



## THE SIXTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION WEEK AND RUFORUM BIENNIAL CONFERENCE, 22 – 26 October 2018

**Theme:** Aligning African Universities to Accelerate Attainment of Africa's Agenda 2063

**Venue:** Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC), Nairobi, Kenya

### **Biennial Plenary session**

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**Venue:** Kenyatta International Conventional Centre (KICC)

**Contact person:**

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**Session Name: Plenary Session 1: Toward Agenda 2063: Catalysing University role in influencing policy and setting development agenda**

**Date:** 24 Oct 2018

**Time:** 08.45-10.30

**Room:** Tsavo

### **Introduction**

In 2013, the People of Africa launched an ambitious and visionary framework to spearhead the socio-economic transformation of the continent within a 50 years' timeframe, hereafter referred to as Agenda 2063- *The Africa We Want*. The Agenda 2063 builds on, and seeks to accelerate the implementation of past and existing continental initiatives for growth and sustainable development and has seven (7) aspirations that were derived through a consultative and participatory process with the African citizenry. The aspirations are (1) a prosperous Africa, based on inclusive growth and sustainable development; (2) an integrated continent, politically united, based on the ideals of Pan Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance; (3) an Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law; (4) a peaceful and Secure Africa; (5) Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, values and ethics; (6) An Africa whose development is people driven, relying on the potential offered by people, especially its women and youth and caring for children; and (7) an Africa as a strong, united, resilient and influential global player and partner.

It is evident that for the continent to achieve these far reaching transformative outcomes, will demand at the very least, some fundamental changes in society's core institutions, the policy and the economy, with major implications for relationships between social groups or classes, means of creation and distribution of wealth, power and status. These aspired socio-economic transformations will demand for robust knowledge systems informed by research, reflective analytical processes and diverse and talented pool of skilled human resources to drive and domicile the ideals of Agenda 2063 into national development policy frameworks. The latter places universities in Africa uniquely at the nerve centre of Agenda 2063.

As Science, Technology and Innovation is taking centre stage in driving inclusive growth, universities in Africa, are facing increasing demand to play a more catalytic role to spur development through generation of knowledge, technology and innovations to solve societal problems. The Agenda 2063 thus presents a unique opportunity for Universities in Africa, to go beyond their traditional frontiers of producing highly





skilled labour and research outputs, to meeting perceived economic needs and engage in social transformation that lies at the radical end of conceptions of social change (Brennan *et al.*, 2004)<sup>1</sup>. One big obstacle to social change in many African countries is the lack of skilled labour for innovation. Research outputs and knowledge production for innovation are vital for Africa's sustainable socio-economic development and any investment in education, research and innovation therefore, helps to advance national innovation systems. This may entail building of new institutions of civil society, encouraging and facilitating new cultural values with universities training and supporting socialisation of members of new social elites. However, informing policy decisions through academic research will demand for patience, persistence and developing long-term relationships, based on trust and respect, with those that have influence in the relevant policy area under the new impact agenda, of being seen to influence policy. Universities may need to learn from unconventional players –charities and campaign groups who cite research findings in their campaign literature to push for evidence-based policy change.

**Session Aim:** To catalyse the engagement of universities in Africa in policy influence and set the development agenda towards achieving Agenda 2063

#### Specifically the Session will

- a) Provide an overview on the current level of engagement of universities and their contribution to national, regional and continental policy space in Africa with evidence of the impact of their research on the policy process
- b) Identify regional and continental spaces and structures that are supportive to full engagement of universities in policy influencing and dialogue
- c) Identify mechanisms for bridging the gap between the academia and policy makers
- d) Identify mechanism for experiential learning and knowledge sharing with specialised policy influencing agencies such as Think Tanks and Civil Society Organisations.

#### Session contributions:

**Moderator: Dr Lindiwe Majele Sibanda;** Former FARNPAN Executive Director

- a) Very briefly introduce the topic and the presenters (5 Minutes)
- b) Ensure that speakers keep to their allocated time (15 Minutes)
- c) Provide guided question to each Panelist(1 or two at most) after the end of each Panelist's presentation
- d) Facilitate audience participation during the discussion session and ensure short questions for presenters rather than long statements (30Minutes)
- e) Provide an opportunity for all presenters to participate in answering questions
- f) Direct questions to a particular presenter rather than allowing each one to answer each question, unless a question has been addressed to a specific presenter
- g) Provide opportunity for Panelists to make concluding statements (3 minutes each)
- h) Present a brief summary of salient points at the end of the discussion and close the session (5 minutes)

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<sup>1</sup> Brennan, J., nad King, R., and Lebeau, Y., (2004). The role os universities in transformation of societies. An international Research Project Synthesis Report. Center for Research in Higher Education. Centre for Higher Education Research and Information. The Open University, 344-354 Grays Inn Road, London WC1X 8BP





**Lead Speaker:** Dr Frannie A. Leautier, Founder and Managing Partner, The Fezembat Group (15 Minutes):

Provide insights on/how;

- a) Key drivers for achieving Agenda 2063
- b) Universities can bridge the academic research mandate and evidence policy influencing for purposes of strengthening their development relevancy in articulating policy-oriented solutions at regional and continental levels.
- c) Universities with their stakeholders in the higher education sector can contribute to knowledge sharing to enrich reflection on key economic and international issues that are considered essential to economic and social development of the continent
- d) Universities could link and engage with the private sector, and expectations from the private sector for engagement with universities and other research bodies in the continent to promote innovations and societal impact

**Panelists:**

1. **Hon. Naledi Pandor**, Minister for Higher Education, South Africa (10 Minutes)  
***How African universities could be better organised to support national development and attainment of Agenda 2063***
2. **Prof. Fanuel Tagwira**, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Zimbabwe (10 Minutes)  
***African universities and their role in national development. A case of Zimbabwe***
3. **Mr. Bright Msaka.**, SC, Minister of Education, Science and Technology, Malawi (10 Minutes)  
***Knowledge generation and Development interventions: strengthening institutional capacity and skills development for accelerating achievement of Agenda 2063: Experience and lessons from Malawi***
4. **Dr. David Phiri**, FAO Sub-regional Coordinator and Representative to the African Union.  
***Towards Agenda 2063. Catalyzing University's role in influencing Africa's food and nutritional security policy agenda***
5. **Prof. Brice Sinsin**, University of Abomey Calavi, Benin (10 minutes)  
***Bridging the gap between academia and policymakers to inform policy domains in light of Agenda 2063: University perspective***
6. **Prof. Didier Pillot**, Sup AGRO/Agrinatura, France (10 Minutes)  
***What skills mix and approaches are needed to spur transformation processes especially in the agricultural sector? What are some of the emerging trends that need to be considered for attainment of the SDGs and Agenda 2063?***

Rapporteur: ( *Charles Owuor & Moses Waswa*)

Discussions: (*Q&A with the audience*)

Rapporteur: *Charles Owuor & Moses Waswa*

**Mode of session contributions:**

- The panel will be seated on the podium with participants' seats angle towards the podium
- The moderator will share his/her perspectives as regards to the theme of the session and provide a couple of guiding question in reflection of the presentations made (5 minutes)
- The audience is expected to keep their question short (Max 2 minutes)





**Session line up:**

**Time:**

08.45 – 08.45:

08.45 - 09.00:

09.00-09.10

09.10 - 09.20

09.20 - 09.30

09.30-09.40

09.40-09.50

09.50-10.00

10.00-10.25

10.25-10.30

**Activity**

**Dr Lindiwe Majele Sibanda** Introduces the Session

**Dr Frannie A. Leautier**, Founder and Managing Partner. The Fezembat Group (15 Minutes)

**Hon. Naledi Pandor**, Minister for Higher Education, South Africa (*10 Minutes*)

***How African universities could be better organised to support national development and attainment of Agenda 2063***

**Prof. Fanuel Tagwira**, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Zimbabwe (*10 Minutes*)

***African universities and their role in national development. A case of Zimbabwe***

**Mr. Bright Msaka.**, SC, Minister of Education, Science and Technology, Malawi (10 minutes) ***Knowledge generation and Development interventions: strengthening institutional capacity and skill development for accelerating achievement of Agenda 2063.***

**Dr. David Phiri**, FAO Sub-Regional Coordinator and representative to African Union Commission. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the UN, Rome, Italy. ***Towards Agenda 2063. Catalyzing University's role in influencing Africa's food and nutritional security policy agenda***

**Prof. Brice Sinsin**, University of Abomey Calavi, Benin (10 minutes) ***Bridging the gap between academia and policymakers to inform policy domains in light of Agenda 2063: University perspective***

**Prof. Didier Pillot**, Sup AGRO/Agrinatura, (10 minutes) ***What skills mix and approaches are needed to spur transformation processes especially in the agricultural sector? What are some of the emerging trends that need to be considered for attainment of the SDGs and Agenda 2063?***

Discussions

Concluding Statements

**Expected take away messages: (*What you expect out of the discussion*)**

- Developing long-term relationships, based on trust and respect, with those that have influence in the relevant policy area under the new impact agenda.
- Effective engagement and communication of academic research to policy makers





- Strengthening the coherence of academic research to address the increasingly fragmented nature of policymaking.
- Increased policy focus on Higher Education, Science Technology and Innovation as a growth driver in Africa

CO-ORGANISERS:

