Conference Book

The Power of Africa

“Africa as a Stronger Actor on the International Stage”

Paris, May 2nd-4th, 2012
Thank you!

The ICD would like to extend its sincere gratitude to all those in the organisation of the conference and to the entire Cultural Diplomacy in Africa & Mediterranean team including: Dragos Prodan, Pauline Soudier, Rudolf Sulik, Shizuka Arai, Ksenija Kovacic, Madalina Puiu and Julia Richter.

Special thanks go to team leaders: Youssef Benbakka and Myriam Zekagh for all of their hard work, inspiration and dedication to the success of the conference.

Finally, the ICD and all of the organisers would like to thank the participants and speakers, whose enthusiasm and participation were a vital contribution to the phenomenal success of this exciting and vibrant international event that was thoroughly enjoyed by all involved.

In cooperation with
Introduction

The Power of Africa is the third of a series of three conferences dedicated to Africa that were held in 2012. The first two stressed the importance of trade and culture in the rise of the African continent; this one focused on the possibilities and barriers that the African countries are facing in terms of economic and political bargaining power as well as the prospect of speaking with one voice on the international stage.

The program consisted of lectures, seminars, debates and panel discussions featuring leading figures from international politics, diplomacy, academia, civil society, and professors. It provided everyone with an extraordinary opportunity for networking both in a formal and informal way, during the conference, but also during group dinners and breaks.

This series of conferences on Africa has been organised by the Cultural Diplomacy in Africa & the Mediterranean program, a program of the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy. CDAM aims at sharing the ICD’s philosophy that diplomacy must transcend mere discussion and include practical implementation of theory, for the reason that sometimes actions speak louder than words: cultural diplomacy must show rather than tell. For this conference, the ICD had the pleasure of benefiting from the support of our partner organisation IRCNL, and from the kind assistance of the French National Assembly, which opened its doors to welcome this event during the very last days of the French presidential campaign.

The following report is a summary of the “Power of Africa” conference. It provides key themes, information on speakers including lecture topics and keynote interviews, and an analysis of the conference as a whole.
The Power of Africa
Paris, May 2nd-4th, 2012

Speakers

H.E. Amb. Albert Agossou
Ambassador of the Republic of Bénin to France

Lindi Mminele
Second Counsellor, Embassy of South Africa to France

Prof. Dr. Léon Koungou
Tocqueville Chair Professor in Safety Policies, Facultés Universitaires Notre-Dame de la Paix

H.E. Amb. Muhamedin Kullashi
Ambassador of Kosovo to France

Nicolas de Rivière
Assistant Secretary for United Nations Affairs for the French Foreign Ministry

H.E. Amb. Agron Buxhaku
Ambassador of Macedonia to France, Permanent Delegate to UNESCO

Dr. Damien Helly
Senior Research Fellow, EU Institute for Security Studies

Eugen Brand
Director General, ATD Fourth World

H.E. Amb. Jacques Kabale
Ambassador of Rwanda to France

H.E. Amb. Osman Faruk Logoglu
Former Turkish Ambassador to the United States

The Hon. Prof. Khalid Naciri
Director of the Higher Institute of Administration, Former Minister of Communications and Moroccan Government Spokesperson

Meral Duran
Managing Director, International Relations Consulting Network and Lobbying (IRCNL)

Nathalie Goulet
Member of the French Senate

H.E. Amb. Teshome Toga
Ambassador of Ethiopia to France

The Hon. Minister Yasar Yakis
Former Foreign Minister of Turkey, President of ICD Young Leaders Forum
The Power of Africa
Paris, May 2nd-4th, 2012

Participants

Oyekanmi I. Adewoye
Edna Adewoye
Mohammed Alghefili
Mohammed Alowairdh
Prof. Dr. Kocra Lossina Assoua
Harriet Atim
Femmy Bab-oke
Katelyn G. Baldwin
Addingi Chia
Honita Cowaloosur
Kate Dargis

Dimitra Dimitropoulou
Mohamed El Mongy
Hicham El kamouni Alaoui Moulay
Isabel Mercedes Da Silva Feijo
Audu O. Fidelis
Mausi Gandonu
Mina Girgis
Anne L. A. Hanan
Mayu Imafuku
Mary Anne Iwara
Verena Lechner

Stacey Links
Natasha Lwenya
Mariana Moscardo
Prof. Chijoke C. Ohuruogu
Daniel Putu Kambol
Davinia Gomez Sanchez
Anja Seiler
Dimeyo Simukwai
Kim So Jeong
John Manyitabot Takang
Drissia Zouyar
Participant Papers

A number of academic papers were delivered from participants as part of the Paris Conference. Papers on a variety of subjects related to Africa and its role on the international stage were presented by the following participants:

**Anne Lassen Hanan**
Assistant professor of business culture/global communication, University College North Denmark, developer of the “Africa - Open for Business” program

**Honita Cowaloosur**
Researcher on Chinese special economic zones in Africa, School of International Relations, University of St Andrews

**John Manyitabot Takang**
PhD candidate and research/teaching assistant in international environmental law at the Chair of American Law, the University of Cologne

**Mina Girgis**
Applied ethnomusicologist and cofounder of the Nile Project cultural initiative

**Mohamed El Mongy**
Marketing and promotion manager, Egyptian African Company for Investment and Development, holder of MSc degree in environment and development, University of Edinburgh

Summaries of these papers are now exhibited on the website of the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy, and are available through the following link:

Conference Summary

**Wednesday, May 2nd, 2012, Assemblée Nationale**

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<tr>
<td>10:30</td>
<td>Welcome Words</td>
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<td>Meral Duran, Mark C. Donfried</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00</td>
<td>Lecture &amp; Discussion</td>
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<td>H.E. Amb. Teshome Toga</td>
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<td>Eugen Brand</td>
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<td>14:30</td>
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<td>The Hon. Minister Khalid Naciri</td>
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<td>15:30</td>
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<td>Nathalie Goulet</td>
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<tr>
<td>17:00</td>
<td>Panel Discussion: The Global Perceptions of Africa: Past, Present and Future</td>
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<td>Mark C. Donfried, Meral Duran, Nathalie Goulet, the Hon. Prof. Khalid Naciri, the Hon. Minister</td>
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<td>Yasar Yakis</td>
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<td>18:00</td>
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Conference Summary

Thursday, May 3rd, 2012, Assemblée Nationale

10:30
Lecture & Discussion
H.E. Amb. Albert Agossou

11:00
Lecture & Discussion
Nicolas de Rivière

11:30
Coffee Break

12:00
Lecture & Discussion: From Crisis to Sustainability: The UCN Approach to Doing Business in Africa
Prof. Anne Lassen Hanan

13:00
Lunch Break

14:30
Lecture & Discussion: Perspectives on the Europe-Africa relationship
H. E. Amb. Muhamedin Kullashi

15:30
Lecture & Discussion: Africa and its Willing to Grow: a Bet for the Future
Prof. Dr. Léon Koungou

16:30
Coffee Break

17:00
Lecture & Discussion: The Nile Project as a Case Study of Enhancing Strong Interregional Relations Within the Continent
Mina Girgis

Lecture & Discussion: International Environmental Norms: Opportunities and Challenges for African Countries
John Manyitabot Takang

18:00
Social Program
Conference Summary

Friday, May 4th, 2012, Assemblée Nationale

10:30
Lecture & Discussion
H.E. Amb. Jacques Kabale

11:00
Lecture & Discussion:
Why Africa’s Matter? European Perspectives Beyond Post-Colonialism
Dr. Damien Helly

11:30
Coffee Break

12:00
Lecture & Discussion: The Role of Cultural Diplomacy in Building Confidence and Trust within Africa
Lindi Mminele

13:00
Lunch Break

14:30
Lecture & Discussion:
Africa – a View From the Western Balkans
H. E. Amb. Agron Buxhaku

15:30
Honita Cowaloosur

Lecture & Discussion: Africa 2.0 – a Manifesto of African Youth
Mohamed El Mongy

16:30
Conclusion
Conference Voices

The Hon. Prof. Khalid Naciri

“Morocco was already the most open democratic, institutionalized society. This is the reason why the political society did not implode, like it did in Tunisia, Libya or Egypt”

“Democratization is a complex change, and refers to steps taken forward, and steps backwards. It is not linear, but dialectic. (...) democracy is a complex and unfinished process. In the case of the Arab spring, a changing regime does not equate democracy: in Egypt, for instance, there are too many open doors that are yet to close, in order to secure a democratic development.”

“Moroccan monarchy has deep roots – it is the oldest regime in the world, set up in the 9th century – and benefits today from the added value that the king is very popular, thanks to his involvement in social issues. Monarchy stems from a very particular historical process (like it did in the UK or in Denmark), and it has a stabilizing role in the country. In this respect, we are in a specific democratic situation.”

H.E. Amb. Agron Buxhaku

“Nationalism has been and continues to be the most important force in international relations today… but it is very different according to the country, it is a inherently historical phenomenon”

“Regional cooperation is one of the keys to economic success for Africa”

“Diaspora, with the knowledge and (possibly) the capital, will have more opportunities in Africa than in other countries abroad”

H.E. Amb. Teshome Toga

“The strategic role of Africa on the international stage is fourfold: security, stability, democracy, unity.”
Conference Voices

Eugen Brand

“Ethics of development cannot rely on a one size fits all approach; it should be to learn and build from each country’s strength.”

“There is much to do in the struggle against poverty, but we must offer freedom to each person, take the time to listen and understand. Misery or poverty will only end with the effort of each person.”

“The drama of the poor is that they do not have a no history: they are in a historical black hole, nothing has been written down”

“Misery kills more people in our world than wars”

“The resilience of African youth should serve as an example for new development policies.”

Nathalie Goulet

“Everyone wishes to engage in cooperation. Regarding France, economic cooperation is the most successful, much better than cultural cooperation, which does not necessarily have to focus on the promotion of French language.”

“You have to be very precise about the money you can put on the table, and also about your aims.”

“The new French minister of cooperation should rethink the relation with Africa.”
Conference Voices

Nicolas de Riviere

“Many African leaders play an important role within the UN. African is quite well represented in the United Nations.”

“Over the last ten to twenty years there has been an increase in the willingness of the African Union to act together. It is a very positive evolution, to see that African people take their responsibility in a local stage.”

“The situation in Africa is not only negative; African people are changing their attitude about globalization from just receiving support in a rather passive way to becoming global actors, participating, cooperating, taking their own responsibilities as well.”