the former South African President, H.E. Thabo Mbeki. Scholars of African renaissance have argued that it ought to be placed within the context of a cultural component that challenges the right of Europeans to impose their cultural-spiritual values on African communities. This cultural project is traced from the early-fifteenth century when Europe sought to make Christianity a universal religion and in order to contain Islam, African religions and the Asian belief system were

¹ Nabudere, D. W. (2001). The African renaissance in the age of globalization. African Journal of Political Science/Revue Africaine de Science Politique, 11-28.

² National Intelligence Council, 2008. Global Trends 2025: A Transformed World. Washington DC.

https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/94769/2008_11_Global_Trends_2025.pdf

CO-ORGANISERS:



decimated. Accordingly, the reawakening of African dreams, the African renaissance perspectives and discourse is a useful tool in the struggle of the African people to redefine a new political and ideological agenda of pan-Africanism in the age of globalization, in which its central focus is on socio-cultural, political, economic regeneration and improvement of Africa's geo-political standing in world affairs³. Contextually, African renaissance implies rebirth, renewal or re-awakening of the African continent taking into account the political, economic, social, technological and more importantly educational dimensions⁴.

Africa currently basks as the continent of the future with a renewed global attention that every global power seems to have a plan for but one wonders whether Africa has a plan for itself. For example, several summits (e.g. India-Africa, Turkey Africa, Japan-Africa, Russia-Africa, China-Africa, Europe-Africa and Brazil-Africa) of 'partnership' between Africa and other global powers have been held. The pertinent issue is how Africa positions itself and its people to leverage from these partnerships, its people and its wealth in heritage and collective power. In order to realise this in the continent, President Mbeki is indicated to have noted that this will require some sort of "rebellion"; an "open resistance to authority..." against political instability on the continent, and an end to "the mixture of greed, dehumanising poverty, obscene wealth and endemic public and private corruption practice" that give birth to many of Africa's coups d'état, civil wars and situations of instability⁵. In this regard, the reawakened Africa is an empowered Africa delivered from the clutches of colonialism and neo-colonialism and the entrenchment of economic, political and/or other pressures by the former dependencies to control and influence the continent⁶. When this is realised the reawakened Africa will be on a global stage as equal and respected, contributor to and beneficiary to all human civilization achievements. This renewal need is thought to be founded in a growing and sustainable economy capable of assimilating the best characteristics, contribute to and take advantage of the real flows of the economic activities around the continent and the world⁷.

Purpose of the Public Lecture

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM), a network of 121 universities from 38 African countries is a Pan-African institution that seeks for vibrant transformative universities catalysing sustainable inclusive agricultural development to feed and create prosperity for Africa. It sees Africa's prosperity and renaissance to be led and driven by its institutions of learning based on the power of education and innovation. RUFORUM underscores the critical and important role played by universities in shaping society and contributing to its development and has a focused attention to shaping graduates that have a sense of self-identity, critical awareness and thinking, and self-driven, innovative and

³ Nabudere, D. W. (2001). The African renaissance in the age of globalization. *African Journal of Political Science/Revue Africaine de Science Politique*, 11-28.

⁴ Koma, S. B. (2018). The African renaissance and the impetus for transforming higher education. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 10(2), 97-108.

⁵ Louw, C.A.H. The concept of the African renaissance as a force multiplier to enhance lasting peace and stability in Sub-Saharan Africa http://www.africavenir.org/fileadmin/migrated/content_uploads/LouwAfricanRenaissanceForceMultiplier_03.pdf

⁶ Thompson, D (Ed), 1995. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*. Oxford: Clarendon

⁷ Mbeki, M. *The African Renaissance*. South African Yearbook of International Affairs, 1998/9. Johannesburg: South African Institute of International Affairs

CO-ORGANISERS:



entrepreneurial; these have been recognised as fundamental ingredients in Africa’s renaissance⁸. Considering that the RUFORUM 15th Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be taking place in Ghana; the foundation of Africa’s self-determination, the RUFORUM Board sought it as the right place to re-ignite the foundations of our forefathers in African togetherness and set a new momentum among the youth, academia and development partners and higher education leaders who will be present in this event to reflect on a new pathway for Africa’s development within a renewal paradigm. In this regard, this public lecture will:

1. Raise a common understanding of the African reawakening, its relevancy, intentions and steps required for this paradigm to be translated into reality.
2. Deliberate on what leadership and ethical principles are required in the ‘rebellion’ against the political and economic injustices within Africa and against Africa and can governments, political, financial and education institutions be creatively be empowered and mobilised to take action.
3. Discuss the space and role of higher education in Africa’s renaissance and how can a paradigm shift be attained in Africa’s higher education space so that it serves a catalytic function in the renaissance period.

The Public Lecture will be delivered by a renowned Pan-Africanist Prof. P.L.O. Lumumba. There will be respondents following his address and a dialogue by the audience.

Programme

Time	Agenda item	Responsible party
Session 1: Setting the Scene		
Session Chair: Prof. Dora Edubuandoh , Pro Vice Chancellor, University of Cape Coast, Ghana		
10:00-10:45	Arrival and networking	All Guests
11:00-11:10	Welcome and introductory remarks	Prof. Prof. Joseph Ghartey Ampiah , Vice Chancellor, University of Cape Coast, Ghana
11:10-11:20	Setting the Scene and Objectives of the Dialogue	Prof. Adipala Ekwamu , Executive Secretary, RUFORUM
11:20-12:00	Key note address: Making Africa Work for Africa: What will it take?	Prof Patrick Lumumba , Nairobi, Kenya
12:00-12:10	First Respondent	Prof. Akwasi Kumi Kyeremeh, University of Cape Coast, Ghana
12:10-12:20	Second Respondent	Dr Fred Muhumuza, A senior economist, Makerere University, Uganda

⁸ Koma, S. B. (2018). The African renaissance and the impetus for transforming higher education. African Journal of Public Affairs, 10(2), 97-108.

CO-ORGANISERS:



12:20-12:30	Third Respondent	Prof. (Mrs) Esi Awuah, Foundation Vice Chancellor, University of Energy and Natural Resources, Sunyani, Ghana
12:30:-13:00	Interventions from the Audience	ALL
13:00-13:30	Final Comments from Respondents	Respondents
13:30-13:45	Concluding Remarks from Key Note Speaker	Prof. Patrick Lumumba, Nairobi, Kenya
13:45-13:55	Closing Remarks	Hon. Prof. Gaspard Banyankimbona, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Republic of Burundi
13:00-14.05	Vote of Thanks	University of Cape Coast Students' Leader
14:05-15:00	LUNCH	
	END OF FUNCTION	

CO-ORGANISERS:

