

*BUILDING STRONGER CONNECTIONS BETWEEN
AFRICA AND THE GLOBAL DIASPORA*

REPORT
OF
TWO-DAY GLOBAL AFRICAN DIASPORA SYMPOSIUM
(GADS) HELD IN ABUJA, NIGERIA

27TH – 28TH APRIL, 2023

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Foreword

The importance of having participants to come together and deliberate on how to connect the enormous resource of African Diaspora towards the development of the continent cannot be overstated. This has been a focus area of great interest for the Federal Government of Nigeria, which has dedicated resources and established structures for Diaspora engagement over the past two decades, and mindful of its key role as a leader on the continent, has promoted Diaspora engagement on a continental scale for the development of Africa and all its people, both at home and in the Diaspora.

The two-day Global African Diaspora Symposium (**GADS**) was thus an imperative step in this regard as it discussed key steps to be taken and how to coordinate the huge African Diaspora wealth so that there will be rapid development in the African continent. The Symposium also created an interface for networking among Africa and other Diaspora all over the world and served as an opportunity to bridge Africa and the Diaspora by deepening relations between the African Union (**AU**) and Caribbean Community (**CARICOM**), the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (**OACPS**) among others, in realizing the African Union's (**AU**) designation of the Diaspora as the 6th region of the **AU**.

African Diaspora are known to be resource endowed, extremely talented, highly educated and recognized as leads in their respective diverse professions. They have also proven to be very passionate in responding to the developmental needs of their countries of origin and the continent at large, and so, an event such as **GADS** will wake up the zeal, while serving as a platform for Africans and the African Diaspora to connect. In this context therefore, the theme of GADS Abuja 2023, *Building Stronger Connections between Africa and the Global Diaspora*, was apt and pertinent, as the continent needs the support of its Diaspora to achieve the desired development.

We therefore commend the Global Organizing Committee and all organizing partners for bringing to fruition the commitment of the Federal Government of Nigeria to a successful hosting of the Global African Diaspora Symposium (**GADS**) which derived from its charge to the Directorate of Technical Cooperation in Africa (**DTCA**) and the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (**NiDCOM**) to collaborate with the African Diaspora Alliance (**AfDA**) and the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (**OACPS**) in the conceptualization, actualization and successful hosting of the Symposium.

The massive success of this Symposium and this reference Report should engender the requisite momentum for its future as a biennial programme that will promote

improved relations and interactions between Africa and its global Diaspora for development and progress.

Hon. Dr Abike Dabiri-Erewa OON
Chairman/CEO,
Nigerians in Diaspora Commission
(NiDCOM)
Abuja, Nigeria

Amb. Rabi'u Dagari mni
Director-General,
Directorate of Technical
Cooperation in Africa (DTCA)
Abuja, Nigeria

Preface

Africa is the acknowledged mother of all mankind on this earth and for ages, global scientists have heralded Africa as the birthplace of this earth's homo sapiens. Consequently, all humans are in some way related to Africa as the mother continent, as ancient African civilizations have for centuries engaged in migration to other parts of the globe, whether through conquering Europe, migrating to Asia or through the horrific trans-Atlantic slave trade of the 1500s to the Americas. Migration throughout the world has thus created a tremendous African Diaspora currently exceeding one hundred million persons of African descent, who have incidentally excelled in all spheres of human endeavour in every country of the world.

Conversely is the apparent deficit in Africa for expertise and skills in tackling its pervasive development challenges, coinciding with the manifest desire of a large number of the Diaspora to engage with their homeland. The global consistency of their love for Africa therefore provides the basis for strengthening the ties between Africa and its Diaspora.

Heads of States and Governments of Africa and Black leaders had in response, and in recognition of the immense possibilities the Diaspora present, undertaken several efforts and initiatives towards engaging with its Diaspora Community in the past. Some of these included: the Pan-African vision of the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063 and the provision for the African Diaspora as the 6th region of the AU; the increasing collaboration between the AU and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM); CARICOM's call for reparatory justice; the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movements; and the UN International Decade for People of African Descent 2015 – 2024.

It was to further amplify these efforts that the African Diaspora Alliance (AfDA), in collaboration with the Kenya Diaspora Alliance (KDA), instituted an African Diaspora Summit as an annual international Conference where the African Diaspora could congregate to brainstorm on issues affecting the African Diaspora on a global scale and was held in Kenya in 2020.

Subsequently, and in a commendable incident of global harmony, four international organizations joined forces to create a dialogue for stronger global African Diaspora connections with Africa. The Africa Diaspora Alliance (AfDA), the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), the Nigerians in the Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM), and the Directorate of Technical Cooperation in Africa (DTCA), both of the Nigerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, decided to jointly increase the dialogue on Diaspora engagement to benefit Africa and all its descendants.

Thus, the concept of the Global African Diaspora Symposium (**GADS**) Abuja 2023 was born.

With a wide range of topics addressed by a diverse group of African experts and participants drawn from over sixty-four countries across the world on the 27th to 28th April, 2023 in Abuja, Nigeria, the Global African Diaspora Symposium highlighted the issues and strategies required to achieve a better quality of life for Africa and a homeland that welcomes its Diaspora to participate in its development, growth and stability.

It is hoped that the publication of this Report of the Symposium will provide reference materials for further engagement with the Diaspora Community and enhance a stronger connection between the African Diaspora and the motherland, Africa.

Dr. Malcolm Beech,

Co-President of the Africa Diaspora Alliance (**AfDA**),

Co-Chairman, GADS Global Organizing Committee

Acknowledgements

The Global African Diaspora Symposium (GADS), held in Abuja, Nigeria from the 27th to the 28th of April, 2023, marked a significant milestone in strengthening the connections between Africa and its Global Diaspora. This Symposium owes its success to the commitment and contributions of esteemed individuals and organizations who generously dedicated their time, talents, and resources.

On behalf of the Global Organizing Committee, I would like to begin by appreciating the former President *Muhammadu Buhari* GCFR, under whose Administration this Symposium was held, for his support and leadership in promoting the engagement and collaboration between Africa and its Diaspora, most especially the Nigerian Diaspora.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to all the participating countries for their gracious support. Their active involvement further solidified the importance of collaboration and engagement between Africa and its diaspora.

On behalf of the entire team who worked onerously on this Symposium, I wish to acknowledge *Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri* OON, the Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of **Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM)** for her doggedness and relentlessness in ensuring the successful organization of this Symposium. We deeply appreciate her for the unwavering support and leadership.

In addition, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to the Africa Diaspora Alliance (AfDA) for initiating the proposal for the organization of this Symposium and the **Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM)** as well as the **Directorate of Technical Cooperation in Africa (DTCA)** and the **Organization of the Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS)** for their vital role in co-organizing the Global African Diaspora Symposium (GADS). The expertise, support and collaborative efforts of these incredible organizations have been invaluable in ensuring the smooth planning and execution of this significant Symposium.

It would be remiss not to specially recognize Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget, and National Planning, whose support and facilitation were instrumental in the resounding success of the Symposium. I also acknowledge the wonderful support received from all our sponsors, particularly the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), in providing financial support that ensured the success of the programme.

I cannot adequately express my deepest gratitude to the members of the Global Organizing Committee from different countries and time zones of the world who worked tirelessly and sacrificially towards the success of this event. I commend each and every one of them for their cooperation, unwavering attention, and the unquantifiable time and resources they wholeheartedly dedicated to the Symposium's success.

While it is impossible to acknowledge each and every individual and organization that contributed to the resounding success of the Global African Diaspora Symposium, please know that your invaluable contributions are deeply appreciated by the entire team. Your unwavering support has played a pivotal role in strengthening the connections between Africa and its Diaspora, and we are truly grateful for your dedication and involvement in making this Symposium a remarkable achievement.

Mrs. Ibukun Odusote

Chairman, Global Organizing Committee,
Global African Diaspora Symposium (GADS)

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Table of Contents

Foreword	iii
Preface	v
Acknowledgements	vii
Global Organizing Committee	ix
Editorial Team	xiii
Rapporteurs	xiii
Concept Note	xxi
Programme of Events	xxviii
SUMMARY REPORT	1
1.0 Introduction	1
2.0 Symposium	2
2.1 Background	2
2.2 Day 1	4
2.3 Day 2	6
2.4 Dinner and Award Night	7
3.0 Conclusions	7
REPORT	9
DAY ONE	10
1.0 OPENING SESSION	10
1.1 WELCOME ADDRESS by Chairman, Global Organizing Committee, <i>Mrs Ibukun Odusote</i>	10
1.2 OPENING REMARKS:	
1.2.1 Global Chairman, Kenyan Diaspora Alliance (KDA) , <i>Dr. Shem Ochuodho</i>	12
1.2.2 Director General, Directorate of Technical Cooperation in	

	Africa (DTCA), Abuja, Ambassador Rabiun Dagari mni	12
1.2.3	Chairman/CEO, Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM) , Abuja, <i>Hon. (Dr.) Abike Dabiri-Erewa OON</i>	12
1.3	REMARKS:	
1.3.1	Honourable Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nigeria, His Excellency Ambassador Zubairu Dada	14
1.3.2	Honourable Minister of State, Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Nigeria, Prince Clement Ikanade Agba	14
1.4	GOODWILL MESSAGES:	
1.4.1	Indian High Commissioner to Nigeria, His Excellency Amb. G. Balasubramanian	16
1.4.2	Chairman, Senate Committee on Diaspora and NGOs , Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, <i>Sen. Michael Ama Nnachi Ph.D.</i>	16
1.5	SPECIAL REMARKS:	
1.5.1	Director-General, International Organization for Migration (IOM) , <i>Mr. António Vitorino.</i>	16
1.5.2	Secretary General, Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) , His Excellency Georges Rebelo Pinto Chikoti.	18
1.5.3	President, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) , His Excellency Omar Alieu Touray	19
1.6	MESSAGES:	
1.6.1	President of Uganda, His Excellency Yoweri Museveni.	20
1.6.2	President of Ghana, His Excellency Nana Akufo Addo	20
1.7	KEYNOTE ADDRESS by President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, H. E. Muhammadu Buhari GCFR	21
2.0	FIRST PLENARY SESSION	22
2.1	KEYNOTE PRESENTATION: <i>Diaspora Home Returns: Issues for African States</i> by Founder and President, Constituency for Africa (CFA) , Washington D.C. United States of America, <i>Mr Melvin</i>	

<i>Foote.</i>	22
2.2 ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC STATES (OACPS) SESSION:	23
2.2.1 OPENING REMARK by Minister of Culture, Tourism and Environment, Republic of Angola, His Excellency <i>Filipe Silvino De Pina Zau</i>	23
2.2.2 PANEL DISCUSSION: <i>Global Experiences in Diaspora Engagement: The OACPS Perspective</i>	23
2.2.2.1 Director-General, Ethiopian Diaspora Service, Ministry of Foreign Affairs , Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and Focal Point for East Africa, <i>Dr. Mohammed Endris</i>	24
2.2.2.2 Director, Congolese Abroad, Ministry of Foreign Affairs , Democratic Republic of the Congo & Focal Point for Central Africa, <i>Ambassador Theo Wabenga Kalebo</i>	25
2.2.2.3 Director, Diaspora Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs , Jamaica and Focal Person for the Caribbean, <i>Dr. Lloyd Wilks</i>	25
2.2.2.4 Deputy Director, Information and Research, Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation , Republic of Namibia and Focal Person for Southern Africa, <i>Ms. Marbeline Goagoses</i>	25
2.2.2.5 Director, Diaspora Affairs Unit, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration , Ghana and Focal Point for West Africa, <i>Mrs. Elizabeth Nyantakyi</i>	26
2.2.2.6 First Secretary, Embassy of the Republic of Vanuatu to the European Union, the Kingdom of Belgium, France and High Commission to the United Kingdom , <i>Mr. Dreli Solomon</i>	27
2.2.2.7 Wrap-up	27

3.0	SECOND PLENARY SESSION	28
3.1	KEYNOTE PRESENTATION: <i>Diaspora Funding for Africa's Development</i> by President, African Development Bank (AfDB) , Dr. Akinwunmi Adesina	28
3.2	DISCUSSION SESSIONS: <i>Building and Sustaining Africa's Self-Reliance</i>	30
3.2.1	SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY: Founder/Chairman, Geometric Power Limited , Nigeria, Prof. Bart Nnaji	30
3.2.2	AGRICULTURE: Dean, College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry , Fiji National University , Fiji, Prof. Paul Iji	31
3.2.3	TRADE, INDUSTRY AND MANUFACTURING: Founder/Chief Executive Officer, Homestrings Inc. , Washington DC, USA, Mr. Eric V. Guichard	32
3.2.4	ENERGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT: Founder-President and Chief Executive Officer, Rife International , Maryland, USA, Mr. Kwabena Osei-Sarpong	32
3.2.5	TOURISM AND CULTURE: Professor of History and African Diaspora Studies, Department of History, Florida International University , Florida, Miami, USA, Prof. Saheed Aderinto	33
3.2.6	TOURISM AND CULTURE: Director General, National Council for Arts and Culture (NCAC) , Nigeria, Otunba Olusegun Runsewe	34
3.3	OACPS-IOM NETWORKING SIDE-EVENT AND COCKTAIL	35
3.3.1	Opening Remarks: Moderator, National Project Officer, Labour Migration and Diaspora, International Organization for Migration (IOM) , Nigeria, Mrs. Elizabeth Poage	35
3.3.2	Welcome Remarks: Secretary-General, Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) , Mr. Georges Rebelo Pinto Chikoti	36
3.3.3	Welcome Remarks: Director-General, International Organization for Migration (IOM) , Mr. Antonio Vitorino	36

3.3.4	Goodwill Message: Honourable Minister of State, Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning , Nigeria, <i>Prince Clement Agba</i>	37
3.3.5	Goodwill Message: Chairman/Chief Executive Officer, Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM) , <i>Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa</i>	37
3.3.6	Presentation on the ACPS Diaspora Platform: Director, African Diaspora Policy Centre (ADPC) , <i>Dr. Awil Mohamoud</i>	38
3.3.7	Presentation on Diaspora Engagement – Moving from Policy to Action: Director, Department of Programme Support and Migration Management, International Organization for Migration (IOM) , <i>Ms. Monica Goracci</i>	39
3.3.8	Exchange of Views	41
3.3.9	Closing Remarks: Moderator, National Project Officer, Labour Migration and Diaspora, International Organization for Migration (IOM) , Nigeria, <i>Mrs. Elizabeth Poage</i>	43

DAY TWO **46**

4.0 THIRD PLENARY SESSION **46**

4.1	KEYNOTE PRESENTATION: <i>Deploying Science and Technology for Africa's Transformation</i> by Founder and President, The Woman Boss , Malaga, Spain, <i>Ms. Awamary Lowe-Khan</i>	46
4.2	PANEL DISCUSSION: <i>The Green Imperative for Africa in the 21st Century</i>	47
4.2.1	President, Global Educational & Infrastructure Services (GEISE) , <i>Prof. Hilary Inyang</i>	48
4.2.2	Professor of Geosciences, Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, University of Missouri , Kansas City, United States of America, and Senior Consultant, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) , <i>Prof. Jimmy Adegoke</i>	48
4.2.3	Wrap-Up by Chairman of Session	50
4.2.4	Interventions	50

5.0	FOURTH PLENARY SESSION	52
5.1	HEALTH: Director, Industry Cooperation Institute of Health and Wellbeing and Program Leader, Master of Health Services Management, Federation University, Australia, <i>Prof. Mimmie Claudine Ngun Chi Watts</i>	52
5.2	INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY: Director, African Diaspora Policy Centre (ADPC), The Netherlands, <i>Dr. Awil Mohamoud</i>	54
5.3	EDUCATION AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT: Professor of Media, University of Sydney and Executive Director, C3N2 Educational Empowerment, Australia, <i>Prof. Chika Anyanwu</i>	55
5.4	PRESENTATION OF SHORT VIDEO Sponsored by International Organization for Migration (IOM)	57
5.5	REMARKS by Co-Chair, Global Organizing Committee, Global African Diaspora Symposium (GADS) and Co-President, Africa Diaspora Alliance (AfDA) , <i>Dr. Malcolm Beech</i>	57
5.6	REMARKS by President, Nigerians in Diaspora Organization (NIDO) New York Chapter, <i>Hon. Bobby Digi Bamidele Olisa</i>	59
6.0	CLOSING SESSION	60
6.1	REMARKS by Special Adviser to the Imo State Government on Diaspora , <i>Elder Aloysius Nwangwu</i> (on behalf of the Diaspora State Focal Point Officers)	60
6.2	REMARKS by Chairman of Nigerians in Diaspora Organization-Europe (NIDO-E) , <i>Dr. Bashir Obasekola</i>	60
6.3	PRESENTATION OF COMMUNIQUE by Chairman, Global Organizing Committee , <i>Mrs Ibukun Odusote</i>	62
6.4	REMARKS by, Curator, Nike Arts Gallery and Managing Director/CEO of Nike Centre for Art and Culture , Osogbo, <i>Chief Nike Davies-Okundaye</i>	64
6.5	REMARKS by Assistant Secretary General, Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) , <i>Dr. Ibrahim Norbert Richard</i>	64

6.6	VOTE OF THANKS by Co-Chair Global Organizing Committee, and Co-President, Africa Diaspora Alliance (AFDA) , <i>Dr. Malcolm Beech</i>	65
7.0	DINNER	70
7.1	WELCOME REMARKS by Co-President, Africa Diaspora Alliance (AfDA) and Co-Chairman, GADS Global Organizing Committee , <i>Dr. Malcolm Beech</i>	70
7.2	OPENING REMARKS by Chairman/Chief Executive Officer, Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM) , <i>Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa</i>	70
7.3	SPECIAL REMARKS by Director-General, Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) , <i>Dr. Bashir Yusuf Jamoh</i>	71
7.4	GOODWILL MESSAGES	
7.4.1	Senior Presidential Advisor on Diaspora Affairs, Republic of Uganda , <i>Ambassador Abbey Walusimbi</i>	71
7.4.2	Director, Diaspora Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Jamaica , <i>Dr. Lloyd Wilks</i>	72
7.4.3	Culture, Hospitality and Tourism Expert, <i>Mr. Wale Akinboboye</i>	72
7.4.4	Chairperson, Nigerians in Diaspora Organization (NIDO) UK-South Chapter , <i>Mrs. Susan Waya</i>	73
7.4.5	Vice President, Constituency for Africa (CFA) , Washington DC, USA, <i>Ms. Jeannine Scott</i>	73
7.4.6	Associate Professor, San Jose State University and Founder, BEST (Black Engineers, Scientists and Techies) , USA, <i>Engr. Folarin Erogbogbo</i>	74
7.5	DINNER SPEECH by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Republic of Jamaica , <i>H.E. Hon. Leslie Campbell</i>	74
	APPENDIXES	78
	Communiqué	79
	Attendance	87

CONCEPT NOTE

1.0 BACKGROUND

The African continent, according to some scholars, is blessed with abundant natural and human resources, and will lead the next industrial revolution if its' resources are well harnessed. The reasons behind this revolve on its human advantageous position as shown in the United Nations' current statistics that the population of **Africa** was **1,408,261,291** as at third quarter of 2022, which was equivalent to **16.72%** of the total world population and number **2** among regions of the world, with a **median age** of **19.7 years**. The population density in Africa was **45** per km² as against the median population density in other regions of the world; Asia **104**, Europe **34**, North America **28**, South America **25** and Australia **5** people per km². (*Worldometer*).

Africa's total land area is 29,648,481 km² (11,447,338 sq. miles), of which its arable land was 1,119 million hectares, corresponding to nearly 40 percent of the Continent's total land area (*Agricultural Land in Africa 2019-2021* – Statista). However, according to the **World Economic Forum (WEF)**, Africa remained a net importer of food, although it had 60% of the world's uncultivated arable land with capacity to feed the entire world. Every mineral found on planet earth is abundant in Africa. With all the above indicators, Africa still remained an underdeveloped continent with poor infrastructure, for a host of reasons.

Nonetheless, Africa's greatest resource required to transform its potentials is its abundant human resource. This resource consists of both Africans within the continent and its Diaspora, the majority of whom are blazing trails and effecting exploits wherever they are all over the world. It was in this regard that the Diaspora is now being looked upon as a partner in the development of the continent, especially as the Diaspora community world over, have been instrumental in the development of their home countries. Globally, the Diaspora have become a force to be reckoned with in the sustainable development of their varied home lands by national governments and regional bodies.

Over the past ten years, there has been a significant change in the **African Union (AU)** and African governments' perception of the African Diaspora. In the previous three decades, Diaspora was not manifestly viewed as a resource that countries of origin could tap into for their development needs. This is no longer the case as the African Diaspora now play a very important role in the economic development of their home countries. Other than sending remittances to their countries of origin, the African Diaspora also

promote trade and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), create businesses and encourage entrepreneurship and transfer of new knowledge and skills where they have been important participants. Now, the African Diaspora are increasingly seen as positive actors; countrymen and women abroad who can contribute to the development efforts in their homelands and Africa continent as a whole.

Beyond the modern Africa Diaspora is the large, also formidable Diaspora which consists of the historical African Diaspora; descendants, whose great grandparents were involuntarily taken from the continent over six hundred years ago through the Gulf and over four hundred years across the Atlantic and by other routes. They include the Caribbean, Brazilians, African-Americans, Pacific Islanders, Afro-Europeans/ Asians, etc.

It was therefore in furtherance of this historical fact that the African Diaspora was now an integral constituency of the African Union and their participation in the Union is a fundamental institution imperative. The **African Union's** designation of the African Diaspora as the 6th Region of the African Continent in **Article 3q of the Protocol on Amendment to the Constitutive Act of the African Union 2003** expressly invites the African Diaspora to participate as an important part of the building of the Union. Furthermore, the **Declaration of the Global Diaspora Summit 2012** recognized the need to build enduring partnerships between the African continent and the African Diaspora through sustainable dialogue and effective engagement. Also in 2021, the **African Union** organized the first **African Global Diaspora Summit** at which governments of Member States of the **African Union** and others signed a Declaration where they agreed to collaborate with each other politically, socially and economically.

The **African Union Commission** through its **Economic, Social & Cultural Council (ECOSOCC)** and **Citizens and Diaspora Directorate (CIDO)** has instituted a program of **Regional Consultative Conferences (RCCs)** as a vehicle to enable the **African Union** to consult with the various Diaspora stakeholders around the world to give practical meaning to the designation of the African Diaspora as the 6th Region of the Continent. This is in consonance with the fifth aspiration of **Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want**, which is *Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, values and ethics*, having as its 16th goal, *African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent*, and the priority areas of: *Values and ideals of Pan-Africanism; Cultural Values and African Renaissance; and Cultural Heritage, Creative Arts and Business*.

It is in the light of these that, through the stakeholders' platform of the **African Union**, the **African Diaspora Alliance (AfDA) Inc.** has established strategic engagement and collaboration with Diaspora networks around the world, including the United States of America, the Caribbean, Brazil, Canada, Guyana, Fiji, Trinidad, Australasia, Europe

and the 'Diaspora in Africa', which included those who repatriated back to the Continent, as well as those who reside, work and/or operate businesses in countries other than their own. **African Diaspora Alliance (AfDA)** is championing Pan-African initiatives across the world to congregate, exchange on and build a Pan-Africanism for the future. These initiatives include: the Pan-African vision of the **African Union (AU) Agenda 2063** and the provision for the African Diaspora as the 6th region of the **AU**; the increasing collaboration between the **AU** and the Caribbean Community (**CARICOM**); **CARICOM**'s call for reparatory justice; the **Black Lives Matter (BLM)** movements across the world; and the **UN International Decade for People of African Descent 2015-2024**. To advance these initiatives, the **AfDA** instituted annual international Conferences where African Diaspora could congregate to brainstorm on topical issues affecting the African Diaspora on a global scale. The first Symposium was held in Kenya in 2020.

Furthermore, the **Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS)** brings together 79 Member States and their respective Diaspora. The 10th Summit of **OACPS** Heads of State and Government which held in Luanda, Republic of Angola, hosted the 1st **OACPS** Diaspora Forum on 7th December, 2022. The Diaspora Forum was chaired by the *Honourable Abike Dabiri-Erewa*, Chief Executive Officer of **NiDCOM** and **OACPS** Champion for the Diaspora. The Forum also launched the **OACPS** Diaspora Engagement Platform, officially. The Luanda Declaration acknowledged the strategic significance of fostering togetherness and camaraderie among the estimated 1.4 billion individuals of African origin in the Diaspora, to advance social, political and economic success. Recognizing its significant contribution to economic, social and cultural development, the **OACPS** Heads of State and Government committed to develop and implement relevant policies and appropriate mechanisms to foster Diaspora participation in national development.

The 2023 Abuja Symposium therefore seeks to foster new connections for a stronger Global African Diaspora partnership and also to commemorate the **International Decade for People of African Descent (IDPAD)** which took place in September 2018 in Accra and Cape Coast, Ghana. The Symposium provides opportunity for Africa to engage with African Diaspora and build upon the first African Diaspora Symposium (ADS-2020), which held in Nairobi, Kenya in December 2020, as well as the 1st Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (**OACPS**) Diaspora Forum hosted at the 10th Summit of **OACPS** Heads of State and Government, on December 7, 2022 in Luanda, Republic of Angola.

The two-day International Symposium is being organized by the **African Diaspora Alliance (AfDA)** and the **Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific**

States (OACPS) in conjunction with the **Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM)** and the **Directorate of Technical Cooperation in Africa (DTCA)**, both in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and charged with Diaspora engagement for development, with nationwide and continent-wide mandates respectively. The Symposium is designed to address and proffer workable solutions to Africa's most pressing issues and offer concrete strategies as well as necessary partnerships between key Diaspora leaders in business and the professions with leaders on the African continent, to achieve successful results. The Symposium seeks to create an interface between Africa and its Diaspora to maximize partnership and collaboration.

The outputs will include a high-level statement to provide Africa's member States with policy recommendations on harnessing the power of the Diaspora, the 6th Region of Africa, for sustainable development. It is also anticipated that the Symposium will enhance participation of African Diaspora actors with the African Union and its' member States and regional communities within the context of the **International Decade for People of African Descent**. It will also add value, synergy and optimism and consolidate the current Action Plan being undertaken by the African Union to achieve **African Union Agenda 2063**. Discussions relating to human development as a whole present an opportunity to initiate in-depth dialogue with various stakeholders, from representatives of the Diaspora in the world (associations and individuals), as well as development practitioners and the donor community, to Heads of State and Government, and make it possible to identify the main thrust of policies and speed up implementation for the benefit of people on the ground.

The **Global African Diaspora Symposium (GADS) Abuja 2023** will allow eminent representatives of the Diaspora to engage in a constructive dialogue aiming at the implementation of effective policies and programs that will advance the contribution of the Diaspora to Africa's economic and social development. It is thus expected to bring together global representatives and participants from Africa and all regions of the world where people of African descent are found, including the Americas, Caribbean, Europe, Asia and Oceania with an anticipated audience of about three hundred (300) individuals, businesses, government leaders, civil societies, and political institutions such as the **AU**, **OACPS**, **CARICOM**, and the **UN**. **GADS Abuja 2023** will provide participants an interactive front row seat in building strategic partnerships between the Diaspora and Africa with countless opportunities to network, meet new partners and achieve business and professional goals.

The Symposium will address various sub-themes aimed at promoting South-South and Triangular exchanges on Diaspora engagement policies and practices, and

create a framework for the implementation of international commitments related to the contribution of the Diaspora to development such as the **IOM Dublin Declaration** and the **African Union Agenda 2063** and the **United Nations (UN)** Sustainable Development Goals (**SDGs**) It is also expected to contribute to raising the profile, voices and visibility of Diaspora practitioners in the development community circles of participating organizations, countries and regions.

2.0 CONFERENCE THEME: *Building Stronger Connections between Africa and the Global Diaspora.*

3.0 OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of the Symposium are to:

- i. Create an interface for networking among African and other Diaspora all over the world.
- ii. Promote the implementation and institutionalizing of Pan-Africanism at the UN through the celebration of the **International Decade for People of African Descent**.
- iii. Build bridges between Africa and the Diaspora by deepening relations between the **AU** and **CARICOM**, **OACPS**, **SPF**, among others in realizing the Diaspora as the 6th region of the **AU**.
- iv. Explore and engage the contributions of Diaspora skills, particularly in scientific knowledge and technology transfer.
- v. Mobilize Diaspora savings and Diaspora philanthropic contributions and harness migration, remittances and Diaspora contributions for suitable development
- vi. Enhance participation of the Diaspora in Africa's development process to support the development of the roadmap for the Diaspora as the 6th Region of Africa towards the attainment of **Africa Union's** Agenda 2063.
- vii. Advocate for policy and practice changes conducive to more effective integration of Diaspora-led actions in the national development plans of their countries of origin through organizations such as the **OACPS**.

4.0 EXPECTED OUTPUTS:

- i. Greater in-depth cooperation between Africa and the Diaspora at institutional levels.

- ii. Collation and documentation of the main points of the discussions and the resolutions reached at the conclusion of each day's Sessions with the final Proceedings of the Symposium published before the end of 2023.
- iii. A Post-event action plan (short-term, medium-term and long-term), which shall include key immediate actions to achieve some of the goals of the Symposium and the organizers, in partnership with Diaspora member organizations, State, CIDO and ECOSOCC delegates and the African Union, in Diaspora engagement for Africa's development.
- iv. High-level statement to provide Africa's member States with policy recommendations on harnessing the power of the Diaspora, the 6th Region of Africa, for sustainable development.
- v. Itineraries for subsequent biennial Symposia.

5.0 EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

- i. A palpable sense of belonging and homecoming for the entire African Global Diaspora.
- ii. Ease of entry and movement for the Diaspora into and within Africa.
- iii. Greater involvement of the Diaspora in Africa's development process working with institutions and policy makers at all levels.
- iv. Improved collaboration on Diaspora engagement between multilateral organizations including the AU, EU, CARICOM, OACPS, IOM, SPF.
- v. Institutionalization of the Symposium through the adoption of the Symposium by the Africa Union as a biennial Diaspora Day Summit.
- vi. Become a platform for the promotion of the Global Diaspora as key resource for positively projecting and developing Africa.
- vii. Actualization of the aspirations, goals and priorities of the Africa Agenda 2063.

6.0 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK:

The African Diaspora Alliance (AfDA) Inc. and the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), in conjunction with the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM) and the Directorate of Technical Cooperation in Africa (DTCA), both of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) with logistic support from the Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning (FMFBNP) of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, will lead the team of experts, policy makers and the Diaspora in the organization of the Symposium.

7.0 FOCUS AREAS:

The Symposium will focus on key strategic solutions in: Science and Technology, Agriculture, Manufacturing and Industry, Energy and Infrastructure Development, Tourism and Culture, Green Energy and Technology, Health, Information Communication Technology, Education, Finance and Economic Development, and much more.

8.0 PARTICIPANTS:

The **Global African Diaspora Symposium (GADS) 2023** will bring together an expected number of about three hundred (300) in-person participants from all relevant stakeholder groups, including the African Union and its member States and the African Diaspora, with more than 5,000 participants virtually from all over the world.

9.0 WORKING LANGUAGES:

The working language for the international Symposium shall be English and French.

10.0 SYMPOSIUM FORMAT:

The format for the Symposium shall be hybrid with in-person/physical participation in Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, as well as virtual participation via online media.

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

GLOBAL AFRICAN DIASPORA SYMPOSIUM (GADS) ABUJA 2023

April 27 – 28, 2023

Building Stronger Connections between Africa and the Global Diaspora

DAY 1

OPENING CEREMONY

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 09:00 | Nigerian Anthem, African Union (AU) Anthem and OACPS Anthem |
| 09:10 | Welcome Address – Chairman, Global Organizing Committee, <i>Mrs. Ibukun Odusote</i> |
| 09:15 | Opening Remarks – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Global Chairman, Kenyan Diaspora Alliance (KDA), <i>Dr. Shem Ochuodho</i> ii. Director-General, Directorate of Technical Cooperation in Africa (DTCA) <i>Amb. Rabiun Dagari mni</i> iii. Chairman/Chief Executive Officer, Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM), <i>Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa OON</i> |
| 09:25 | Remarks – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Honourable Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <i>Amb. Zubairu Dada</i> ii. Honourable Minister of State, Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning, <i>Prince Clement Agba</i> |
| 09:35 | Entertainment – ADILA Dancing Troupe |
| 09:45 | Goodwill Messages |
| 09:50 | Special Remarks – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Director-General, International Organization for Migration, <i>Mr. António Vitorino</i> |

- ii. Secretary-General, **Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS)**, *H. E. Georges Rebelo Pinto Chikoti*
- iii. President, **Economic Community of West African States**, *H.E. Omar Alieu Touray, Ph.D.*
- 10:10 **Entertainment** – **ADILA Dancing Troupe**
- 10:20 **Messages** –
 - i. President of Uganda, *H.E. Yoweri Museveni*
 - ii. President of Ghana, *H.E. Nana Akufo Addo*
- 10:30 **Remarks by Special Guests of Honour** –
 - iii. President of Kenya, *H.E. William Ruto*
 - iv. President, **African Union (AU)**, *H.E. Azali Assoumani*, President of the Union of the Comoros
- 10:40 **Keynote Address** – President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, *H. E. Muhammadu Buhari GCFR*

GROUP PHOTOGRAPHS

11:00 **TEA BREAK**

1ST PLENARY SESSION

- 11:10 **Keynote Presentation** – *Diaspora Home Return: Issues for African States: Mr. Melvin Foote*, Founder and President, **Constituency for Africa (CFA)**, Washington D.C, United States of America.

OACPS Session:

- 11:30 **Opening Remarks** – **Minister of Culture, Tourism and Environment**, Republic of Angola, Chair of the 10th Summit of the **Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS)**, *H. E. Filipe Silvino de Pina Zau*.
- 11:35 – **Panel Discussion: Global Experiences in Diaspora Engagement: The OACPS Perspective.**

Moderators: **H. E. Harriet Sena Siaw-Boateng**, Ambassador of Ghana to Belgium and Ghana's Permanent Representative to the European Union.

Discussants:

- i. **Dr. Mohammed Endris**, Director-General, **Ethiopian Diaspora Service, Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Focal Point for East Africa.
- ii. **H. E. Amb. Theo Wabenga Kalebo**, Director, **Congolese Abroad, Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, Democratic Republic of the Congo. Focal Point for Central Africa.
- iii. **Dr. Lloyd Wilks**, Director, **Diaspora Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, Jamaica. Focal Point for the Caribbean.
- iv. **Ms. Marbeline Goagoses**, Deputy Director, **Information and Research, Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation**, Republic of Namibia. Focal Point for Southern Africa.
- v. **Mrs. Elizabeth Nyantakyi**, Director, **Diaspora Affairs Unit, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration**, Ghana. Focal Point for West Africa.
- vi. **Mr. Lionel Warimavute**, Senior Desk Officer, **Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and External Trade**, Republic of Vanuatu. Focal Point for the Pacific.

13:00 **LUNCH BREAK**

2ND PLENARY SESSION

Chairman: **Special Presidential Advisor on Diaspora Affairs** to the President of the Republic of Uganda, **H. E. Amb. Abbey Walusimbi**

14:00 **Keynote Presentation – Diaspora Funding for Africa's Development:** **Dr. Adesina Akinwunmi**, President, **African Development Bank (AfDB)**.

14:30 **Discussion Sessions:** *Building & Sustaining Africa's Self-Reliance*

Sector: **Science and Technology –**
 Presenter: **Prof. Bart Nnaji**, Founder/Chairman, **Geometric Power Limited**, Nigeria.

- Sector: **Agriculture -**
Presenter: *Prof. Paul Iji*, Dean, College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Fiji National University, Fiji
- Sector: **Trade, Industry and Manufacturing -**
Presenter: *Mr. Eric V. Guichard*, Founder/Chief Executive Officer, **Homestrings Inc.**, Washington D.C., USA.
- Sector: **Energy and Infrastructure Development -**
Presenter: *Mr. Kwabena Osei-Sarpong*, Founder-President and Chief Executive Officer, **RIFE International**, Maryland, USA.
- Sector: **Tourism and Culture -**
Presenter: *Prof. Saheed Aderinto*, Professor of History and African and African Diaspora Studies, Department of History, African and African Diaspora Studies Program, **Florida International University**, Florida, Miami, U.S.A.

Co-Presenter: *Otunba Olusegun Runsewe*, Director-General, **National Council for Arts and Culture (NCAC)**, Nigeria.

17:00

COCKTAIL - ACP Diaspora Platform *Diaspora Networking Event*

TIME	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY
17.00 - 17.30	Walk-in	All Participants
17.30 - 17.40	Opening	Moderator
17.40 - 17.50	Welcome remarks	OACPS Secretary-General <i>H.E. Mr. Georges Rebelo Pinto Chikoti</i>
17.50 - 18.00	Welcome remarks	IOM Director General, represented by <i>Mrs. Ugochi Daniels</i> , Deputy Director General, IOM
18.00 - 18.10	Goodwill message	Chairman/Chief Executive Officer, NiDCOM <i>Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa</i>
18.10 - 18.25	Presentation on the ACPS Diaspora Platform	Director, African Diaspora Policy Centre, <i>Dr. Awil Mohamoud</i>

18.25 – 18.40	Presentation on Diaspora Engagement – Moving from Policy to Action	<i>Ms. Monica Goracci</i> , Director, Dept of Programme Support and Migration Management, IOM
18.40 – 19.00	Testimonies (cultural, economic, social, and human)	The Diasporas
19.00 – 19.20	Exchange of views	All Participants
19.20 – 19.35	Artistic performance	Diasporan Artist
19.35 – 19.50	Closing Remarks	OACPS and IOM

DAY 2**3RD PLENARY SESSION**

Chairman: Secretary-General, **Developing Eight Organization for Economic Cooperation (D8)**, *Amb. Isiaka A. Imam*

09:00 **Keynote Presentation** – *Deploying Science and Technology for Africa's Transformation: Ms. Awamary Lowe Nicholas*, Founder and President, **The Woman Boss (CFA)**, Malaga, Spain.

09:20 **Panel Discussion:** *The Green Imperative for Africa in the 21st Century:*

Discussants:

- i. *Prof. Hilary Inyang*, President, **Global Educational & Infrastructure Services (GEISE)**.
- ii. *Prof. Jimmy Adegoke*, Professor of Geosciences, **Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, University of Missouri**, Kansas City, United States of America & Senior Consultant, **African Development Bank Group (AfDB)**.

11:00 **TEA BREAK**

4TH PLENARY SESSION

Chairman: Senior Regional Adviser for Sub-Saharan Africa, **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**, Geneva, *Mrs. Aïssata Kane*.

12:00 **Discussion Sessions:** *African Solutions to Africa's Problems*

Sector: **Health –**

Presenter: *Prof. Mimmie Claudine Ngun Chi Watts*, Director, **Industry Cooperation Institute of Health and Wellbeing & Program Leader**, Master of Health Services Management, **Federation University**, Australia.

Sector: **Information Communication Technology –**

Presenter: *Dr. Awil Mohamoud*, Director, **African Diaspora Policy Centre (ADPC)**, The Netherlands.

Sector: **Education and Youth Development –**

Presenter: *Prof. Chika Anyanwu*, Professor of Media, **University of Sydney** and Executive Director, **C3N2 Educational Empowerment**, Australia.

Sector: **Finance, Economic Development & Investment –**
Presenter: *Mr. Amadou Cisse*, Chief Executive Officer, **African Institute of Remittances (AU-AIR)**.

14:00 **LUNCH BREAK**

CLOSING CEREMONY

15:30 Communiqué - Chairman, **Global Organizing Committee**, *Mrs. Ibukun Odusote*

15:50 Vote of Thanks - Co-Chairman, **Global Organizing Committee** and Co-President, **African Diaspora Alliance (AfDA)**, *Dr. Malcolm Beech*

15:55 **Nigerian Anthem, African Union Anthem and OACPS Anthem**

18:00 DINNER & AWARDS NIGHT

DINNER & AWARDS NIGHT PROGRAMME

MC: *Dr. Seun Adigun*

Music: *DJ Busta*

PROGRAM OF EVENTS

17.40 Arrival of Guests

18.00 Recognition of Dignitaries

18.10 **Nigerian, AU & OACPS Anthems**

18.15 Opening Performance – *Miss. Oreofe Balogun* the Saxophonist

18.25 *Welcome Address* by Co-Chairman, **GADS Global Organizing Committee, Dr. Malcolm Beech**

18.30 *Opening Remarks* by the Chairman/CEO, **Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM), Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa OON**

18.35 *Special Remarks* by Director-General, **Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Dr. Bashir Yusuf Jamoh**

18.45 Interlude – **ADILA Dancing Troupe**

18.55 Goodwill Messages

19.00 Interlude – **Abuja Cultural Troupe**

19.15 *Dinner Address* by Minister of State, **Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Jamaica, Hon. Leslie Campbell.**

19.30 Presentation of Awards

19.45 Entertainment – *2Face Idibia*

20.00 *Vote of Thanks* by Chairman, **GADS Global Organizing Committee, Mrs. Ibukun Odusote**

SUMMARY REPORT

SUMMARY REPORT OF THE GLOBAL AFRICAN DIASPORA SYMPOSIUM (GADS), ABUJA 2023, HELD FROM APRIL 27TH - 28TH 2023, AT THE CONFERENCE HALL OF THE ASO ROCK VILLA, STATE HOUSE, ABUJA.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM) received communication from the African Diaspora Alliance (AfDA), which was passed on to the Directorate of Technical Cooperation in Africa (DTCA), proposing an **African Diaspora Summit** as a follow up to the **Africa Diaspora Symposium (ADS)** held in Nairobi, Kenya in December, 2020. The proposed Summit was scheduled to take place in Abuja, Nigeria in June/July 2022, and NiDCOM, in partnership with the DTCA, were requested to co-organize it.

1.2 Activities towards the hosting of the Symposium commenced from December 2021, with an inaugural Local Organizing Committee meeting of about seven attendees, held at the instance of the Global Organizing Committee Chair, *Mrs. Ibukun Odusote* on the 20th December, 2021 at the **Pearls Learning Hub**, Durumi District, Area 1, Garki, Abuja. After this meeting, more members were conscripted into the Committee drawn from the organizing partners and the private sector and the group was further organized into sub-committees for proper function, delineation of tasks and distribution of assignments/responsibilities to the different subcommittees for the purpose of shared responsibility. The sub-committees created were:

- Technical Sub-committee;
- Logistics Sub-committee; and
- Finance and Partnership Sub-committee.

1.3 With the various sub-committees in place, several other meetings were held with tasks and responsibilities assigned to the sub-committees and the Logistics Sub-committee was further subdivided into:

- Media & Publicity;
- Security & Protocol; and
- Accommodation & Transportation.
- Welfare & Health

1.4 In the course of its meetings, it was finally agreed that it should be called the **Global African Diaspora Symposium** while the proposed theme was "*Africa and African Diaspora: Connection for a Stronger Africa Agenda*". It however became obvious that the

proposed date of 26 July, 2022, for the Symposium was not feasible and it was agreed to postpone the planned Symposium to later in 2023. It was instead agreed that a hybrid Planning Workshop be held on the earlier proposed date of 26th July, 2022. The Planning Workshop was then organized and hosted at **Pearls Learning Hub**, Durumi District, Area 1, Abuja on the 26th of July, 2022, with both physical and virtual attendees.

1.5 In the course of the Workshop, a team from the **Organization of African, Caribbean, and Pacific States (OACPS)** led by the Assistant Secretary General, Department of Political Affairs, *Dr. Nobert Richard Ibrahim* paid a visit to some government agencies in Abuja, including the **DTCA** and **NiDCOM**, and leveraged on the visit to attend the planning workshop. Their valuable contributions further gave the planning a broader scope and enabled the buy in of the **OACPS** as an organizing partner. At the same meeting, the date for the event was set at 27th and 28th of April, 2023, in Abuja, Nigeria.

1.6 A total of twenty-six (26) virtual, physical and hybrid meetings, including the Planning Workshop, were held. The Committee, which commenced with just seven (7) members, expanded to a total of about forty (40) members who worked assiduously towards the planning and execution of the event, some of whom were drawn from the global Diaspora while others were physically on ground as Local Organizing Committee for the execution of plans and decisions reached at the various meetings.

1.7 The membership of the Global Organizing Committee was drawn from the African Diaspora Alliance (**AfDA**), Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (**NiDCOM**), Organization of African, Caribbean, and Pacific States (**OACPS**), Directorate of Technical Cooperation in Africa (**DTCA**), Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning (**FMFB&NP**), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and others from the private sector.

1.8 The **Global African Diaspora Symposium** with the theme: *“Building Stronger Connections between Africa and the Global Diaspora”*, finally took place from the 27th – 28th April, 2023 at the Conference Hall of the Aso Rock Villa, State House, Abuja.

2.0 SYMPOSIUM

2.1 BACKGROUND:

2.1.1 A total of 296 Participants were physically in attendance and hundreds more in virtual participation at the 2-day Symposium, with hundreds more participating virtually drawn from over sixty-four (64) different countries of the world. Some of these countries included; Australia, Belgium, Chad, Congo, Cote d’Ivoire, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gambia, Ghana, Jamaica, Kenya, Namibia, Netherlands,

Niger Republic, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Spain, Switzerland, Tunisia, Uganda, United Kingdom, United States of America, Vanuatu and Zimbabwe.

2.1.2 The 2-Day event was focused on the following sector strategic areas: Health; Education & Youth Development; Agriculture; Tourism & Culture; Science & Technology; Manufacturing & Industry; Green Energy and Technology; Information Communication Technology; and Energy & Infrastructure Development.

2.1.3 The Symposium was designed to address and proffer workable solutions to Africa's most pressing issues and offer concrete strategies as well as necessary partnerships between key Diaspora leaders in business and the professions with leaders on the African continent, to achieve successful results. The Symposium sought to create an interface between Africa and its Diaspora to maximize partnership and collaboration.

2.1.4 The Objectives of the Symposium were to:

- viii. Create an interface for networking among African and other Diaspora all over the world.
- ix. Promote the implementation and institutionalizing of Pan-Africanism at the UN through the celebration of the **International Decade for People of African Descent**.
- x. Build bridges between Africa and the Diaspora by deepening relations between the **AU** and **CARICOM**, **OACPS**, **SPF**, among others in realizing the Diaspora as the 6th region of the **AU**.
- xi. Explore and engage the contributions of Diaspora skills, particularly in scientific knowledge and technology transfer.
- xii. Mobilize Diaspora savings and Diaspora philanthropic contributions and harness migration, remittances and Diaspora contributions for suitable development
- xiii. Enhance participation of the Diaspora in Africa's development process to support the development of the roadmap for the Diaspora as the 6th Region of Africa towards the attainment of **Africa Union's** Agenda 2063.
- xiv. Advocate for policy and practice changes conducive to more effective integration of Diaspora-led actions in the national development plans of their countries of origin through organizations such as the **OACPS**.

2.1.5 The Expected Outputs were:

- i. Greater in-depth cooperation between Africa and the Diaspora at institutional levels.

- ii. Collation and documentation of the main points of the discussions and the resolutions reached at the conclusion of each day's Sessions with the final Proceedings of the Symposium published before the end of 2023.
 - iii. A Post-event action plan (short-term, medium-term and long-term), which shall include key immediate actions to achieve some of the goals of the Symposium and the organizers, in partnership with Diaspora member organizations, State, **CIDO** and **ECOSOCC** delegates and the African Union, in Diaspora engagement for Africa's development.
 - iv. High-level statement to provide Africa's member States with policy recommendations on harnessing the power of the Diaspora, the 6th Region of Africa, for sustainable development.
 - v. Itineraries for subsequent biennial Symposia.
- 2.1.6 The expected Outcomes from the Symposium are:
- i. A palpable sense of belonging and homecoming for the entire African Global Diaspora.
 - ii. Ease of entry and movement for the Diaspora into and within Africa.
 - iii. Greater involvement of the Diaspora in Africa's development process, working with institutions and policy makers at all levels.
 - iv. Improved collaboration on Diaspora engagement between multilateral organizations including the **AU**, **EU**, **CARICOM**, **OACPS**, **IOM**, **SPF**.
 - v. Institutionalization of the Symposium through the adoption of the Symposium by the Africa Union as a biennial Diaspora Day Summit.
 - vi. Become a platform for the promotion of the Global Diaspora as key resource for positively projecting and developing Africa.
 - vii. Actualization of the aspirations, goals and priorities of the Africa Agenda 2063.

2.2 DAY ONE

2.2.1 Opening Ceremony: The two-day Symposium started with the Opening Ceremony, which commenced with the rendition of the Nigerian, AU, and ACP anthems, by the 11-year-old saxophonist, *Miss. Oreofe Balogun*. The Opening ceremony featured the Welcome Remarks by the Global Africa Diaspora Symposium Committee Chairman, *Mrs. Ibukun Odusote*; Opening Remarks by the Director-General of the Directorate of Technical Cooperation in Africa (DTCA), *Amb. Rabiun Dagari mni*, Chairman of the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM), *Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa OON*, and the Global

Chairman of the Kenyan Diaspora Alliance (KDA), **Dr. Shem Ochuodho**. Special remarks were given by the Director-General, International Organization for Migration (IOM), **Mr. Antonio Vitorino**, represented by the Deputy Director-General, **Mrs. Ugochi Daniels**; Secretary-General, Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), **H. E. Georges Rebelo Pinto Chikoti**, and the President of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), **H. E. Omar Alieu Toray**. Messages were also received from the representatives of the Presidents of the Republics of Ghana and Uganda. There were performances by the young Saxophonist, **Miss. Oreofe Balogun**, the **Adila Dancing Troupe** and the **Abuja Cultural Troupe**. The President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, **H. E. Muhammadu Buhari GCFR**, represented by the Minister of State for Transportation, **Mr. Muazu Sambo**, in his Keynote Address declaring the Symposium open, identified the need for African governments to harness the human and material resources of the Diaspora. The Opening Ceremony ended with a group photograph and a tea break and was immediately followed by the Plenary Sessions of the Symposium.

2.2.2 First Plenary Session: The first Plenary Session commenced with a Keynote Presentation on *Diaspora Home Return: Issues for African States* by **Mr. Melvin Foote**, Founder and President, **Constituency for Africa (CFA)**, followed by the **OACPS Panel Discussion** focused on the State of Diaspora Engagement in the **OACPS** with the theme “*Global Experiences in Diaspora Engagement: The OACPS Perspective*”. The Session was moderated by **H. E. Harriet Sena Siaw-Boateng**, Ambassador of Ghana to the Kingdom of Belgium, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and Head of Mission to the European Union and had Opening Remarks by the Minister of Culture, Tourism and Environment, Republic of Angola and Chair of the 10th Summit of the **OACPS**, **H. E. Filipe Silvino de Pina Zau**. Six (6) discussants featured in the discussion drawn from Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Jamaica, Republic of Namibia and Vanatu.

2.2.3 Second Plenary Session: The Second Plenary Session featured Sectoral Discussion Sessions focused on *Building and Sustaining Africa's Self-Reliance*, and was chaired by the Secretary, Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (**NiDCOM**), **Engr. Dr. Sule Yakubu Bassi**. The Session commenced with a Keynote Presentation by the President of the African Development Bank (**AfDB**), **Dr. Akinwumi Adesina**, represented by the Vice-President of the Bank, **Dr. Kevin Urama**. He spoke extensively on the need for Africans both within the continent and in the Diaspora to cooperate in building a sustainable and self-reliant Africa. The

Sectoral Presentations were by: *Prof. Bart Nnaji (Science and Technology); Prof. Paul Iji (Agriculture); Mr. Eric Guichard (Trade, Industry and Manufacturing); Mr. Kwabena Osei-Sarpong (Energy and Infrastructure Development); and Prof. Saheed Aderinto and Otunba Olusegun Runsewe (Tourism and Culture).*

2.2.4 COCKTAIL-ACP Diaspora Platform: The First Day of the Symposium came to a climax with the OACPS-IOM Networking Side-Event with the theme, *Engaging the Global Diaspora*. It featured a welcome remark from the OACPS Secretary-General *H. E. Mr. Georges Rebelo Chikoti* and the IOM Director-General, represented by the Deputy Director General, *Mrs. Ugochi Daniels*, messages from the Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of **Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM)**, *Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa OON* and the Nigerian Minister of State for **Budget and National Planning**, *Prince Clement Agba*. There were also Presentations by the Director, **African Diaspora Policy Centre (ADPC)**, *Dr. Awil Mohaoud* and the Director, Department of Programme Support and Migration Management, *Ms. Monica Goracci*. The Network ended with a Cocktail Party.

2.3 DAY TWO

2.3.1 Third Plenary Session: The second day programme commenced with the third Plenary Session featuring a keynote presentation on *Deploying Science and Technology for Africa's Transformation* by *Ms. Awamary Lowe-Khan*, Founder and President, **The Woman Boss**, Malaga, Spain. This was followed by a Panel Discussion on *The Green Imperative for Africa in the 21st Century*. The discussants were *Prof. Hilary Inyang*, President, Global Education and Infrastructure Services (GEISE), and *Prof. Jimmy Adegoke*, Senior Consultant, **African Development Bank Group (AfDB)** and the Session concluded with tea break.

2.3.2 Fourth Plenary Session: The Fourth Plenary Session involved Sectoral Discussion Sessions focused on *African Solutions to Africa's Problems*. The Session was chaired by the Senior Regional Adviser for Sub-Saharan Africa, **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**, Geneva, *Mrs. Aissata Kane* and featured the following Presenters: *Prof. Mimmie Claudine Ngun Chi Watts (Health); Dr. Awil Mohamoud (Information Communication Technology); and Prof. Chika Anyanwu (Education and Youth Development)*. The Session ended with an IOM video testimony by a Diaspora and remarks on the role of AfDA by *Dr. Malcolm Beech*.

2.3.3 Closing: The Closing ceremony of the Symposium featured remarks from the Chairman of Nigerians in Diaspora Organization, Europe (**NIDO-E**), *Dr. Bashir Obasekola*, the presentation of the Communique by the Chairman of the Global Organizing Committee, *Mrs. Ibukun Odusote*, and the vote of thanks by the Co-Chairman, Global Organizing Committee, and Co-President, African Diaspora Alliance (**AfDA**), *Dr. Malcolm Beech*. He was excited at the outcome of the event and appreciated all those who had worked towards the success of the symposium. The Nigerian National Anthem, African Union Anthem, and ACP Anthem were then rendered, thereby bringing the program to a close.

2.4 DINNER & AWARD NIGHT

2.4.1 After two days of brainstorming sessions, participants were hosted to a Dinner and Awards Night at the Transcorp Hilton Congress Hall. The Welcome Address was by the Co-Chair, Global Organizing Committee, *Dr. Malcom Beech*, and Opening Remark by the Chairman/CEO, **Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM)**, *Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa OON*. In her remarks, she appreciated everyone who had worked towards the success of the event and particularly thanked the Director-General, **Nigerian Maritime and Safety Administration (NIMASA)** for hosting the dinner. Remarks were also received from the representative of the Director-General, **NIMASA**, among a number of others.

2.4.2 The Dinner Address was by the Honourable Minister of State, **Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade**, Jamaica, *Hon. Leslie Cambell*. His speech was followed by a fashion parade, and the presentation of Awards and recommendation certificates to **GADS** resource persons and some distinguished staff and partners of the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (**NiDCOM**). There were performances by the young saxophonist, *Miss. Oreofe Balogun* and the **Abuja Cultural Troupe** with the climax of the Dinner and Award Night being the musical performance by *Mr. Innocent Idibia*, popularly known as *2Face Idibia*.

3.0 CONCLUSIONS

3.1 The 2-day **Global African Diaspora Symposium (GADS) Abuja 2023** provided a platform for experts and stakeholders to discuss issues related to *Diaspora Home Return*,

Building and Sustaining Africa's Self-Reliance, The Green Imperative for Africa in the 21st Century, and African Solutions to Africa's Challenges.

3.2 The Symposium was adjudged a huge success by participants at the event, despite all the bottle necks and uncertainty experienced during the planning stage. The outcome has shown that Africa can achieve her dream of a better, self-reliant and sustainable continent if we join hands and work together, particularly with the conscious and purposeful engagement of the Diaspora. The major disappointment however was the non-participation by the **African Union (AU)** and its agencies, despite due invitation to them.

3.3 The Symposium agreed to reconvene next year, 2024 in Kampala, Uganda for a mid-term review of the progress so far on the conclusions of the Symposium, while the next Symposium in 2025 was proposed for Kingston, Jamaica.

3.4 It is hoped that the recommendations proposed at the Symposium would be utilized by relevant stakeholders and that African leaders would take necessary steps to harmonize the process of engaging with the Diaspora for a better and stronger continent.



Nigerian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Amb. Zubairu Dada (third from left), Chairman, NiDCOM, Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa (fourth from left), Dr. Shem Ochuodho (center), Secretary, NiDCOM, Engr. Dr Sule Yakubu Bassi (fourth from right) and Chairman of the Global Organizing Committee, Mrs. Ibukun Odusote (third from right) with some invited guests.

REPORT

DAY ONE

1.0 OPENING SESSION

The Symposium commenced with the rendition of the anthems of Nigeria, African Union and the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) by 11-year-old saxophonist, *Miss. Oreofe Balogun*. The Masters of Ceremony for the Symposium, *Dr. Tope Ojeme* (English) and *Ms. Aya Kasasa* (French), thereafter called on the Speakers for their presentations.



Dignitaries standing for the Anthems

1.1 WELCOME ADDRESS by Chairman, Global Organizing Committee, *Mrs Ibukun Odusote*.



Mrs. Odusote expressed her great pleasure in welcoming Participants to the all-important programme, which marked the second edition of the Global African Diaspora Symposium, with the theme "*Building Stronger Connections Between Africa and the Global Diaspora*". She said it was no longer news that Africa would develop only when all Africans worked together, and that the goal of developing the African continent could not be achieved without the involvement of the 'Sixth

Region of Africa: The African Diaspora'. She noted that it was by harnessing the skills and expertise of this sixth Region that the dreams of a better Africa could be achieved.

According to *Mrs. Odusote*, it was on this premise that the **African Diaspora Alliance (AfDA)** instituted an Annual International Conference, where African Diaspora could congregate to brainstorm on topical issues affecting Africa and the African Diaspora on a global scale. To actualize this, she said the first Symposium was held in Kenya in 2020, while the second was planned to hold in 2021 but could not materialize due to certain constraints beyond the control of organizers. In place of the 2021 edition, she informed participants that a planning workshop was organized in 2022 to look into the design, structure and modalities for implementing the second symposium, which was the Planning Workshop held in Abuja on Tuesday, 26th of July, 2022. This coincided with the visit of the Secretary General of the **Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS)** with some of his team members, who then assisted, in no small measure, towards the expansion of the scope of the event as was now evident, she stated.

The Chairman of the Global Organizing Committee said the 2023 Edition of **GADS** sought to foster new connections for a stronger Global African Diaspora partnership and also to commemorate the **International Decade for People of African Descent (IDPAD)**, which took place in September 2018 in Accra and Cape Coast, Ghana.

She expressed hope that the 2023 Symposium and others in the near future, would provide opportunities for Africa to engage with its Diaspora and build upon the first **African Diaspora Symposium (ADS-2020)**, held in Nairobi, Kenya in December 2020, and also the **1st Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) Diaspora Forum** hosted at the 10th Summit of **OACPS** Heads of State and Government, in Luanda, Republic of Angola, on the 7th of December, 2022.

She proceeded to acknowledge the roles of **African Diaspora Alliance (AfDA)** in championing the two-day international event in collaboration with the **Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS)**, the **Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM)** and the **Directorate of Technical Cooperation in Africa (DTCA)**, both under the **Nigerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs**.

She concluded her welcome address with a special welcome to all Participants to the second edition of the **Global African Diaspora Symposium (GADS), 2023**, holding in Abuja, Nigeria, with the hope that the contributions and participation of everyone present would go a long way in achieving the set objectives of this occasion.

1.2 OPENING REMARKS:

1.2.1 Global Chairman, Kenya Diaspora Alliance (KDA), *Dr. Shem Ochuodho*.



Dr. Shem Ochuodho in his opening address hoped that Nigeria, as a pillar in the African Community across the globe, would further help to drive the agenda of the Symposium in the **African Union (AU)**, **OACPS**, **Caribbean Community (CARICOM)** and others so that it has a much larger and wider impact. According to *Dr. Ochuodho*, **African Development Bank (AfDB)** in 2022 reported that the Diaspora brought into the African Continent \$100 billion with most of this fund going to Egypt and Nigeria. There was therefore need to continue to collaborate with the African Diaspora, restoring their trust where there was a shortage of it.

1.2.2 Director General, Directorate of Technical Cooperation in Africa (DTCA), Abuja, *Ambassador Rabi'u Dagari mni*.



Amb. Rabi'u Dagari, in his remarks, highlighted a few important points, stating that Africa had reached a state where it required a new story about Africans and Africa, as evidenced by the inflow of steady finance by African in Diaspora which was in excess of official developmental aid and Foreign Direct Investment. In Nigeria for example, he pointed out, its Diaspora remittance was four times its FDI in 2021. He mentioned that this inflow of remittances should be directed to productive ventures and not consumption. Lastly, he was of the opinion that the Symposium took place at the right time as the **African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)** was picking up, stating that **AfCFTA** offered huge opportunities to aid in attaining the African Agenda 2063.

1.2.3 Chairman/CEO, Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM), Abuja, *Hon. (Dr.) Abike Dabiri-Erewa OON*



Hon. (Dr) Abike Dabiri-Erewa welcomed all Participants to the **Global African Diaspora Symposium (GADS) Abuja 2023**. She said it was the recognition of the African Diaspora, who are persons of African descent living all over the world, that made the **African Union (AU)** to declare African Diaspora as the Sixth Region of the continent.

She explained further that the recognition was because the African Diaspora were strategically important to the world in several fields of human endeavours, be it Education, Science and Technology, Tourism, and Culture, Agriculture, ICT, Health, Manufacturing and Industry, etc.

According to *Dr. (Mrs) Abike Dabiri-Erewa*, the Symposium was designed to address and proffer workable solutions to Africa's most pressing issues and offer concrete strategies as well as the needed affiliation between key Diaspora leaders in government, business, the private sector and the professions, with leaders on the African continent, so as to achieve successful results. The Symposium also sought to create an interface between Africa and the Diaspora for the sole purpose of maximizing partnership and collaboration.

Hon. Dabiri-Erewa further said that the rich academic, professional, global exposure and various contemporary experiences had placed the African Diaspora on a global pedestal, and as a result of which, expressed high expectation of the generous contributions that would emanate from the brainstorming sessions from the Symposium, while hoping that these would ultimately lead to the development of the African Continent. She enumerated the efforts made by **NIDCOM** since its establishment in 2019 to engage with over 17 million Nigerians in the Diaspora through its flagship Programmes such as:

- a) Presidential Town Hall meetings;
- b) National Diaspora Day Celebrations on July 25th of every year;
- c) National Diaspora Investment Summit which holds annually in November;
- d) Diaspora Mortgage and Housing Programme; and
- e) Regular interventions for Nigerians abroad.

Dr. (Mrs) Abike Dabiri-Erewa concluded her opening remarks by expressing her desire and hope that the Symposium would be institutionalized as a biennial event to further galvanize the necessary support and attention of African Diaspora in the accelerated development of the African Continent.

1.3 REMARKS:

1.3.1 Honourable Minister of State, **Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, Nigeria, **His Excellency Ambassador Zubairu Dada**



Amb. Zubairu Dada asserted that the Symposium took place at an opportuned time, as the 21st century had been marked as century of human mobility and migration with estimated 250 million migrants, having over 40 million of African descent increasing in the past two decades and expected to keep rising. Therefore, Africa could not think about its economy without factoring in the African Diaspora, he stated.

He further noted that migration was inevitable, necessary and desirable if and when properly governed. In recognition of its importance, Africa needed to transform it's the potential of its abundant human resource, inclusive of historic African Diaspora and global African Diaspora, and it was therefore in recognition of this, the President of Nigeria, **His Excellency Muhammadu Buhari** approved the Symposium and the establishment of the **OACPS** Diaspora Centre for Excellence in Abuja to further promote connections between Africa and the global Diaspora.

1.3.2 Honourable Minister of State, **Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning**, Nigeria, **Prince Clement Ikanade Agba**.



The Honourable Minister of State for Budget and National Planning started his opening remarks by paying glowing tributes to representatives of other African countries who had come all the way, to contribute to the fostering of a new and stronger Global Diaspora which provided an opportunity for Africa to engage with its Diaspora. He termed the Symposium as very important because it was expected to build upon the outcomes of the First African Diaspora Symposium (ADS-2020) held in Nairobi, Kenya in December, 2020, as well as the first Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (**OACPS**) Diaspora Forum hosted at the 10th Summit of **OACPS** Heads of State and Government, on December 7, 2022 in Luanda, Republic of Angola, with the two earlier events aimed at creating frameworks for maximizing the engagement between Africa and the Diaspora towards achieving the sustainable development.

He hailed the African Diaspora as a formidable constituency worthy of consideration in relation to Africa's development, and whose development contribution to Africa was far more than remittances; contributing in many important ways such as in

international circles, business joint ventures, technological transfer, cultural exchange, religious networks, and institutional linkages. He therefore advised that in order to encourage the African Diaspora to support transformative development, African countries needed to be more systematic, structured and strategic in their engagement with the Diaspora, as opportunities for them to contribute to the development of the African continent remained unexploited, largely because of the lack of proper coordination and the inability to envision the importance of the Diaspora beyond remittances.

The Honourable Minister proceeded to advise African countries to learn lessons from other emerging and developing countries that had successfully engaged their Diaspora for economic and social development, citing Malaysia's Talent Corp, South African Network of Skills Abroad (**SANSA**) and Rwanda's Solidarity Fund as classical examples. All these, he said, were started with a view to enable the Diaspora contribute to the development of their countries.

He concluded by stating that Nigeria was not resting on its oars in the quest for expanding the frontiers of Diaspora engagement, as government Agencies such as the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (**NiDCOM**) were set up to provide platforms for the engagement of Nigerians in Diaspora in the policies, projects and participation in the development of Nigeria, and for the purpose of utilizing the human capital and material resources of Nigerians in Diaspora towards the overall socioeconomic, cultural and political development of the country. He commended Nigeria's Ministry of Foreign Affairs for facilitating the Symposium, trusting that the outputs from the Symposium would empower member States to develop policy recommendations on how to harness the power of the Diaspora for Africa's development. He appreciated all participants for being part of the very important meeting and wish them a successful deliberation.

There was then an interlude for entertainment of the audience by the **ADILA Dancing Troupe**.



1.4 GOODWILL MESSAGES:

1.4.1 Indian High Commissioner to Nigeria, **His Excellency Amb. G. Balasubramanian**



The Indian High Commissioner expressed the hope that Nigeria and Indian cooperation on Diaspora matters, as evidenced in Nigeria's delegate visit to India in January 2023 on Diaspora matters, would continue to grow stronger as they exchange experiences and learn from each other. He also mentioned that India would continue to cooperate with **NiDCOM** and other Nigerian agencies in fostering closer bilateral relations.

1.4.2 Chairman, **Senate Committee on Diaspora and NGOs**, Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, **Sen. Michael Ama Nnachi Ph.D.**



Sen. Nnachi, in his brief speech, stated that the Federal Government of Nigeria would continue to encourage and engage with the Diaspora through institutions like **NiDCOM**.

He further said the Senate would also continue to support Diaspora related programs that could be a catalyst to the accelerated development of Africa. He opined that **NiDCOM** should be a Ministry standing alone, not part of any Ministry and that the Senate would take a step towards actualizing that in the near future.

1.5 SPECIAL REMARKS:

1.5.1 Director-General, **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**, **Mr. António Vitorino**.



The Deputy Director of Operations, **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**, **Ms. Ugochi Daniels**, who represented the Director-General of **IOM**, stated that the Diaspora contributed well over \$100 billion to economies in Africa, with Nigeria ranking second. She described the financial growth as impressive, going from \$37 billion in 2010 to \$96 billion in 2021. She however emphasized that the Diaspora's contribution went beyond statistics, as members of the African Diaspora shared a common vision and commitment to Africa's development.

She noted that the **IOM** was intensely involved and often played a role of bringing together the Diaspora with government and Civil Society Organizations to ensure that the contributions of the Diaspora were geared toward the Sustainable Development Agenda, Global Compact for Safe Orderly and Regular Migration, AU's Agenda 2030 and the Dublin Declaration of 2022. Further to this, she noted that last year, 30 countries expressed their support for the Dublin Declaration that identifies the path to maximizing Diaspora engagement. Among the partners that have supported the Dublin declaration were governments from the Pacific, Caribbean, and eleven countries from the African continent and she therefore encouraged more countries to join the Dublin declaration to co-create pathways for global change. She further stated that the **IOM** was working to ensure the Diaspora had access to resources, networks and partnerships to enable them contribute to sustainable development of the continent.

She stated that during the inaugural Global Diaspora Summit, a commitment was made to create a global Diaspora Policy Alliance, which would be an ecosystem of collaboration between government and stakeholders. In this light, she said she was delighted to announce that the **IOM** would launch the **Global Diaspora Policy Alliance (GDPA)**, as envisioned in the Dublin Declaration, to create an environment where States and partners could share their best practices and targeted programs. She added that the **GDPA** would particularly focus on three priorities: Good Health and Wellbeing; Gender Equality; and Climate Change.

Mrs. Daniel also gave examples to inspire other members of the Diaspora to become actors of development. For example, *Dr. Charles Senessie* from the **Afro European Medical Research Network** demonstrated that through a passionate-driven network and expert and necessary resources, communities could enjoy special life support, medical care, and education from abroad. Another example she mentioned was *Almaz Negash*, CEO of the **Africa Diaspora Network**, whose mission was to channel capital from the Diaspora into Africa's development through philanthropy, investment, and innovation. She also gave the example of **Baby Loan**, a crowdfunding platform that helps the Diaspora in France provide loans or donations to support agriculture activities in Africa.

In conclusion, she invited participants to join the Hybrid event being organized by the **International Organization for Migration (IOM)** scheduled for 17th of May, 2023 in Geneva. She stated that at this event, Permanent Missions and Governments would be able to further share their expectations of the **Global Diaspora Policy Alliance**.

1.5.2 Secretary General, **Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS)**, **His Excellency Georges Rebelo Pinto Chikoti**.



His Excellency thanked the government and people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for the warm welcome extended to all delegations since their arrival in Abuja, Nigeria. He specially thanked the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, **His Excellency Muhammadu Buhari GCFR**, whose unwavering commitment to the Diaspora had enabled organizers to bring together participants from around the world and to strengthen ties between institutions, countries and peoples.

He said the **OACPS** brought together seventy-nine (79) Member States and more than 1.3 billion people spread over three continents, whose wealth and diversity constituted a real catalyst for development and cooperation among member States. Demographically, **Mr. Chikoti** said nearly 70% of the population of **OACPS** was under 30 years old by 2020, and that this meant that the young population was the greatest asset. In spite of this, he further said, too many young people around the world were without jobs, education or training, while women and girls continued to face significant barriers, such as a lack of access to inclusive, quality education and digital skills. He therefore called for the integration of youth into the development strategy in order to capitalize on their contribution, and to collaborate with them to bring about the structural changes that our societies needed to create sustainable solutions to our main challenges and to generate positive impacts for their future.

In the area of Science and Technology, he presented the **OACPS's** commitment to utilize the talents and expertise of the Diaspora to harness the power of science, technology and innovation to address multidimensional vulnerabilities and achieve the SDGs. Combating climate change and building resilience to future shocks was a key priority for the **OACPS**, he said. For some of its members, climate-induced human mobility was a daily reality that required urgent global attention. He informed participants of a land mark achievement last month, where the United Nations General Assembly (**UNGA**) took a historic consensus decision in favour of a resolution requesting an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on climate change, an initiative led by Vanuatu. This resolution, he explained, demonstrated the importance of multilateralism, solidarity and unity expressed through the numerical strength of the 79 members of the **OACPS** on an issue of shared and common interest and importance.

Furthermore, he called for the prioritization of human mobility as a matter of urgency, to capitalize on the **Loss and Damage Fund** established at **COP 27**. In doing so,

all **OACPS** members, including African countries, Small Island Developing States, drought-stricken countries, Least Developed Countries and their Diaspora, would have easy access to it, as well as to other adequate climate finance for adaptation and mitigation, including the Green Climate Fund.

Mr. Chikoti expressed the commitment of **OACPS** governments to work together to create the right framework to facilitate the positive contributions of the Diaspora. To do so, he said, all stakeholders must be recognized, solicited and supported in their actions, while giving a sense of belonging to the Diaspora, and restoring the spirit that animated the Pan-Africanist movement.

He also informed Participants about the **OACPS** establishment of a Platform for Engagement with the Diaspora and People of African Descent, known as the "**ACP Diaspora**". These engagements he explained, could be through the following:

- i) **OACPS** Business Forum, launched in 2022;
- ii) Exchanges with members of Parliament; and
- iii) Focus on dialogue and consultation.

Mr. Chikoti concluded his special remark by inviting participants to unite their voices to bring a strong message from this assembly in favour of the Diaspora.

1.5.3 President, **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)**, His Excellency *Omar Alieu Touray*.



His Excellency acknowledged the contributions of the global Diaspora to global security, stability and development, acknowledging also on behalf of **ECOWAS**, the importance of the Diaspora in Africa's integration and development projects, and therefore called for continuous evaluation of extant policies and regulations for enhanced Diasporan engagement. He enjoined participants to aid the move from the norm to a more actionable strategy that would be beneficial to all parties concerned. He postulated that the approach taken on matters of Diaspora were sentimental rather than practical considerations. This was because there was no common understanding of what African Diaspora meant. He stated that **ECOWAS** believed that in order to make headway, a clear and common understanding was required. The inclusive approach of involving everyone of African descent was not practical and where this approach lead was unclear in his opinion as the African Diaspora was not homogenous, but heterogenous.

There was then another vibrant and colorful entertainment interlude by the **Abuja Cultural Troupe**.



Performance by the Abuja Cultural Troupe

1.6 MESSAGES:

1.6.1 President of **Uganda**, His Excellency *Yoweri Museveni*.



The President of Uganda, represented by the **Senior Presidential Adviser on Diaspora Affairs, Amb. Abbey Walusimbi**, drew attention to the increasing vital role of the African Diaspora with their diverse expertise, experiences and resources, which could not be disregarded as they had a vital role in shaping Africa.

The Diaspora community must be acknowledged and encouraged to take an active role in the development of Africa, by harnessing their resources and expertise for the benefit of the continent and the Diaspora as well, he said. He concluded by stating that the Symposium provided a platform for stakeholders to share ideas and experiences and explore innovative solutions for Diaspora integration and sustainable development in Africa.

1.6.2 President of **Ghana**, His Excellency *Nana Akufo Addo*.



The President of Ghana was represented by the **Ambassador of Ghana to the Kingdom of Belgium, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and Head of Mission to the European Union, Amb. Sena Siaw-Boateng**. He noted that it was important to empower the young living within and outside the continent who have a stake in the future, as it was their future.

He explained that they needed policies that would shape their prospects, as failing to respond to their needs and aspirations was a risk, which, if taken, would neglect their

valuable economic contribution. He further noted that market integration with respect to AfCFTA that ECOWAS was championing with the Secretariat in Accra, had the potential for an African single market with the consistent support of the African Diaspora. He asserted that Ghana believed that economic integration was the single biggest force that could aid the African Union realize its economic ambitions as stated in the African Agenda 2063; the Africa we want.

1.7 KEYNOTE ADDRESS by President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency Muhammadu Buhari GCFR.



His Excellency Muhammadu Buhari GCFR, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, represented by the **Minister of Transportation, Mu'Azu Jaji Sambo**, started his keynote address by saying the Symposium represented yet another very important milestone in the history of the Nigerian nation, in hosting the rest of Africa and its Diaspora. The choice of Nigeria as the host country was timely and historic in the face of the present political transition to a new government, he stated.

He noted that the majority of Africa's Diaspora were blazing trails and effecting exploits wherever they were all over the world, in governance, business, science and technology, academia etc. It was in this regard that the Diaspora was now being looked upon as partners in the development of the continent. Globally, the Diaspora have become a force to be reckoned with, he said, with regard to sustainable development of their varied home lands by regional bodies and national governments, through remittances, medical missions, FDI, educational visits, tourism, investments/enterprises, etc.

On this note, he informed participants of the international and national initiatives undertaken by his government to harness the potential of the African Diaspora in the development of the African continent. He also explained that the **African Union (AU)** and African Governments had been making efforts towards mobilizing the African Diaspora for the social and economic development of African communities worldwide, pointing out statements by high-level officials of several African countries calling for "*turning the brain drain into brain gain.*"

He said Nigeria had risen to the challenge of harnessing our Diaspora for national development, noting that it was engaging with its Diaspora to create an enabling environment for them to contribute and play active roles in the socio-political and economic development of the nation. In this regard, he explained that they had

implemented several strategies, such as the establishment of **Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM)**, and the State Diaspora Focal Point Offices across States of the Federation. He also spoke about the development of the National Diaspora Policy, and a Strategic Action Plan on Diaspora engagement, while explaining that his government was currently finalizing the Diaspora Investment Trust, the Diaspora Mortgage Programme and other initiatives to attract the Diaspora for positive engagement with Nigeria.

He therefore advised that the sectoral themes on Human Capacity Development, Private Sector Development, Women Empowerment, Brain Gain & Circulation, Information Technology, and so on, be mainstreamed into the Diaspora agenda, charging the **Africa Diaspora Alliance (AfDA)** to remain steadfast as a model platform of connection among the African Diaspora and Africa's institutions and governments.

He concluded his address by suggesting that the forum be institutionalized as a biannual event, and thereafter declared the 2nd **Global African Diaspora Symposium (GADS) Abuja 2023** open.

The Opening Ceremony then came to an end with group pictures by the dignitaries and a Tea Break.

2.0 FIRST PLENARY SESSION

2.1 KEYNOTE PRESENTATION: *Diaspora Home Returns: Issues for African States* by Founder and President, **Constituency for Africa (CFA)**, Washington D.C. United States of America, **Mr Melvin Foote**.



The Session opened with the Keynote Presentation by **Mr. Melvin Foote**. He saw the discuss on the Diaspora and the Diaspora Home Return as a timely one, with Africa, as a Continent, at a point where leveraging on the collective ideas, knowledge and inputs of its citizenry, especially the Diaspora, may just be its saving grace. The United States of America's Policy towards Africa, he said, aimed at setting a range of programs to engage the continent through its Diaspora, especially those who have distinguished themselves in diverse fields of endeavour, which has paved way to a handful of them holding sensitive positions in the US, Europe and other continents. He pointed out that worthy of note was the report that the President of the USA, **Mr. Joe Biden**, holds a quarterly parley with some key stakeholders on Diaspora matters to gather resources that could help to better shape their policy on Africa and enhance engagements in general.

Mr. Foote therefore highlighted the need for proper dissemination of information amongst key players and networking with other institutions to ensure the vast majority of the world had proper information on Africa. He also urged the embrace of technology and utilization for betterment of the African continent, noting that the focus should not be on Africans back home only but also on those in the Diaspora. With women accounting for about 50% of the African population, he further stated that it would not be out of place to involve them to great lengths in activities geared towards ensuring the sustainable development of the continent.

2.2 ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC STATES (OACPS) SESSION:

2.2.1 OPENING REMARK by Minister of Culture, Tourism and Environment, Republic of Angola, His Excellency *Filipe Silvino De Pina Zau*.



H. E. Filipe Silvino de Pina Zau remarked that it was very important to ensure that the Diaspora was deeply involved in all aspects of development of the African Continent in order to foster and improve ties between sister countries. He called for significant measures to be put in place to enhance Diaspora contribution to the homeland and make the Diaspora an asset for their host countries. He noted that the most visible political crisis in Africa now has made the Continent to have to grapple with many ills and challenges that were ravaging her such as wars, overheated conflicts, etc. which were to the detriment of its entirety. It was important therefore to ensure the Diaspora was involved in all aspects of development strides to foster and improve ties between sister states. He further noted that the role of Diaspora organizations in providing humanitarian support to stranded migrants in/to their regions could not be downplayed; as such, regional leaders should be tasked to be proactive and coordinate their regions to the best of their abilities.

2.2.2 PANEL DISCUSSION: *Global Experiences in Diaspora Engagement: The OACPS Perspective.*

The Panel Discussion was moderated by the Ambassador of Ghana to the Kingdom of Belgium, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and Head of Mission to the European Union, **H. E. Harriet Sena Siaw-Boateng**. She laid the background for the discussion stating that engaging with the Diaspora required peer to peer learning and

taking into account measures aimed at proposing elements to set up the **OACPS** Forum as feeder for the much-anticipated forthcoming Diaspora engagement program in September 2023. She reiterated the fact that all stakeholders must be recognized, solicited and involved if success was to be achieved. The Discussants were required to discuss in the light what was obtainable from the countries/regions they represented with the discussion centred on the following:

- i) How can the platform facilitate Diaspora engagement;
- ii) To what extent can the web or the platform enhance South-South and Triangular Cooperation; and
- iii) How can the platform support the constant yearnings of the Diaspora for a connect?



The OACPS Panel, with the Moderator of the Session, H. E. Harriet Sena Siaw-Boateng, Ambassador of Ghana to the Kingdom of Belgium, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and Head of Mission to the European Union (middle)

2.2.2.1 Director-General, **Ethiopian Diaspora Service, Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and Focal Point for East Africa, **Dr. Mohammed Endris**

He applauded the Symposium as he said it would build up on a 3-phased Regional Consultative effort on the operationalization of their organization's Diaspora Initiatives. Firstly, bringing a series of regional Consultative Conferences to foster effective partnerships between Africa and its Diaspora, then bringing issues to the attention of the Heads of Governments and those at Ministerial levels. Thirdly, a proposed Global Summit geared towards realizing a more united and integrated Africa. He proposed that the platform/forum to be created should be full of knowledge and capital, etc. Diaspora engagement should be intensified and a scale-up of best practices was also key. He added that we could and should build on diversifying priorities with Diaspora as an engine for

brain gain and circulation which could have a great impact on country growth. He concluded by stating that they had an innovative Diaspora engagement and legal framework in place but more focus and attention were needed.

2.2.2.2 Director, **Congolese Abroad, Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Focal Point for Central Africa, *Ambassador Theo Wabenga Kalebo*

He stated that transfer of funds, knowledge, technical know-how, policies and strategies/mechanisms needed to be put in place for enhanced Diaspora engagements as the main channel through which States may interact with their Diaspora. He explained that his region had set up a **Citizens and Organizations of the Diaspora from the African Union and Pan Africa Forum on Migration** to help with evaluation of all traceable movements. This engagement with the Diaspora, he noted, was aided by Nigeria and was well appreciated. He said Congo set up their Diaspora engagement structure in the year 2006, ensuring remittances were targeted at nation building. Also, profiles of the Diaspora were keyed into the system for ease of information.

2.2.2.3 Director, **Diaspora Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, Jamaica and Focal Person for the Caribbean, *Dr. Lloyd Wilks*.

He appreciated the organizers for setting up such a fruitful and rich discuss and stated that so long as the attention of the Diaspora was still on Africa, the continent had hope and more to benefit. He submitted that the Caribbean would love to be the 6th Region of the **AU** if given the opportunity. He said that to thrive, Africa needed to come to a consensus. In Jamaica, he explained that they had a significant buy-in from all relevant sectors (i.e., the Academia, Finance, etc.) and that the Diaspora everywhere must have supportive mechanisms and agree to have a portal where inclusiveness was key. He pleaded that a virtual means of communication be put in place to discuss steps and modalities of enhancing the sustainability of the African Diaspora's continued engagements.

2.2.2.4 Deputy Director, **Information and Research, Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation**, Republic of Namibia and Focal Person for Southern Africa, *Ms. Marbeline Goagoses*.

She recommended the involvement of youths in Diaspora engagements, citing the incidence of youths in her region helping stranded migrants during the COVID-19 Pandemic, war periods and in times of distress too. She explained that the Southern

African Development Community (**SADC**) was setting up Diaspora units, developing Diaspora policies, assisting with issues of migrants' dual citizenship, etc. In Namibia, they were already working on a Diaspora policy since the year 2021 which states the specific and wide roles of the Diaspora. Input was sought from their country's Ministries, Agencies and Departments (MDA's) to ensure the document captured the true needs of those it was meant to cater for and for a smooth implementation as well.

She however noted that they had wide consultations with their Diaspora and discovered they still had a lot of ground to cover, so they solicited input from their partners. They also employed a "3- E's Strategy" which helped a lot, which was:

- i) E- Enable: this featured the creation of a Migration Advisory Board;
- ii) E- Engage: they conducted a Diaspora outreach and set up Diaspora engagement online portal in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (**IOM**); and
- iii) E- Empower: equip and empower stakeholders on best practices to aid achievement of set targets/ goals

She outlined some of the setbacks they encountered to include lack of trust amongst Diaspora partners and challenges with Diaspora data maintenance.

2.2.2.5 Director, **Diaspora Affairs Unit, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration**, Ghana and Focal Point for West Africa, *Mrs. Elizabeth Nyantakyi*.

She explained that the Diaspora Unit in Ghana was established in 2012 after the declaration of the year of return, which was an avenue to mark the return of many Diaspora of African descent believed to have been shipped into slavery through the coastal areas during the slave trade era (with most of them believed to have been from Ghana and its neighbouring countries). In 2019, the "*Beyond the Return Celebration*", a welcome forum for Diaspora of Ghana descent and others was also marked with an overwhelming number of participants and great support from the government of Ghana. Remittances from the Diaspora was at an appreciable level and duly recognized by the government. Presently, Ghana had not formally launched a Diaspora Policy but thrived on stakeholders' consultative meetings/workshops, collection and collation of views from Ghanaian Diaspora in a bid to provide legal influence for sustainable national development. They hoped to organize cultural awareness programmes for the Diaspora to showcase peer to peer learning and transfer of best practices.

2.2.2.6 First Secretary, Embassy of the Republic of Vanuatu to the European Union, the Kingdom of Belgium, France and High Commission to the United Kingdom, Mr. Dreli Solomon.

Mr. Dreli Solomon, who stood in for *Mr. Lionel Warimavute*, Senior Desk Officer, **Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and External Trade**, Republic of Vanuatu and Focal Point for the Pacific, noted that several Pacific Countries had a sizeable Diaspora population even though the Diaspora engagements were still very weak. As at the time of the Symposium, none of the Region's twelve (12) countries had set up a core Diaspora engagement forum yet and Vanuatu in particular had no policy on Diaspora engagement. They had put in some effort in that direction by collecting data aimed at facilitating a vibrant Diaspora engagement that would help open their country to the world and subsequently bring about sustainable growth and development in their economy which would translate to all spheres of their national engagements.

2.2.2.7 Wrap-up:

To wrap up the Discussion Session, the Moderator, *H. E. Harriet Sena Siaw-Boateng* recapped by laying emphasis on the strategies to improve Diaspora engagements as mentioned by the discussants with some recommendations as follows:

- i) There should be a Diaspora Commission in every region to facilitate data collection and processing. The idea of having a platform/forum for the Diaspora to rub minds, interact and share competitive advantages on matters of Diaspora engagements and the successes thus far needed to be followed up with action.
- ii) South-South and Triangular Cooperation was and should be regarded as a viable tool for sustainable regional development, especially with the Diaspora as the cardinal point and drivers of this equation.
- iii) Due consultations and consensus are key to building capacity; as such, all stakeholders must come together, everyone bringing their areas of competitive advantages to boost the inadequacies of the weaker parties.
- iv) Africans must note and understand that Diaspora engagement for sustainable developmental strides was a 'do-it-yourself' project, as such, they must rise up to the task of nation, regional and overall building themselves.

3.0 SECOND PLENARY SESSION

The Session was to be chaired by **H.E. Amb. Abbey Walusimbi, Special Presidential Advisor on Diaspora Affairs** to the President of the Republic of Uganda, but was represented by **Engr. Dr. Sule Yakubu Bassi**, Secretary, Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (**NiDCOM**).

The Session was a Sectoral Discussion Session focused on Science and Technology; Agriculture; Trade, Industry and Manufacturing; Energy and Infrastructure Development; and Tourism and Culture.

Dr. Bassi in his introductory remarks stated that the Diaspora had contributed to the development of Africa through their resources, skills, talents and global exposure especially to their countries and particularly for Africa's development, and for the Diaspora phenomenon to be more rewarding for the countries of Africa, African governments must engage, empower and enable the Diaspora be agents of change for Africa's development. He stated that this would be possible by building strategies and synergies for sustainable development

3.1 KEYNOTE PRESENTATION: *Diaspora Funding for Africa's Development* by President, **African Development Bank (AfDB)**, **Dr. Akinwunmi Adesina**.



The Keynote Presentation by **Dr. Akinwunmi Adesina** was delivered on his behalf by the Vice President and Chief Economist of the African Development Bank Group (**AfDB**), **Dr. Kevin Urama**.

He appreciated the organizers for the event and for inviting the **AfDB** adding that the topic, '*Diaspora Funding for Africa's Development*', was apt. He commended the organizers and agencies involved, which he said came at the heels of several other events, one of which was organized by the **AfDB**, **African Union Commission**, **International Organization for Migration (IOM)** and the **Africa Continental Free Trade Area Secretariat (AfCFTA)**, in December, 2022, to leverage Africa's Diaspora for inclusive growth and sustainable development of the continent

He reiterated that Africa's Diaspora were pivotal to the development of the continent and they could build a great Africa without considering their nationality. He further explained that a global Africa was one that presented formidable investment opportunities for Africans in the Diaspora and for Africa itself and that the African Diaspora could play a key role in funding the continent's development.

He said the significant number of African Diaspora were playing huge roles in contributing to their host countries in areas of medicine, science, robotics, space engineering, nano technology, architecture, engineering, public policy, the academia, trade and investment, as one finds the African Diaspora leading the world in all these areas.

He went on to identify areas Africans in Diaspora could play key roles in funding Africa's development to grow the continent's economy with their investment capacity in medicine, space engineering, robotics, architecture, public policy, academia, trade and investment. He pointed out that development was a do-it-yourself thing and the African Diaspora could not cut itself off from its source lest it dried up. He therefore stated that this was a call on the Africans in Diaspora and people of African descent to take the bull by the horn and do what was right; invest in Africa by nourishing their source and as they unite, they would be able to build the Africa we want through productive investments.

The Paper Presenter highlighted other areas Africans in Diaspora could play key roles in the development of the continent, namely: that Remittances must be properly harnessed into productive ventures beyond consumption; there were grants and new forms of concessional financing that could be deployed into food security, health, security and the like, noting that despite the COVID-19 pandemic, remittance had been resilient and had given rise to development, citing several countries such as Philippine, Mexico, Pakistan and India that had properly channelled remittances from their Diaspora for national development. He said it was therefore a call to the African Diaspora to create financial instruments with the programs the Banks already had.

Diaspora Bonds, he also explained, were secured and cheaper source of investment for the continent's development and therefore Africans in Diaspora should be encouraged to invest in such bonds in their countries of origin, to invest and make money to drive the development agenda. Through trade and investment, he emphasized that the Africans in Diaspora had the advantage of owning businesses and being investors in the countries of their origin.

Another area they could contribute to the development of the continent was through research, knowledge and technology transfer, as technology allowed for reducing the cost of education through information technology systems and engaging in research and laboratory engagements. The Diaspora could make this happen and could engage without having to come home. Lastly, he explained that through brain circulation, sharing the knowledge, skill, expertise gained by the African Diaspora could

be deployed back home in the areas of science, technology, governance, engineering and agriculture, among others.

He concluded the presentation by noting that African Countries must improve policies to secure capital and investment to create wealth, adding that the Bank had been doing a lot in this respect.

3.2 DISCUSSION SESSION: *Building and Sustaining Africa's Self-Reliance*



Panelists for the Discussion Session with the Moderator of the Session, *Engr. Dr. Sule Yakubu Bassi*, Secretary, Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM) (far right)

3.2.1 SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY: Founder/Chairman, **Geometric Power Limited**, Nigeria, *Prof. Bart Nnaji*.

Professor Bart Nnaji explained that Africa was positioned to benefit from the good of science and technology, and could become economically complete and prosperous using science and technology stating that he saw the African Diaspora as central to this.

Prof. Nnaji mentioned that the Diaspora, having acquired education, technology and knowledge, tended to have stronger connections with international colleagues whom they could partner together with, as the Indians, Chinese and others have used their acquired knowledge to develop their countries. However, he lamented that the efforts of African universities had not been felt in the area of science and technology in the development of drugs, which usually comes from research laboratories of other countries. He advised that there was nothing to stop Africa from manufacturing original products, but we had not developed the culture to do so because of lack of commitment,

adding that as Africans we could find areas of comparative advantage where we could excel in science, medicine, oil and gas, petroleum, agriculture (agricultural tech and business) through value addition to agricultural products and food processing.

Prof. Nnaji explained further that in medicine, Africa could recapture the ancient healing tradition for use through science and technology, while with the internet, Africans were excelling and raking in millions of dollars through fintech companies like **Flutterwave, Paystack, Kuda Bank, Jumia, Jobberman** and the likes but the amazing thing was that they were based in Africa not in Europe and U.S.A.

The Chairman of **Geometric Power Limited**, concluded by stating that more Africans could begin to look for opportunities in artificial intelligence and robotics, but they must be properly galvanized, calling the century the century for Africa to prosper using science and technology with the African Diaspora at the centre of this revolution.

3.2.2 AGRICULTURE: Dean, College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Fiji National University, Fiji, *Prof. Paul Iji*.

Professor Paul Iji explained that the topic was close to his heart as an animal scientist because of the importance of animal protein to human health but which unfortunately was in short supply in Africa. He pointed that there were challenges, especially diseases, and that Africa was growing at the fastest rate, having a population of 1.34 billion of Africans to feed with an abysmal annual output of animal production, and thus not able to feed its teeming population.

He pointed out that most African countries had low consumption of animal protein below the world average, stating that once animal feeding management was right, a lot of things could happen. He lamented that Africa had poor livestock industry and that nutrients that came from feeding was as a result of heavy reliance on imports to power the continent's livestock industry.

He went on to mention that a typical animal diet contained wheat, maize, sorghum and with the alternative of cassava to feed animals if supplemented, Africa could then use her comparative advantage, rather than relying on imports. The continent could also develop technology to enhance feed for the continent's livestock industry to support her population and also generate income for exports. He advised that wheat could be completely replaced with maize to support livestock feeding, but care must be taken to endeavour not to lower the nutritional value but enhance the growth of the animals and its products.

Prof. Iji called for upgrading to modern use of software and in conclusion, called on Africa to focus on production of crops and livestock it had comparative advantage over, monitor technology, and if possible, acquire management technology from other countries to improve the continent's livestock and also look for ways of adding value to agricultural products.

3.2.3 TRADE, INDUSTRY AND MANUFACTURING: Founder/Chief Executive Officer, **Homestrings Inc.**, Washington DC, USA, *Mr. Eric V. Guichard*.

Mr. Guichard stated that Diaspora engagement in trade and industry told stories of the commitment of Africans in Diaspora to the families that sent them out. He said that there were 35 million Africans living outside the continent, with the World Bank also stating that the Diaspora had 40/50 billion dollars in savings that ought to be engaged. He added that African Diaspora were becoming involved in production and manufacturing of local products, and that the Diaspora were looking for opportunities to engage in these three sectors with great success, adding that there was an aggressive Diaspora engagement in those sectors.

He opined that Diaspora engagement was not in making speeches but that African governments must have a plan and incentives to engage the Diaspora to apply their strength, skills, knowledge and relationship for benefit of their countries of origin.

He listed four key success factors African governments must begin to do to properly engage the Diaspora in Trade, Industry and Manufacturing, and these were:

- i) Engagement was not only in making speeches but having a plan to properly engage the Diaspora.
- ii) Network, i.e., leveraging the network of the Diaspora.
- iii) Facilitation, i.e., understand the frictions and eliminate them.
- iv) Provide the Diaspora with execution tools.

He concluded that Africa had what it takes to take over the world.

3.2.4 ENERGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT: Founder-President and Chief Executive Officer, **Rife International**, Maryland, USA, *Mr. Kwabena Osei-Sarpong*.

Mr. Osei-Sarpong began by pointing out that Africa had the fastest growing economy, with the youths accounting for 60% of job placement. To secure the socio-economic development of such a large population, the focus of the next decade must be

infrastructure and energy development and transformation to tap into the continent's abundant energy resources and infrastructure for maximization of resources, he asserted.

He said that, surprisingly, in 2021, forty-three percent (43%) of Africa's population in southern Africa, which was about 600 million people, were without access to energy. In a world of technology, how does one operate without access to energy, which he said had become a big issue. However, he enthused that there was an opportunity for these population to be trained to lead the transformation to clean energy, which he said the Africa Diaspora could engage in.

Mr. Osei-Sarpong also stated that Africa was seen as one of the fastest growing economic hubs and to meet the demand for clean energy, energy and infrastructure development must become a priority, adding that the Symposium presented a veritable opportunity for investors and the African Diaspora to latch on to it. He reiterated that the Africa Diaspora was huge, and very different and therefore there was the need for the continent to understand what worked for her in terms of energy and what the continent could do for clean energy. He enthused that it was very encouraging to see the Africa Diaspora understand what had to be done to leverage on this revolution as the need to improve energy and infrastructure in Africa required a multi-facet approach which the Diaspora ought to lead.

Mr. Osei-Sarpong ended by highlighting key points which included: embrace renewable energy; address financial barriers; and focus on community-led development. He explained that these were some of the solutions that could help Africans overcome the barrier to energy and infrastructure development, adding that with the right approach and the help of stakeholders, Africa could achieve sustainable economic growth and development by leveraging the skills-set experience and resources of her Diaspora.

3.2.5 TOURISM AND CULTURE: Professor of History and African Diaspora Studies, **Department of History, Florida International University**, Florida, Miami, USA, *Prof. Saheed Aderinto*.

Professor Saheed Aderinto began his presentation by stating that emphasis had always been on economic remittance but that focus must begin to shift to the intellectual component of African remittances. *Professor Aderinto* said that the continent was overlooking the enormous investment of the Diaspora across Africa, and billions of knowledge transfer basically because intellectual remittances were not of real cash or easily monitorable even though for the first time, scholars are now beginning to take

intellectual remittances as a significant component for the development of the African continent.

He mentioned that one of the connections was grants that universities across Nigeria had benefited from for research and teaching, as a sizeable portion of those grants came through the work of the African Diaspora on daily, weekly, monthly and yearly basis with colleagues being funded by institutions across the world.

The ebullient scholar further disclosed that intellectual remittances did not operate the way other forms of remittance did because they were not easy to monitor. But in clear terms, when put in the right context, it provided not only research but cumulative impact not only in the kind of research conducted but able to also feed the families of beneficiaries of such research grants.

He reminded the audience that there had been an unprecedented increase in the number of Nigerian students studying abroad, with many Nigerians and Africans studying in some of the biggest universities and surprisingly even the unknown ones, with those students getting funding which had become resources to help their families back home to address poverty. He enthused that the cumulative impact of these streams of income was consistently transforming the lives of relatives back home.

He however lamented that intellectual remittances had remained un-respected, unacknowledged and untracked, and asked how do we track it to deploy it to provide the necessary resources, especially since the continent had the best scholars in the academia, which could be deployed to Nigerian universities to help develop the curriculum to boost the Nigerian educational sector.

The eminent Professor concluded that the intellectual contribution of the African Diaspora academia could translate to billions of dollars and that the continent should begin to deploy the resources of the academia to develop the continent's educational system.

3.2.6 TOURISM AND CULTURE: Director General, National Council for Arts and Culture (NCAC), Nigeria, *Otunba Olusegun Runsewe*.

Otunba Runsewe stated that the strongest disconnect in Africa was that the continent had separated culture from tourism, which ought not be as both should go together. Culture was the one thing that goes with a person wherever they find themselves, he said, adding that as Africans culture was our strength and so should not be separated from tourism as it was being done in Africa. He noted that when they were separated it did not have as much impact as it should because tourism involved

marketing and promotion of cultural content which was the brand identity of any society in the world.

He emphasized that Africa must promote her culture through tourism, as tourism was the marketing and promotion of the cultural content, calling on the continent's leaders to present its culture and identity through tourism.

Speaking further, he asserted that Africa generally lacked good management and tended to invite foreign experts to aid them. He decried the mis-management of the continent's culture as a result of undue competition amongst the African countries, advising them to undertake the SWOT Test, i.e., Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, to leverage on the strengths and areas of comparative advantage and stop competing against each other.

On the subject of young people migrating in search of greener pastures, he noted that this trend was deceiving and bringing about frustration. Leaving the country as an expatriate or a consultant was a better way, he advised.

In his conclusion, he stated that our culture was our pride and we must hold on to it in order to build a strong continent.

3.3 OACPS-IOM NETWORKING SIDE-EVENT AND COCKTAIL

3.3.1 **Opening Remarks:** Moderator, National Project Officer, Labour Migration and Diaspora, **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**, Nigeria, *Mrs. Elizabeth Poage*.

The Moderator called the Session to order, informing the gathering that it was a side-event organized by the **OACPS & IOM**. She introduced the Panel as consisting of the Deputy Secretary General of the **OACPS**, *Dr. Ibrahim Norbert Richard*; the representative of the **IOM** Director General, *Mrs. Ugochi Daniels*, Deputy Director General, **IOM**; the Honourable Minister of State for Budget and National Planning, Nigeria, *Prince Clement Agba*; Chairman/Chief Executive Officer, **NIDCOM**, *Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa*; and *Mrs. Aïssata Kane*, Senior Regional Adviser for Sub-Saharan Africa, **IOM**, who stood in for the Director, Department of Programme Support and Migration Management, **IOM**, *Ms. Monica Goracci*, who was unavoidably absent. She then gave a rundown of the agenda for the Session.

3.3.2 **Welcome Remarks: Secretary-General, Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), H.E. Mr. Georges Rebelo Pinto Chikoti.**

The Secretary General, who was represented by the Assistant Secretary-General, *Dr. Ibrahim Norbert Richard*, expressed his pleasure at welcoming participants to the side event. He noted that it was being jointly organized by the **IOM** and the **OACPS** to promote the commitments made under the revised Georgetown Agreement and Dublin Declaration, which aim to promote conditions that would enable migrants and the Diaspora to make greater contributions to sustainable development. He also saw it as a unique opportunity for participants gathered from all over the world at the Symposium to get to know each other better.

He concluded by once more welcoming all who had travelled from all over to be at the Symposium and expressed appreciation to **IOM** for co-organizing the event. He also appreciated the Nigerian government for providing leadership in Diaspora engagement and thanked them for the warm welcome given to all delegates.

3.3.3 **Welcome Remarks: Director-General, International Organization for Migration (IOM), Mr. Antonio Vitorino.**

Speaking on behalf of the Director-General, the **IOM** Deputy Director-General, *Mrs. Ugochi Daniels*, in her remarks, stated that it was a pleasure for her to have the honour of addressing the Symposium for the second time that day. She appreciated the patience and commitment to course on the part of the participants despite the long day, promising to be brief in her remarks.

She referred to discussions held earlier in the day which, she said, featured really excellent initiatives by the Diaspora from many countries. She stated that it was very difficult to track what the experience had been like; in noting which ones had been very successful, not so successful, and getting to learn why they were so and if at all they had achieved their intended objectives.

She reported that the **IOM**, being the United Nations' (UN) migration agency had created a platform known as the "*I Diaspora*" which was a community-led platform to share knowledge and experiences in the community. As good as it sounded, she remarked that it was certainly not enough; therefore, **IOM** deeply and heartily congratulated the **OACPS** for the creation of the **ACP Diaspora Platform** which would now bring countries together to not just share experiences but learn what worked so that they could obviously take that and replicate in their countries. Mrs. Daniels lauded the initiative, as it would also serve as an inventory of all the best practices and policies.

She once again welcomed and appreciated participants for joining the session, spending their evening with them and on behalf of the **IOM D-G**, reassured the **OACPS** of **IOM**'s full commitment to this effort, to the Global Diaspora and particularly with regards to Nigeria, being a Nigerian herself.

3.3.4 Goodwill Message: Honourable Minister of State, Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Nigeria, *Prince Clement Agba*.

He started his remark by saying he was particularly pleased that holding of the Symposium demonstrated Stakeholders' commitment to the promotion of South-South exchanges for strengthening Diaspora engagements.

According to *Prince Clement Agba*, this networking event was apt for participants of the Global African Diaspora Symposium (**GADS**) to create alliances and future partnerships in the move towards establishing a Diaspora Centre of Excellence in the capital city, Abuja. All hands, he said, must therefore be on deck in establishing enduring systems for promoting the commitments under the revised **OACPS** Georgetown Agreement (2019) and the Dublin Agreement (2022) of the **International Organization for Migration (IOM)** to meet the objectives for facilitation of migrants and Diaspora to contribute more to sustainable development.

He said while he looked forward to entrenching better systems of engagement with the Diaspora, it was pertinent for him to appreciate the support and key role of **IOM** and other multilateral institutions in promoting humane, orderly migration and return of African people over the years.

He proceeded to describe the event as very important to usher us into the series of events lined-up for the **Global African Diaspora Symposium 2023**, and concluded with an appreciation extended to colleagues and counterparts in the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)** and **Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM)** working in close collaboration with the **Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS)**, and **Africa Diaspora Alliance (AfDA)** in making this Symposium a reality.

3.3.5 Goodwill Message: Chairman/Chief Executive Officer, Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM), *Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa*.

Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa thanked the **OACPS** for the initiative of launching the long-awaited **ACP Diaspora Platform**, stating that it was a very good initiative and an anticipated successful one too. She appreciated all the participants for coming to Nigeria

for the Symposium with special thanks to the Honourable Minister of State for Budget and National Planning for Nigeria, *Prince Clement Agba*, who made the funding of the programme possible. This, she said, was consequent on their meeting in Luanda where she was declared the **OACPS** Diaspora Champion, while he represented the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, *President Muhammadu Buhari*. Upon their return, she said, he called her and said they had to make this project/platform a reality, despite the usual slim resources available. She thanked him for pushing it through and the President for approving it. Special thanks also went to the Hon. Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Ambassador Zubairu Dada*, who also provided the much-needed encouragement, sparing time for meetings to see to the actualization of the programme.

While expressing her passion for the Diaspora and its engagement, she enjoined participants not to see the Symposium as being in its beginning stage but as a continuation to earlier efforts, urging them all to make it a project that they would all be proud of. She hoped that the **ACP Diaspora Platform** would work with the African Union (AU) to ensure that the Global African Diaspora was truly brought together.

3.3.6 Presentation on the ACPS Diaspora Platform: Director, African Diaspora Policy Centre (ADPC), *Dr. Awil Mohamoud*.

Dr. Awil Mohamoud in his presentation on the **ACPS Diaspora Platform**, saluted the gathering noting that he was happy to be there, and considered Nigeria as his home, being his tenth visit to the country. He delightfully shared the good news that at **ADPC**, they had created the ACPS Diaspora Engagement Platform where all stakeholders could work, bringing African, Caribbean and Pacific countries together to create a framework for knowledge and experiences sharing, exchange of information and also reach out to its Diaspora. He said the platform was created sometime in June, 2022 and was launched in Angola to facilitate formal collaborations and elevate partnerships between the **OACPS** governments and the Diaspora.

Dr. Mohamoud said it aimed at taking Diaspora seriously to the next level in terms of policy, practice and strategy. He noted that there was already a lot of expertise out there, with Jamaica as a good example in the Caribbean, as well as others in Africa, the Pacific and beyond. He opined the need for South-South exchange to make sure that the Diaspora Focal Points, irrespective of their location would get the opportunity to share knowledge, to learn from each other, but most importantly, to network. Another reason for the creation of the platform was to reach out to the Diaspora; so, one of the duties would be to organize workshops involving Governments and the Diaspora.

Documentation of cases was another aspect he mentioned that needed to be strengthened.

He expressed committed to partnering with **IOM** and **OACPS** to have an **ECOWAS** Programme focusing on a 5-team Member States to learn from each other, to help them develop National Diaspora Policies. He buttressed that without the Policy, nothing could be done, thus the capacity of Member States must be strengthened, as almost every country in Africa had a Diaspora Department or Directorate but institutional capacity to implement the Diaspora engagement was lacking. He stated that training would be one of the components, to exchange and share knowledge at regional programmes. He was therefore excited that the **OACPS** took the lead as they had the convening power and drive to see to the actualization of the project.

3.3.7 Presentation on Diaspora Engagement – Moving from Policy to Action: Director, Department of Programme Support and Migration Management, **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**, *Ms. Monica Goracci*.

Speaking on behalf of *Ms. Monica Goracci*, *Mrs. Aïssata Kane* appreciated the opportunity to make the presentation on behalf of her colleague for **IOM** as it aimed at providing the Symposium with knowledge of some elements of what **IOM** had been doing since the Diaspora engagements started and how they saw and valued the Diaspora engagements and partnerships they had, particularly with organizations such as **OACPS** and other government led initiatives. This was so that there may be some kind of cohesion, collaboration and partnership that would be efficient in terms of responding and providing for the Diaspora, who would in turn provide them with guiding recommendations on how to foster their contributions. She further said their contribution stemmed from the Objective 19 of the **Global Compact of Migration** which called for the creation of the conditions for migrants and Diaspora to fully contribute to sustainable development to help them catch competencies, economic support, social and cultural dynamics of all six segments of the African population, in a bid to harness their potentials and also work with them to develop their countries.

Mrs. Kane said she saw the Diaspora as already recognized actors who were already contributing in humanitarian settings because they were usually the first responders, helping countries facing some conflicts and crisis such as climate issues, and most times staying on even after international organizations had left the scene. Therefore, recognizing the important role they play in the response was key, she stated. She reported that the **IOM** practicalized this during the 77th General Assembly in New York as part

of the **IOM** Framework document, which was the review of the **Global Compact of Migration** so that countries could better recognize the important role of the Diaspora and what they had to offer as well as provide space for them to come and contribute their quota. She explained that **IOM**'s Diaspora engagement was built on a Tripolar Approach which was "Engage, Enable & Empower":

- i. Engage: this mapped the Diaspora in terms of where they were, who they were and what they could offer.
- ii. Enable: this was the provision of all national regulatory frameworks so that they could come in trust and confidence, bringing the value that they had.
- iii. Empower: this involved capacity building in terms of provision of space and some skills for those willing to reinvest in their countries.

The Presenter said that many tools, methodologies and project partnerships had been developed and co-opted in an e-platform, reflecting the workings of the **IOM**, which had launched many mapping exercises in many countries and regions of the world, not only in Africa. She said they were willing to capitalize on the efforts so far made on this project to avoid duplication while being committed to building on the existing resources.

Furthermore, she spoke about the **Global Diaspora Summit** which, she opined, was a real landmark event that brought together many leaders, the Diaspora, civil societies and other actors from the private sector to brainstorm on ways to foster the Diaspora potential. More importantly, listening to what the Diaspora had to say and how they saw themselves empowered to come support their country was key. She informed the participants that the Global Summit was based on three (3) Regional Consultations, fourteen (14) Sessions and seven (7) Parallel Events, more than 700 participants with cross-thematic sessions bordering on Data, Humanitarianism, Youth, Digitalization, Gender, Climate change, amongst others. The key economic conclusion of the Summit was to;

- i. Expand the focus of the Diaspora engagement beyond remittances as their contributions usually extended to Trade, Entrepreneurship, Philanthropy and Tourism.
- ii. Collect data to measure the economic impacts of the Diaspora in diverse areas and sectors.
- iii. Partner with Chambers of Commerce/Private sector in a more cohesive manner.

Lastly, she further reported that they looked into the area of brain-gain and circulation, citing the COVID-19 period and humanitarian intervention from the Diaspora. The social capital aspect involved strengthening the coordination of the

Diaspora and humanitarian response, while urging the players to look into ways of responding collectively to issues. She noted that the Dublin Declaration was adopted during the Global Summit and it provided how to initiate Diaspora participation in policies and programmes. Also, there was the launch of the **Global Diaspora Policy Alliance** to aid sharing of best practices to allow for the harnessing of Diaspora engagement. All these were meant to enable the implementation of the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** prior to the 2030 mark, according to the African Development Agenda, which would certainly contribute to continued engagements with partners of the **IOM**.

With the wrap-up of the presentation session, the Moderator informed participants that the video on the testimonies of the cultural, economic, social and human lives of the Diaspora, which was to come up next, was not yet ready. As such, the exchange of views would be taken.

3.3.8 Exchange of Views:

Dr. Ayodele from the UK applauded the excellent contributions made at the Symposium and noted that they would however amount to nought if they did not cascade to the Diaspora. He said there was a need to find a way to narrow down the discussions to where the Diaspora had their regular meetings so that many of the items discussed could find physical application. He asked about the efforts so far put in place to see how many of the concepts discussed were being localized to reach the Diaspora, citing an intervention earlier mentioned about an Indian leader who went to different countries, interacting with the Diaspora one-on-one in their localities.

Responding, *Dr. Awil Mohamoud* said, in Europe the African Diaspora Platforms for Development were created where African Diaspora in the EU States could be members. He said they had been organizing workshops and meetings since 2010 with a Diaspora Academy where the Diaspora come to their Centre for a weeklong training in areas like Advocacy lobby, etc. He stated that they had also been trying to support by participating in the **Global Forum on Migration Development**.

Global Chairman, **African Diaspora Alliance (AfDA)**, *Dr. Shem Ochuodho*, said he was proud of **GADS** for bringing together the various stakeholders, drawing from the Government and Private sectors amongst others. He then requested *Dr. Malcom Beech*, Co-President of the **African Diaspora Alliance (AfDA)** and *Dr. Bashir Obasekola*, the President of Nigerians in Diaspora Organization, Europe (**NIDO-E**), to share their thoughts on behalf of the Diaspora, whom he described as being more than the remitters of remittances.

On his part, *Dr. Beech* stated that his particular background and interest was business and noted that there was another side to the Diaspora other than remitters, which was the area of investment. He said that Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) also meant joint business ventures between members of the Diaspora and the African Countries and African Business people. He opined that there was a need to spend more time discussing how to facilitate those interactions because the outcomes of the interactions, were the businesses which create jobs to grow the much-needed GDP. He further cited the minimum wage in some countries at \$100-\$200 monthly, making it difficult to do anything tangible such as buying a home, sending children to college, etc. He noted a need to begin to figure out other ways to generate economic opportunities and benefits, saying networking was a sure tool to accomplishing more financial goals with less reliance on the hope that remittances would grow. He informed the house that there were many developed countries that had available funding for their citizens to do business in Africa, for example, the US, which had several organizations and agencies planning to invest about 60 billion dollars in Africa. He advised that there was a need to figure out how the Diaspora could become beneficiaries of some of that money.

Dr. Bashir Obasekola, Continental Chair, **NIDO-E**, said that they, as Diaspora in Europe, were most times not privy to such information on funding as stated, as they were not exposed to some of the activities of the agencies and noted that they need to be carried along even as they draw on their synergy.

In his submission, *Mr. Femi Odere* (former Special Assistant to the former Governor of Ekiti State, *Dr. Kayode Fayemi*) remarked that since growing up, he had never seen a collection of very brilliant minds of black Africans as he had witnessed at the Symposium. He commended *Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa* for putting together such an impressive gathering of personalities from virtually all over the world and said it was unprecedented. He dropped a poser, asking “*if we all have everything that it took and all the things needed to develop, what is stopping us?*” He said he had hoped that if everything discussed at **GADS** was implemented, Africa would transform from a third to a first world power but this was only possible if the leaders and all stakeholders were willing to take up the challenge.

Concluding the exchanges, the **AfDA** Co-President asked that the venue for the next gathering be considered and the house accordingly briefed.

3.3.9 Closing Remarks: Moderator, National Project Officer, Labour Migration and Diaspora, **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**, Nigeria, *Mrs. Elizabeth Poage*.

The Moderator once again appreciated participants for their meaningful contributions and apologized for the inability to play the video of the Diaspora testimonies due to technical hitches experienced, but promised that it would be uploaded on the event website. She noted also that the Artistic performance billed to come up next could not be observed. She then called on the Deputy D-G, **IOM**, *Mrs. Ugochi Daniels*, and the Assistant Secretary General, **OACPS**, *Dr. Ibrahim Norbert Richard*, for closing remarks.

Dr. Ibrahim Norbert Richard noted that the lessons to be learnt from the interactions at the side event were a bit difficult to summarize, pointing out however that the major outcome was the call to move from strategies and ideas to action. He referenced the speech of the Secretary-General of **OACPS** earlier in the morning, where he stated the need for actions that had real impact on people. He therefore noted that the Diaspora needed to have an impact on the development of their countries, and thus to motivate them to achieve this, a favourable environment for investment by the Diaspora needs to be created. Their investment potential however, he said, needed to be diversified beyond remittances to other forms of intervention, such as education, research, innovation, capacity-building, among others, with the governments having a major role to play in actualizing it. He called for dialogue with the Diaspora, which he said, the **IOM-OACPS** Platform sought to provide and thus called for everyone to be part of the Platform, particularly in this age of technology. He concluded by noting that the **OACPS** was ready to listen and thus ideas and suggestions would be most welcome.

Mrs. Ugochi Daniels pointed out that a take-home for the **IOM** after the very rich deliberations featured would be the role and contributions the **IOM** could make in supporting all of the efforts with the **AU** to make sure that it was truly continental. She noted that they would support the Diaspora Centre of Excellence with all they could as a UN Entity as well as the **OACPS** Diaspora Platform for the Diaspora community. She recapped that the human capital, commitment and diversity of stakeholders were the needed resources to get the work done and that **IOM** would partner in ensuring success. She once more thanked the participants for their very rich reflections and challenging discussions in terms of the way forward beyond **GADS 2023**.

The Moderator thereafter announced the close of the Session and invited the participants to proceed for the Cocktail at the Dome while informing everyone that the Symposium would reconvene at 9:00 a.m. the next day.



Cross-section of dignitaries and other guests at the event



Participants listening to presentations



(L - R) Dr. Shem Ochuodho, Dr. Malcolm Beech, Mrs. Ibukun Odusote and Amb. Isiaka Imam



H. E. Hon. Leslie Campbell and H.E Filipe Silvino De Pina Zau recording proceedings



(L – R) Dr. Ibrahim Norbert Richard and H. E. Harriet Sena Siaw-Boateng



Chairman, GADS Global Organizing Committee, Mrs. Ibukun Odusote with Okeoghenemaro Sefia Esq.



Sen. Michael Ana Nnachi (right), and other participants, listening intently



Cross-section of participants



Representative of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Mu'azu Jaji Sambo immediately flanked by Amb. Zubairu Dada and H.E. Georges Robelo Pinto Chikoti with other dignitaries in a group photograph at the Opening Ceremony

DAY TWO

4.0 THIRD PLENARY SESSION

The Session was chaired Secretary-General, **Developing Eight Organization for Economic Cooperation (D8) Amb. Isiaka A. Imam**, who commenced the Session by inviting the Keynote Speaker for her presentation.

4.1 KEYNOTE PRESENTATION: *Deploying Science and Technology for Africa's Transformation* by Founder and President, **The Woman Boss**, Malaga, Spain, **Ms. Awamary Lowe-Khan**.



According to the Presenter, to effectively deploy Science and Technology for African transformation, there was need to make concerted efforts to build research and development (R&D) capacity, strengthen institutional frameworks and invest in infrastructure. This required collaboration between governments, the academia and the private sector. She insisted that there was need to learn to harness technology for economic growth and development, followed by empowering human capital through education and digital literacy, fostering innovation and entrepreneurship in Science and Technology, building partnerships between Africa and the Global Diaspora while aligning with the **African Union (AU) Agenda 2063** for a competitive and a prosperous continent.

She further noted that Africa had the opportunity to tap into the grossly untapped technology mechanism at its disposal, pointing out that it had been named the next big market for deploying technology, owing mainly to its increased usage of advanced mobile phones and other gadgets by mostly the youth population. This enhanced networking and job creation among other educational resources, she explained.

She said Africa had at least one (1) amongst five (5) rural women having access to the internet, and that this meant the digital gender gap needed to be closed by the international community. 60% of underdeveloped communities were in Africa and Science and Technology was one of the major tools that could be deployed to aid the transformational process, as only about 39% of Africa was said to have access to the internet. There were some challenges that need to be addressed, she stated, enumerating them to include:

- Infrastructure: Inadequate electricity, internet, transportation, energy, etc. needed to be fixed to ensure smooth transformation;

- Health: Infectious disease and inadequate health facilities could hinder the much-desired transformation. Telemedicine could be employed;
- Governance: Political instability, corruption and weak institutions were inhibitors of transformation;
- Education: limited access to quality education and skills can weaken the drive for transformation.

She called on Africa to invest in human capital, create gainful and useful employment for Africa's youth, increase efforts in research in fields of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and technological revolution, and nurture inclusive growth so that we are not just consumers. Regulatory frameworks need to be institutionalized and devices and technological services should also be made available and affordable.

She noted that the African Diaspora has a role to play in all of these by strengthening connections between Africa and the Global Diaspora, in encouraging trade and foreign direct investment, fostering collaborations for sustainable development, engaging in programs and participating in the activities of the AU. They could also work towards influencing policies for minorities for technology, women and small businesses. In her summary, she stated that Africa needed to embrace digital transformation, strengthen partnerships, implement sustainable practices and above all, unite for a common goal.

4.2 PANEL DISCUSSION: *The Green Imperative for Africa in the 21st Century.*

The Chairman of Session, *Amb. Isiaka A. Imam*, introduced the **Developing Eight Organization for Economic Cooperation (D8)** which he said was established in 1997 as one which consisted of eight (8) developing countries, namely; Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan and Turkey. It was established purposely for economic and trade cooperation with the Secretariat in Istanbul, Turkey. They were mainly into Agriculture, Information Communication Technology (ICT), Tourism and Energy, in a bid to bridge the gap in these sectors. They had established a Science and Technology Transfer Network mandated to improve technological transfer among member States and they motivate companies that were willing and able, to share their technology with another. This they did by monetary awards, to the tune of millions of dollars.

After his presentation on the **D8**, he called on the Panelists for their presentations.



Panel Discussants with the Moderator of the Session, *Amb. Isiaka Imam*, Executive Secretary, Developing Eight Organization for Economic Cooperation (D8) (middle)

4.2.1 President, Global Educational & Infrastructure Services (GEISE), *Prof. Hilary Inyang*

Prof. Hilary Inyang spoke on the need to create an African Continental Research Foundation brought about by a needs assessment in areas of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI). Unless STI was institutionalized, enfranchisement in Africa would continue to suffer, he asserted. To have an effective and thriving continental STI setup, bigger continental players in this field such as Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa amongst others, must come together to bridge the gap so that smaller players may have a level field of play and glean some expertise from them. Population management and energy sustainability were some of our common challenges in this field. He further proposed that a supporting endowment fund should accompany this initiative.

He noted that in Africa, we were very heavy on the environmental/natural resources cutting across so many sectors such as construction, agricultural, energy, industrial, transportation, public works, housing, communication, health maintenance, judiciary systems, financial services, educational sectors, amongst others. The interest to harmonize all of these sectors to improve Green most times brings about waste, which was released into the environment through exposure pathways and taken into the human system with ecological and health impacts.

He went on to define Green Economy as an economy that resulted in improved well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities, which was often characterized by low-carbon development, enhanced efficiency to cut down cost, and social equity/inclusiveness. He explained that there were seven (7) key methodologies to use to intervene which were;

1. Engineering
2. Communication/Education
3. Regulation
4. Enforcement
5. Market Incentives
6. International/Inter-Governmental Cooperation
7. Environmental Management Systems

He further said the application of technology and techniques to gather data, mitigate risks, and direct use by communities for operations and planning would be of great help. Existing data that are given various spatial-temporal coordinates needed to be interlinked with more recent data that could be generated by satellites and transferred by both satellite and cable communication systems. He suggested that Africa must increase its monitoring stations for data collection to ensure wider coverage, while advising that African economies could not be green with so much gas flaring and oil spillages, especially around the coastal regions of Africa. He concluded by laying emphasis on harmonization of ideas and competitive advantages for sustainable continental advancement.

4.2.2 Professor of Geosciences, **Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, University of Missouri**, Kansas City, United States of America, and Senior Consultant, **African Development Bank Group (AfDB)**, *Prof. Jimmy Adegoke*.

Prof Adegoke opened with a poser, asking “*what is the driver for this push towards a green economy*”? He gave the answer to be ‘*The Price Agreement*’. Prof. Adegoke informed the gathering that the **AfDB** had regional member stakeholders and non-regional stakeholders, with Nigeria being the largest, followed by the US. He mentioned that there was room for experts at the apex development bank on the continent as the Bank was always looking for and was open to consultants in diverse fields. The African Diaspora, he said, had an opportunity to leverage on this by bringing its expertise, experiences, and technical know-how to solve key developmental challenges in needy areas.

He noted that there was a lag in the area of building linkages and collaborations among the African nations and therefore challenged everyone to think of how to create synergy for productive connections to help access some funding to enable the green revolution thrive, pointing out that off-grid approaches were required for this. He further posited that the African Diaspora also needed to find ways to leverage on its intellectual resources and collaborate amongst themselves in many sectors such as finance, medicine, banking, etc.

He explained that **AfDB** was creating an architecture to develop a Green Bank which must not necessarily be owned by bankers only but by anyone who was bold, innovative and passionate about creating change. Partnership was key and there was room for consultants in diverse fields to create Green Banks, not just for themselves but for Africa as a whole, he stated.

4.2.3 **Wrap-Up** by Chairman of Session:

In wrapping-up the presentations, the Chairman of the Session, **Amb. Isiaka A. Imam**, urged the African Diaspora to reach out to the **D8** for linkages to the large population of Diaspora on its radar and from its member countries such as Pakistan, Malaysia, Nigeria and others. There was need to form companies that promote the green emergence for Africa, he said, noting that cluster-like settings would help to de-risk problems and hitches associated with accessing resources from the **AfDB**. He further noted that the recommendations to have NiDCOM serve as a one-stop-shop to de-risk entities, and for the Diaspora to serve as consultants to the **AfDB**. He then called for interventions from participants.

4.2.4 **Interventions:**

4.2.4.1 *How can the Green Monetary Instrument be enhanced? Also, in the light of third-party interest, how can the regional economic currency be integrated into the continental economy?*

It all boils down to the economics of demand and supply where the continent on the one hand demands total attention to come up with solutions to the many challenges ravaging it and the Diaspora brings capable supplies in terms of expertise in those areas of developmental initiatives. At this stage, the single intermittent point would be money to finance that economic development. In 2014, Jamaican indigenous communities had issued a currency called the “*Lumi*” which was backed by 100kwh of solar energy pegged against 4 grains of gold. After prototyping it locally, they projected the digital *Lumi* globally in 2021 by creating a footprint in 194 countries with a total of 80 million

transactions and a transaction volume of 1.1 trillion dollars. With such wide coverage and acceptance, this currency could be said to be successful.

4.2.4.2 Seeing that eight (8) out of the ten (10) most vulnerable countries in terms of climate change were in Africa; how could that be alleviated and those inflicting the harm be made to account for their misdoings?

Get a viable monitoring system able to meet the needs of global climate action. The African Diaspora Central Bank can use its institutions and monetary instruments, not as a third-Party engager but as a regional economic community. Huge global funds (running into billions) could be created as compensation funds in cases of losses and damages for countries (such as Malawi, Niger, Mozambique and other countries around the coastal areas) that are vulnerable to climate change to access. There are intervention funds set aside to mitigate greenhouse gases, adaptation issues, etc. that had not received much patronage. The Diaspora need to synergize to come up with bankable project proposals, while African countries must rise to the challenge of learning how to write good proposals and concepts that meet the criteria for accessing such funds. The problem of Africa can be solved within Africa by Africans, not necessarily the Diaspora, except for their wealth of expertise. We must mimic the European Union (EU) by having joint policies on energy, sewage management, etc. All these are possible by having equal opportunities to education and good governance with a tailor-made curriculum to be implemented at our own pace, going with technology that we can manage and which reflects us. More coastal vulnerability tests should be carried out and should serve as feeder to those whose responsibility it was to handle such data.

4.2.4.3 How can Diaspora elected officials and appointees be best engaged to enhance development?

The final Communique of this Symposium could be sent across to the political appointees to provide them an informed position on shared best practices around. Also, relevant government bodies may be contacted for further information.

4.2.4.4 How can Science, Technology and Innovation be effectively taught especially at the basic level so pupils could grow with the right background and mindset in it?

The legislation in every region should be made such that it caters for such as a policy issue.

5.0 FOURTH PLENARY SESSION

The fourth Plenary Session was chaired by the Senior Regional Adviser for Sub-Saharan Africa, **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**, Geneva, *Mrs. Aïssata Kane*. She thanked the organizers for the privilege to chair the Session stating that the presenters would address how the Diaspora could contribute their know-how and knowledge to build some sectors that were key to the development of Africa. She thereafter introduced the first Presenter, *Prof. Mimmie Claudine Ngun Chi Watts*, who, she said, was sharing knowledge on how health mainstreaming could cover universal health coverage in Africa, share health approaches and how it could shape the development of Africa.



Moderator of the Session, *Mrs. Aïssata Kane* (left) with the only physically present Session Presenter for the Session, *Dr. Awil Mohamoud*.

5.1 HEALTH: Director, Industry Cooperation Institute of Health and Wellbeing and Program Leader, Master of Health Services Management, Federation University, Australia, *Prof. Mimmie Claudine Ngun Chi Watts*.

Prof. Mimmie Claudine Ngun Chi Watts, participating virtually, stated that she was also the Chair of the **Africa Science Research and Innovation Council (ASRIC)**, Australia Chapter, and began by introducing **ASRIC**, which she said was adopted by the African Union (AU) to mobilize African research excellence, sustain continental research and also mobilize resources for research programs across Africa, focusing on research partnership and innovations. She explained that **ASRIC** had as its membership, all the fifty-five (55) academic and Research Councils in Africa and had over eighteen thousand scientists then as registered members. The organization had six (6) flagship projects

focused on health, science, technology, innovation, agriculture and renewable energy fully funded to the tune of two million United States Dollars (US\$ 2 m) with sixty-seven (67) Ph.D. scholars currently carrying out research in different Universities, more so at the Morocco State University.

She also informed the audience that **ASRIC** currently had 3 chapters to which the African Diaspora could become members, namely: United Kingdom Chapter; United States of America Chapter; and the Australia chapter. She further stated that as one of the **AU** specialized agencies and institutions, it was of strategic advantage to help advance research and partner with institutions on the continent to leverage on the fourth industrial revolution. She noted that it was an organization set up to enhance and support emerging scientists working with established scientists to share knowledge, collaborate and see how together they could build and advance available opportunities.

She also emphasized that one of the key things that the African Diaspora had brought in working within the mandate of **ASRIC** was the competitive advantage to focus on key areas to advance the continent's health sector. one of the key things that the African Diaspora had so far done, in her view, was to focus on areas they could leverage on to improve citizens' life in the health sector.

Prof Watts also explained that **ASRIC** had also identified mentors both in the continent and the Diaspora in the African health sector and that African Diaspora had shown their presence in every health sector in the world, from the low levels to the specialist areas in their countries of residence, whereas taking a look at the African continent, especially in the specialized areas of health care sector, Africa lacked psychiatrists, neurosurgeons, and public health specialists, as they were mostly in the Diaspora.

On how the Continent could leverage on the contributions of the Diaspora to come back home to contribute to the health care sector, she emphasized the need to build necessary infrastructure in the African health care sector. She further stated that with the mandate **ASRIC** had, it was very ready to undertake research and make its contributions, provided that it was given the platform, infrastructure and voice to be able to engage in the continent.

She also stated that it was not uncommon for the Africa Diaspora to continually express concern over the barriers they faced when they want to engage in the development of the continent in terms of knowledge exchange and therefore, fora like the **Global African Diaspora Symposium (GADS)** platform would help bring forces together to make health care a reality for Africa.

She enthused that **ASRIC**, and the African Diaspora, could pool resources together to enhance and make good health care available for Africans, through collaborative research, knowledge exchange and meaningful partnerships in the health care sector in key area such as health information technology, relative food/good nutrition, and focusing on areas of preventive care rather than curative care using African indigenous food and what was available on the continent, for enhanced healthcare.

She also revealed that **ASRIC** and the African Diaspora, through meaningful partnerships, could provide point of contact care in the health sector such as timely diagnosis, using virtual platform that was available at the moment in the global health sector. Thus, Africans do not have to travel to receive treatment outside the continent but would be able to have medical doctors and nurses to both provide the care and the needed structure and practice as was obtainable in the developed world as long as the governments across the continent were ready to put right policies in place.

According to her, the thinking of the African Diaspora should shift towards collaboration in terms of knowledge, meaningful partnership, tapping into the youth engagement and finally using technology in bringing effective health system in Africa. She concluded that for Africa to have an effective healthcare sector, they needed engagement, collaboration and partnerships with the African Diaspora.

After her presentation, the Chair of the Session, *Mrs. Kane* highlighted that Africa needed collaboration, exchange and partnership to ensure implementation of projects at grassroots levels.

5.2 INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY: Director, African Diaspora Policy Centre (ADPC), The Netherlands, *Dr. Awil Mohamoud*.

Dr. Awil Mohamoud informed the audience that the African Diaspora Policy Centre (ADPC) was the first African Think Tank organization in Europe created in 2005, stating that for the past 16 years the organization had been working with several governments to help develop their individual National Diaspora Policy, pointing out that Diaspora engagement is not a new phenomenon. *Dr. Mohamoud* reiterated the commitment of Centre to support African Governments in the area of Diaspora engagement, helping them develop a national Diaspora policy strategy because without an effective National Diaspora Policy, no country could effectively engage its Diaspora for national development.

He also added that the Centre was at the forefront to creating the African Diaspora Academy and also engaged in research and outreaches across Africa. He noted that the

Centre created something new with a research and outreach strategy as Diaspora engagement required putting in place the best practices for a program of Diaspora engagement for development of the continent and so developed a program '*Diaspora Engagement for Development*'.

Dr. Mohamoud explained the model had important pillars to create an enabling environment on ground needed by Diasporas to return home and engage and an effective outreach strategy, which was a medium to reach the Diaspora, using communication. He mentioned that the most important communication were the traditional and modern means of communication. The traditional means included using the national embassies, wherever they were, to make sure that they also mobilized the Diaspora. Others were Diaspora Institutes, Diaspora Radio, Diaspora Workshop, Conferences and Symposia and Diaspora Institutions, as those were the kind of traditional ways of communicating with the Diaspora. He added that it was also important to engage them using the modern means of communication using social media such as Facebook, Instagram and the likes as a means of reaching the younger generation of Diaspora.

Dr. Mohamoud disclosed that in many countries the Diaspora were the biggest development actors, especially for the poor countries, with World Bank reports that disclosed that more poor countries were being sustained by their Diaspora. He therefore concluded that the Diaspora had become aid actors and the most important partners and development agents in Africa, and that without the Diaspora in Africa there could be no development.

The Chair of the Session thanked **Dr. Mohamoud** for his presentation and for emphasizing that the importance of information sharing between governments and the Diaspora and the whole of government approach would ensure a clear road map for Diaspora engagement

5.3 EDUCATION AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT: Professor of Media, University of Sydney and Executive Director, C3N2 Educational Empowerment, Australia, *Prof. Chika Anyanwu*.

Prof. Chika Anyanwu, in his virtual presentation, told the audience that education and youth development were two areas where Diaspora engagement was important and that being in a knowledge economy, human capital, especially in the area of knowledge economy in Africa, was key, being a gift and a resource and so Africa needed a mind shift to be able to harness the inherent potentials.

He emphasized that no country was ready to share technology or knowledge, especially if one was their competitive partner, and advised African governments to

expunge the terminology from their lexicon. He explained that education was a business that required returns on investment, and so must be invested in and not funded, requiring the contribution of stakeholders, especially African governments. He said Africa should not solely depend on her Diaspora to build a quality education system in her continent but that Africa should work for Africa.

He decried the modern trend where African leaders sent their children to acquire education and medical treatment abroad when the continent had educational and medical practitioners in their thousands that should be deployed for the development of the continent. He added that Africans must disabuse their mind that everything Western was supreme and must therefore have a rethink on brain circulation of youthful intellectual contributions while not also leaving out those in the vocational and technical fields, which could be harnessed to energize the economies of Africa.

He advised that the African educational system should shift; students should be active learners and not passive recipients of information, especially in the 21st century of learning and teaching that encouraged interdisciplinary learning. He urged the contextualizing of education to handle issues and challenges in the continent such as environment, hunger, agriculture, science, by getting students to find solutions and that if students were well engaged, then there would be a shift in the way Africa thought about education by moving from the Ivory Towers to areas of connection with the community and with the Diaspora, as collaborators and not necessarily solutions.

Professor Anyanwu advocated involving African students in relevant sectors of impact to the world such as challenges of climate change, food shortage, migration, and global conflict so as to be able to position Africa in the 21st century. He asserted that it was time for Africa to provide education that engaged students to find solution to every day challenges, thereby providing employment and develop Africa for Africans and not for or by Europeans.

He went on to reiterate that African people should own their voices, as they had a right to their natural resources, and so enable modern education for their children and develop Africa for Africans pointing out that Africa had the skills and so should put the right structures in place to allow the children of Africa have hope in Africa.

The Chair of the Session remarked at the end of the presentation that *Professor Chika Anyanwu* had outlined the ownership that was needed to address some key challenges and also to harness the opportunities for the continent to have a shift in mindset to change the narratives to be able to see education as a new investment. She

therefore posited that intellectual migration should benefit Africa and the African Diaspora was key in that perspective.

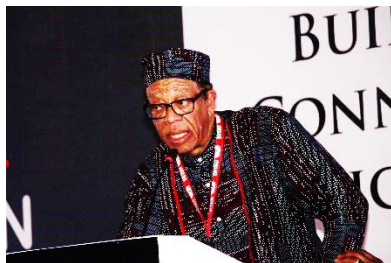
5.4 PRESENTATION OF SHORT VIDEO Sponsored by **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**.

The video featured *Ms. Oby Okigbo*, an Architect and Artist living in the United Kingdom who in the last six years, had been associated with the Nigerian Artists in the United Kingdom under the auspices of the group, Nigeria Society, UK. The Organization holds its exhibition yearly to engage in matters happening in Nigeria.

For *Ms. Oby Okigbo*, it was important that as a Nigerian in Diaspora, she kept strong links with Nigeria and that vocabulary, she said, reflected in her work. She explained that since she started her exhibitions in 2002, she had noticed an increasing interest in African and Nigerian arts, which she also expressed in some of her works, which included Nigerian and African Sculptures.

She further mentioned that in 2015, she did a piece which was being housed in the Picasso Museum, representing the African ancient cultures, emphasizing that her work was not only about living in the Diaspora but definitely identified her as a Nigerian artist living and working in the Diaspora.

5.5 REMARKS by Co-Chair, Global Organizing Committee, **Global African Diaspora Symposium (GADS)** and Co-President, **Africa Diaspora Alliance (AfDA)**, *Dr. Malcolm Beech*.



Dr. Malcolm Beech pointed out that the Symposium was gradually coming to an end and had been largely successful, with exceptional networking and excellent presentations by each speaker. He appreciated all participants and stated that the next Symposium would definitely make the difference and be better. He also drew attention to the fact that there had been representatives from over 60 countries, which meant that as Africans we could do differently when we make up our minds to continue the work that had been started.

The Co-Chair of the Global Organizing Committee drew attention to the fact however that there were not only 30 million Diaspora from Africa but there are also 55 million Afro-Brazilians and 45 million African-Americans that were part of the story and the success of the Symposium.

Dr. Beech took the audience down memory lane and reminded them of what happened in 1619 in Virginia, America, when the first enslaved Africans landed the continent of America and that from 1619 to 1865, Africans were under the yoke of slavery. Then in 1861, he noted that the American Civil War broke out, and the States in the North fought against those of the South. While the Southern States had more money, the Northern states wanted more of that money; asserting that the war was all about money and that the first shot fired was in South Carolina, at a revenue station and not in a battle ground. He explained that the war continued because the North wanted a union but the South wanted rights.

He further stated that in 1863, *President Abraham Lincoln* issued a proclamation because it became necessary as a military strategy as the North was losing and the South was winning. To forestall that, *President Lincoln* enlisted the over 200,000 ex-slaves to join the Union Forces – the Infantry, Artillery, Cavalry – and then the North started winning more battles and eventually won the war. He however reiterated that the most important thing was that the slaves freed themselves, which he said, had become an important point in Black history – our African history.

Dr. Beech stated that as the President of the **African-American Museum and Cultural Centre** in Texas, North Carolina, the Centre teaches African-American children who visit the Centre about ancient African civilization; educating them that their ancestors, before slavery, had traded in gold, diamonds, even when they lived in the dark ages, and that their history did not start with slavery when their ancestors were taken from Nigeria, Ghana and other African countries as slaves to America.

He asserted that the Centre also teaches the children that their ancestors, though slaves, fought in the Civil War, won and freed themselves and that there was a national holiday, one of the most important holidays in the history of the United States declared every June 19th to celebrate ‘*Our Freedom*’. The Co-Chair went on to recall that before the Civil War, there were four million slaves in America, but that after the war, there were no more slaves.

He stressed that everything that Africa had accomplished, the Diaspora had supported and that the African Diaspora in America had not only risen to the top on the corporate ladders, but had also become Pension Funds Managers, heads of Banks and Financial Institutions and when Africa says she needs money, she had a new purse to draw from. He said it was therefore up to African Governments and other members of the Diaspora to put the deal together. The Co-Chair of the Global Organizing Committee noted that the American Government’s *Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA)*, set

up twenty years ago, enabled over 6,000 African products to be admitted duty free into America and that though there was money in export and the customers in America, Africa was sadly yet to take full advantage of that programme.

Dr. Beech further explained in detail that Africa had a GDP of 1.5 million dollars, Africans in America had a GDP of 1.5 billion dollars, while America had a GDP of 35 trillion dollars, which was where the money was. He explained that if Africa could fully utilize a duty-free program like AGOA, then she would take her products to the buyers in America, and Africa could then benefit when the exporters from Africa partnered with Diaspora importers in America. More money would then come to all African countries, and Africa would not have to worry about money as a people, if Africans in Diaspora could do business with each other. That, he asserted, was one of the things the Diaspora could strive to achieve.

He ended his remarks by appreciating all the participants, speakers and paper presenters for their efforts in terms of attendance and particularly for talking to each other.

5.6 REMARKS by President, Nigerians in Diaspora Organization (NIDO) New York Chapter, *Hon. Bobby Digi Bamidele Olisa*.



Mr. Bobby Olisa introduced himself as a social entrepreneur and a first generation Nigerian-American. He stated that the Symposium had really opened his eyes and offered him valuable resources to take back to New York. He promised to galvanize other young African Diaspora to participate in the development of the continent, calling on those who had connected through the Symposium to make a commitment by not only adding knowledge but also make a donation towards the hosting of the next Global Symposium. In that regard, he stated that he was making a donation to the next Symposium.

The Session then came to an end for the lunch break.

6.0 CLOSING SESSION

6.1 REMARKS by Special Adviser to the Imo State Government on Diaspora, *Elder Aloysius Nwangwu* (on behalf of the Diaspora State Focal Point Officers)



Elder Aloysius Nwangwu who spoke on behalf of the Diaspora Focal Officers, congratulated the NiDCOM Chair, *Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa* for displaying the capacity to co-organize such an event as the **GADS 2023**.

He informed the audience that *Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa* was such a meticulous leader that she knew all the Diaspora Focal Officers by name and even other little details about them, which he said depicted her capacity as a leader.

Elder Nwangwu also appreciated other members of the committee that organized the **GADS 2023**, praising all committee members for the excellent job of putting up such a wonderful Symposium, adding that the Diaspora officers had so many learning points to take home to their individual States, from the presentations on various intervention areas for the development of their home States.

He further lauded the fact that over 60 countries were represented at **GADS 2023** pointing out that all the issues raised and discussed during the two-day programme would definitely be taken back home for implementation.

The Representative of the Diaspora Focal Officers ended his remarks by appreciating all present for their participation.

6.2 REMARKS by Chairman of Nigerians in Diaspora Organization-Europe (NIDO-E), *Dr. Bashir Obasekola*



The Chairman of the **Nigerians in Diaspora Organization-Europe, (NIDO-E)**, *Dr. Bashir Obasekola* began by informing the audience that wherever the discuss of Africans in Diaspora was introduced, it was incomplete without Nigeria, because of the sheer value of the vibrancy and level of achievements of her population in the Diaspora, such that, when there was any mention of the assets that Africa as a continent had outside her shores, Nigerian Diaspora were always acknowledged.

The **NIDO-Europe** Chair expressed his happiness that such a programme as the **Global Africa Diaspora Symposium (GADS) 2023** was being held in Nigeria. He noted

that Nigerians in the Diaspora were very available to work, collaborate, and engage and for that purpose, **Nigerians in Diaspora Organization (NIDO)** was ready to network with the African Diaspora. He added that the platform had also provided the opportunity to leverage and collaborate with other African Diaspora, away from the annual Nigerian Diaspora Day, an annual event, which usually holds on the 25th of July of each year, which he said had been the constant platform for Nigerians in Diaspora to have interactions with one another for Nigeria's development.

He stated that with the wide scope and opportunity of leveraging on what she had outside the continent; with Nigeria having the concentration of the most educated of the Black Community in America which was true even in the other continents as well; such intellectual remittance should be harnessed for the development of Nigeria and the continent of Africa as a whole.

Dr. Obasekola informed the audience that **NIDO** was open to join forces with other African Diaspora Organizations, advising that Africa should remove the tag of separation and not discriminate amongst one another but collaborate with and see one another as sons and daughters of Africa, currently living outside the continent of Africa.

He emphasized that Africans in Diaspora could unite with the first generation of Africans who were outside the continent by no volition of theirs, such as the African-Americans and were also beginning to align themselves with the home land of Africa, in order to contribute to her development, which he said, Africa should be excited about.

Dr. Obasekola advised the African Diaspora to note that, no matter the level of their personal achievements in their countries of residence, they would be judged by how developed the continent of Africa was and therefore called on all Africans in Diaspora to team up to develop Africa, not only when they converge at such programmes like the **GADS 2023**, but out there in the Diaspora.

The **NIDO** Europe Chairman also enjoined Africans in Diaspora to partner together in all aspects to develop Africa by communicating with one another. He expressed excitement that the **GADS 2023** platform had launched an opportunity to collaborate and engage, adding that technology had also enhanced the much-needed partnership, enabling doing things together without restrictions.

He ended his remarks by thanking the organizers, sponsors partners and the Nigerian Government for making **GADS 2023** a reality, asking the participants and all present to enjoy the rest of the day.

6.3 PRESENTATION OF COMMUNIQUE by Chairman, Global Organizing Committee, Mrs Ibukun Odusote.



Mrs. Ibukun Odusote, Chairman, Global Organizing Committee read the draft Communiqué to the audience after which she called for contributions and corrections to enrich the document. The following interventions were then made:

6.3.1 *Pastor Peter Omoragbo* from NIDO UK-South, expressed the need for the venue of the next Symposium to be added to the Communiqué.

6.3.2 *Prof. Magnus Onuoha* from West African Green Income Development Institute requested that item 6 of the Recommendations include Green as Blue was limiting while Green Economy was also discussed in the course of the Symposium.

6.3.3 *Ms. Elizabeth Poage* from IOM recommended that IOM should be added to items 28 and 29 as key partners and that IOM desires to be involved in the organization of GADS in the future. Secondly, she requested that an addition item should be added as follows: “The need to build on the Global Diaspora Summit held in Dublin in 2022, which calls for the institutionalization of Diaspora participation in policies and programs and this needs to support the Global Diaspora Alliance”.

6.3.4 The next speaker congratulated the organizers for the successful organization of the Symposium and expressed his appreciation for everything put together in the Communiqué. He asked how everything listed in the Communiqué would be addressed properly and suggested that an agency be created to make sure that the Communiqué was addressed and a report given at the next Symposium in two years.

6.3.5 *Mr. Melvin Foote* congratulated the organizers, commending the Symposium as having been an awesome experience. He expressed his concern about the next generation of leaders who were under 30 years and constituted about 70% of the African Diaspora and who wished to be part of the conversation. He recommended that a panel of young people was needed to reflect on what they were hearing because the older generation needed to have them to carry the torch. There was the need to intentionally engage the next generation of leadership in all the efforts to engage the Diaspora in support of Africa.

6.3.6 *Dr. Jacob Ako*, a Consultant General and Transplant Surgeon from the UK, stated that action planning for post conference was critical. He suggested that every nation that was represented at the Symposium ought to go back and draw an action plan about how to realize some of the key discussions and objectives. The action

plan would involve how to actualize the end product that had been decided. For Nigeria, he suggested that **NIDCOM** should have two or three people draw an action plan on the various things discussed. He went further to suggest that since AfDB had expressed their willingness to work with the Diaspora, the particular item should be changed to “*Diaspora are encouraged to explore the possibility of engagement with AfDB as Consultants*”.

6.3.7 On the issue of database of Diaspora, the **IOM** said that a platform existed that was contributed and open to the Diaspora and even led by the Diaspora. It was a platform that could be used to start and then extend to the overall new initiatives that were coming up.

6.3.8 **Mr. Horace Amu**, Operations Support Manager at the **AfDB**, proposed that the item on the **AfDB** should be changed to state that “*The African Diaspora is encouraged to engage with the AfDB on its programs*”.

6.3.9 A participant wanted the Chairman to reiterate item 2 and explain how it could be achieved. The Chairman in her response noted that as those in the world, each participant would state how to get it done and that every country should do whatever would work for them to actualize the Diaspora policies.

6.3.10 **Prof Chika Anyanwu**, speaking online from Australia, stated that it was agreed during the preparation for the Symposium that the essence was not to make the Symposium an academic exercise but to have achievable targets and tasks. The idea was that after the event, the Planning Committee would go back to thrash out the low hanging fruits that could be done immediately and also working with the African Union through the various countries.

6.3.11 **Dr. Shem Ochuodho** suggested that because various countries had their own mechanisms, instead of being prescriptive, the organizers together with all stakeholders could come up with a framework having monitorable tangible key performance indicators within a year. He also advised Diaspora to take advantage of the over twenty vacant positions at the **AfDB**.

6.3.12 **Dr. Robert Okojie**, contributing online from Canada, stated that the Symposium should be expanded to Symposium and Exposition, with the exposition offering an opportunity for inventors and investors to interact.

6.3.13 The Chairman closed the reading of the Communique by informing the audience that the date and venue of the next Symposium would be communicated as soon as it was decided.

6.4 **REMARKS** by Curator, **Nike Arts Gallery** and Managing Director/CEO of **Nike Centre for Art and Culture**, Osogbo, *Chief Nike Davies-Okundaye*.



The legendary *Nike Davies-Okundaye*, began by greeting all participants in Yoruba language ‘*Ekabo*’ to which they chorused ‘*Ekule*’. She then went ahead to praise the organizers as well as the **NiDCOM** Head, *Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa*, for giving her the platform as an Art/Culture Ambassador of Nigeria, jokingly enthusing that one day she may become the President of Nigeria.

She encouraged all participants to be proud of their African identity and heritage and preserve it, especially their names, adding that she was glad to see Africa unite as one under the **GADS 2023** and for coming to her beloved country, Nigeria.

Chief Nike Davies-Okundaye concluded her remarks by expressing her appreciation to the organizing committee for a successful Symposium.

6.5 **REMARKS** by Assistant Secretary General, **Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS)**, *Dr. Ibrahim Norbert Richard*.



Dr. Richard began his speech by stating that he was happy and honoured to have been to Nigeria and requested for the Communiqué to be opened to allow further inputs. He apologized for the absence of the Secretary General who, he said, had to urgently attend to other commitments involving bilateral meetings with the Nigerian Government.

Dr. Richard congratulated the organizers, noting that it had been a hitch free event, having been provided with some expertise, given the level of preparation by the organizers; **NiDCOM**, **DTCA**, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Federal Government of Nigeria, and **OACPS**. He recalled that about a year ago they had been working together and in a short time, had birthed this great level of participation and cooperation. He also appreciated the contribution of the **NiDCOM** Chair, *Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa*, naming her as the **OACPS** Champion on Diaspora Matters. He also hailed the partnership with International Organization for Migration (**IOM**) for working closely to aid the launch of the **OACPS** Diaspora platform.

The Assistant Secretary General explained that his take away as **OACPS** representative from the **Global Africa Diaspora Symposium (GADS) Abuja 2023** was

that it was a success and he was therefore proud to be associated with the event, believing that the outcomes enunciated in the Communiqué, would be implemented.

Dr. Richard emphasized that over the last two days, there had been a rich fruitful exchange of ideas as attested to by the recommendations in the Communiqué, which he said provided relevant options to deliver maximum impact by moving from planning to action. He however said that presently, the Communiqué was only theoretical but would come alive if all concerned could match it with implementation through an action plan. He emphasized that **OACPS** was ready to collaborate with other stakeholders to see to the implementation of the Communiqué to match plan with action.

Dr. Richard also stressed that in terms of outcomes, he recommends the signing of a Memoranda of Understanding with the Federal Government of Nigeria binding the **OACPS** to Nigeria with a commitment to working out a partnership with her Diaspora.

He concluded by expressing his heartfelt gratitude to the President of Nigeria, President Muhammadu Buhari, and the people of Nigeria for the warm reception accorded the **OACPS** delegation to Nigeria.

6.6 **VOTE OF THANKS** by Co-Chair Global Organizing Committee, and Co-President, **Africa Diaspora Alliance (AFDA)**, *Dr. Malcolm Beech*.



Dr. Malcolm Beech expressed great pleasure in delivering the closing remarks for the **Global African Diaspora Symposium (GADS) Abuja 2023**, and extended his heartfelt appreciation to every member of the **GADS 2023** Organizing committee for their hard work in planning the Symposium and to everyone who had made the event a resounding success, saying it was truly an honour for him to have been part of such a prestigious gathering of esteemed personalities from all over the world.

The past two days, he said, had provided him an opportunity to witness a series of engaging discussions, keynote presentations, and panel sessions, all aimed at exploring ways to improve the relationship between Africa and her global Diaspora. He expressed hope that participants had all learned a great deal from each other.

He thanked the Presidents of Uganda, Ghana, the Secretary General of the **OACPS**, and the keynote speakers for their insightful presentations, which, he said, had given participants a lot to think about. He was confident that the ideas and suggestions put forward would be instrumental in building stronger connections between Africa and the global Diaspora. He also expressed appreciation to panellists who participated in the Discussion Sessions, saying their presentations were informative and thought-provoking,

and he believed that they would go a long way in shaping policies and programs that would enhance the development of Africa and the global Diaspora engagement.

Finally, *Dr. Beech* extended his gratitude to the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, **H. E. Muhammadu Buhari GCFR**, for delivering the keynote address, and whose support for this Symposium was deeply appreciated, and an attestation that he held the Diaspora in high esteem.

In conclusion, he said the **Global African Diaspora Symposium (GADS) Abuja 2023** had been a remarkable success and he believed that the ideas and recommendations put forward would be instrumental in building stronger connections between Africa and the global Diaspora. He said he therefore looked forward to seeing the implementation of the ideas in the near future.

The Nigerian, African Union (AU) and ACP Anthems were then performed by the young Saxophonist, *Miss. Oreofe Balogun*, with all participants thereafter invited to the stage for a photograph session to bring the **Global African Diaspora Symposium (GADS) Abuja 2023** to an end.



Chairman/Chief Executive Officer, NiDCOM, **Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa** (middle), in a group photograph with some of the Resource Persons and Contributors for Day 2



(L – R) **Dr. Shem Ochuodho**, **Dr. Malcolm Beech** and **H. E. Harriet Sena Siaw-Boateng**



Cross-section of some participants from other African countries



Members of the GADS Global Organizing Committee.



Dignitaries and other participants listening to presentations



H. E. Hon. Leslie Campbell (right) and other participants



Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa and other participants during presentations on Day 2



Amb. Rabi'u Dagari (left) and Amb, Isiaka Imam with other participants in rapt attention



A participant making an observation at the Symposium



A Cross-section of participants at the event



Secretary, NiDCOM, Engr. Dr. Sule Yakubu Bassi with other participants



Another cross-section of participants at the event



Chairman/Chief Executive Officer, NiDCOM, Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, and Chairman, GADS Global Organizing Committee, Mrs. Ibukun Odusote, in the middle, in a group photograph with some participants at the Symposium



Participants at Tea Break



Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa leading Hon. Leslie Campbell and other dignitaries through the Exhibition stands



Some participants in a group photograph with the Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of NiDCOM, Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, at the end of the Symposium

7.0 DINNER

The Dinner, took place at Congress Hall of the **Transcorp Hilton Hotel**, Abuja, and was sponsored by the **Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA)**. It commenced with the Nigerian, African Union and ACP Anthems performed by *Miss. Oreofe Balogun*.

Introduction of dignitaries present was made by the Compère, *Dr. Seun Adigun*, the multi-talented Nigerian-American bobsledder, and track and field runner who competed at the 2012 Summer Olympics, and in 2016 founded the Nigerian bobsled team.

The Dinner featured a number of remarks, sumptuous meals, fashion parade, presentation of Awards to **GADS** Resource Persons and Certificates to **NiDCOM** Staff and partners, and captivating performances by the young saxophonist, *Miss. Oreofe Balogun*, and the **Abuja Cultural Troupe**, with the climax of the Dinner being a scintillating performance by the renowned *2Face Idibia*.

The following speeches were part of the programme of activities at the Dinner.

7.1 WELCOME REMARKS by Co-President, **Africa Diaspora Alliance (AfDA)** and Co-Chairman, **GADS Global Organizing Committee**, *Dr. Malcolm Beech*.

In his remarks, *Dr. Beech* stated that the night was for being together, and an avenue to have some fun. He said that for two days, participants had heard a lot of speeches, which were very great and contained important information, but it was time to have some fun, he reiterated.

He enthusiastically asked the audience if they were prepared to express love to each other, using the occasion to express his gratitude to the President of Nigeria, **His Excellency President Muhammadu Buhari** and *Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa*, who he said made him work his finger to the bone, with other organizers too, in order to get things done.

He concluded by welcoming all present and congratulated them for the end of successful Symposium.

7.2 OPENING REMARKS by Chairman/Chief Executive Officer, **Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM)**, *Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa*.

The Chairman/Chief Executive of **NiDCOM** expressed her gratitude to all participants and stakeholders for making the Symposium a huge success, calling out some members of the Global Organizing Committee for a great job well done. She

reminded the guests that the dinner was occasion and a time to have some fun, enjoy and party.

Hon. Dr. Abike-Erewa emphasized that her organization was poised to continue to partner with the Diaspora, with the intention to move the Diaspora forward, through constant engagements with them.

She pointed out that the highlights for the night were the Nigeria Fashion show and the star appearance by the guest artist, *Tuface Idibia*, and advised the guests to relax, eat, dance and have great fun.

7.3 SPECIAL REMARKS by Director-General, Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), *Dr. Bashir Yusuf Jamoh*.

The NIMASA Director-General, who was represented by the Director, Special Duties, *Mr. Isichie Osamgbi*, asserted that GADS 2023 was one of the greatest things to happen to the continent because of the convergence of the class of people from all over the world, which he said was very impactful.

He called upon the African Diaspora to invest in the maritime sector as the sector was the future 'oil' and held so much prospect, he stated. He further stressed that he looked forward to a fruitful partnership between his agency and the Diaspora

He thereafter enjoined the guests to enjoy their dinner as, in his opinion, it was not an evening of speech making.

7.4 GOODWILL MESSAGES:

7.4.1 Senior Presidential Advisor on Diaspora Affairs, **Republic of Uganda, Ambassador Abbey Walusimbi**.

Ambassador Walusimbi praised *Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa* for her efforts to promote, engage, project and unite the African Diaspora. He also used the occasion to express his sincere appreciation to the President of Nigeria, **His Excellency President Muhammadu Buhari**, for supporting the Diaspora, which was evident in the policies and programmes implemented by the Nigerian government and for accepting to host the Diaspora Centre of Excellence.

He went on to commend the sponsors, participants and speakers who made the Symposium a great success, mentioning that his country Uganda, was willing to host the Symposium in 2025.

Amb. Walusimbi reminded the African Diaspora that their time had come to unite to move the continent forward, build structures and be there for each other because

together, they could move Africa forward. He ended his remarks by calling on the guests to enjoy the evening.

7.4.2 Director, Diaspora Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, **Republic of Jamaica, Dr. Lloyd Wilks.**

Dr. Lloyd Wilks, who started his remarks on a lighter note by informing guests that he drank freshly brewed Nigerian palm wine that evening, stated that he was proud to mention that he was a member of the African Diaspora and that over the past two days, he had benefited from the opportunity of being part of the Symposium.

He said the Symposium had reaffirmed the importance for the root of Africa to be connected to its branches in the Diaspora, stating that it had also been an enlightening experience as so many people had come from different areas of expertise, different organizations, both local and international agencies, as well as experts in their own fields who reaffirmed the importance of the '*One Africa*' principle to be followed.

Dr. Wilks stressed that his country, Jamaica, had definitely taken cognizance of the importance of the Diaspora for her national development and this Symposium had therefore strengthened that and so, he had a lot to take back home from the two-day Symposium. He affirmed his country's commitment to share the experiences and to contribute to the objectives and the ideals that the '*One Diaspora*' philosophy held.

He concluded by commending the organizers who made the Symposium possible and stated that Jamaica would stand shoulder to shoulder with other stakeholders to move the resolutions in the Communiqué forward.

7.4.3 Culture, Hospitality and Tourism Expert, **Mr. Wale Akinboboye.**

Mr. Akinboboye stated that Africa was the wealthiest continent and the second largest continent in the world, but unfortunately also happened to be the poorest and socially disconnected from her past which had led to the retrogression of the continent.

He maintained that America was developed by those in the Diaspora that came from different parts of the world and that if we looked at what was necessary and what had to be done, then it must be the beginning with the continent of Africa beckoning to Africans in the Diaspora, as she could not do it alone.

The culture and tourism expert stated that Africa had only 3.4 trillion dollars compared to Japan that had 37,000 sq m area but only occupied 15%, which was 6,000sqm of area, while generating about 5.9 trillion dollars with zero natural resources. In his view, the population of Africa was often underestimated to 1.2 billion whereas, it was

almost 2 billion, which was bigger than China. He also stressed that the African-American economy alone was worth 1.7 trillion US dollars and that our coming together should not just be once in two years but every week, as there was a lot of ground to cover and Africa needed her Diaspora to achieve that.

Mr. Akinboboye revealed that he returned from the Diaspora in 1984 and went into the forest to create authentic African resources being replicated in Africa and all over the world. In conclusion, he appealed to the Africans in Diaspora that they ought to remember that “*they were not just born in Africa but Africa was born in them.*”

7.4.4 Chairperson, **Nigerians in Diaspora Organization (NIDO) UK-South Chapter**, *Mrs. Susan Waya*.

Ms. Susan Waya said it was a great pleasure to participate at the Symposium which she called a huge success.

She explained that as the Chairperson of **NIDO UK South**, the members of the organization were usually excited to spend a week in Nigeria to celebrate the Nigerians in Diaspora Day which comes up on 25th July, 2023. It was therefore an exciting opportunity to have had the GADS provide them with another opportunity to be in the country and, more still to network with African Diaspora from all over the world.

She commended the Chief Executive Officer/Chairman of the **Nigeria in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM)**, *Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa* and the other organizers for **GADS 2023**, a platform designed to bring Africans together. She said that in the past two days she had listened to so much, especially the policies put together by various speakers and intellectuals in order to build a community to make Africa a better place for ourselves and the people of Africa. She concluded by stating that the gains of the Symposium should therefore not be taken for granted.

7.4.5 Vice President, **Constituency for Africa (CFA)** Washington DC, USA, *Ms. Jeannine Scott*.

Ms. Scott acknowledged all dignitaries and participants present, and commended the committee members for putting **GADS 2023** together, adding that it was an honour to be in such a gathering.

She informed the guests present that she was an African/American, born in America, but was proud and grateful to be in Nigeria and part of the Symposium. To conclude her brief remarks, she stressed that the take home for all present at the Symposium was to focus on how we could collaborate to actualize the recommendations in the Communiqué in order to move things forward to the next stage.

7.4.6 Associate Professor, **San Jose State University** and Founder, **BEST (Black Engineers, Scientists and Techies)**, USA, *Engr. Folarin Erogbogbo*

Engr. Erogbogbo, in his remarks, stated that wherever we go as Africans, we can easily identify ourselves as one. He added that the Symposium had been phenomenal as he had met different people from different countries – Ghana, Uganda etc. He pointed out that one of the things he had realized by working in Silicon Valley, which he said was the wealthiest place in the world, was that they provided the largest number of engineers for all companies like Apple, LinkedIn etc.

Engr. Erogbogbo further revealed that with that in mind, they started organizing the yearly Black Engineer Week in June to unite people of Black Diaspora to come and gain insight into all those great companies. He therefore invited all Africans in Diaspora who were interested, to take advantage of the opportunity, stressing that one of the themes of his organization was to build stronger connections, which also resonated with the theme of **GADS 2023**.

He thanked the organizers for giving him the opportunity, adding that he was grateful to be there.

7.5 **DINNER SPEECH** by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, **Republic of Jamaica, H.E. Hon. Leslie Campbell**.



The Honourable Minister began his Dinner Speech by noting that he was home as a Diaspora coming to Africa, and recounted the good time and warm feeling of welcome and acceptance he had experience since he arrived. He emphasized that a unified Diaspora was critical to the collective agenda for sustainable growth and development.

He went on to state that with abundant human resources both at home and abroad, the Diaspora had remained significant for the development of the continent in areas of economic development, human rights, governance, youth development, health and education, culture, gender, recreation and human security. However, to properly harness these sectors for the continent's development, he opined that various governments must set up appropriate instruments to ensure that what had been discussed and agreed at **GADS 2023** did not end as mere talks. He asserted that we could take advantage of our collective strength to move forward.

He further stated that the African Diaspora was estimated to be in excess of 13 million persons, representing a composite of skills, expertise, intellect and other resources

with opportunity for self help and triangular development in pursuance of the African Union Agenda 2053. *Honourable Campbell* stressed that to sustain economic growth and development, the national development plans of African countries must be in tandem with the transformation agenda of the AU.

Recounting Jamaica's story on Diaspora engagement, he said Diaspora engagement had been identified as the top priority area of the Government of the day and it had been working assiduously to strengthen and deepen its contribution to national development. To achieve these, he said the Government recently adopted a National Diaspora Policy, supplying an institutional framework for proper engagement of the Jamaican Diaspora in nation building, as a way of supporting their Diaspora. He also revealed that his home Government had instituted the Global Jamaica Diaspora Conference and the Jamaica Diaspora Youth Conference to support the realization of the goals of the National Diaspora Policy. He explained that there were representatives from the continent of Africa who also sat on the Council to represent the region, while also working closely with other Diaspora partners in the spirit of the African brotherhood.

Honourable Leslie Campbell commended Nigeria for hosting the first **GADS 2023** for Diaspora engagement and hoped to establish something similar in the Caribbean region soon. He informed the guests that as a focal point, Jamaica was successfully galvanizing the region to develop global means for their Diaspora engagement, adding that there had also been renewed interest amongst the leaders of the **Organization of Africa and the Caribbean States (OACPS)** to strengthen and deepen the relationship between the two regions, for cooperation and development.

Honourable Campbell concluded by declaring that he was confident that **GADS 2023** would further create a new framework for the global Diaspora engagement and advised that all must play their part.



A cross-section of guests at the Dinner



Another cross-section of guests at the Dinner



Fashion Parade at the Dinner



Cultural troupe in performance



H. E. Hon. Leslie Campbell delivering the Dinner Speech



Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa in discussion with Okeoghenemaro Sefia Esq. and the MC, Dr. Seun Adigun



Dr. Awil Mohamoud displaying his Award



Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa presenting the Award to H.E. Hon Leslie Campbell



Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa dancing with Mr. Kwabena Osei-Sarpong



The Chairman, Mrs. Ibukun Odusote and Co-Chairman, Dr. Malcolm Beech, showing off their steps



2Face Idibia entertaining the guests at the Dinner



Miss. Oreofe Balogun providing the supporting act with the saxophone.



2Face Idibia in full voice to bring the Global African Diaspora Symposium (GADS) Abuja 2023 to a close

APPENDIXES

COMMUNIQUE DELIVERED AT THE END OF THE 2-DAY GLOBAL AFRICAN DIASPORA SYMPOSIUM (GADS) HELD IN ABUJA, NIGERIA FROM 27TH - 28TH APRIL, 2023

1.0 PREAMBLE

1.1 Over 30 million Africans, plus 55 million Afro Brazilians and 45 million African Americans, live outside the continent of Africa, and represent a vast network of potential partners for development. Through their resources in remittances and pension fund investments, they play a crucial role in Africa in investments, sustaining livelihoods and social services, as well as contributing to development initiatives through their expertise, networks, and social capital. Desiring to overcome the numerous challenges it faces such as poverty and conflict, Africa's engagement with the Diaspora communities in development initiatives is therefore necessary to help bridge critical development gaps. In order to ensure the success of these engagements, several strategies need to be implemented, which include building trust and partnerships (including African governmental assurances of Diaspora investments), and investing in capacity building and knowledge sharing, as well as creating an enabling policy environment that recognizes the role of the Diaspora in Africa's sustainable development.

1.2 It is against this background that the **Global African Diaspora Symposium (GADS) Abuja 2023** was convened by the **Africa Diaspora Alliance (AfDA)** with the **Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS)** in conjunction with the **Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM)** and the **Directorate of Technical Cooperation in Africa (DTCA)**, both of the Nigerian **Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, and the Federal Government of Nigeria, at the State House Conference Centre, Abuja, Nigeria, as well as virtually, on 27th - 28th April, 2023 with the theme: *"Building Stronger Connections between Africa and the Global Diaspora"*.

1.3 The **Overall Goal** of the Symposium was to offer a platform to facilitate a consultative, immersive interaction between African Diaspora and other stakeholders where workable solutions to Africa's most pressing issues would be discussed and concrete strategies proffered for necessary partnerships between key Diaspora leaders in business and professions with leaders on the African continent to achieve pertinent results.

1.4 The **Objectives** of the Symposium were therefore to:

- xv. Create an interface for networking among African and other Diaspora across the world.
- xvi. Promote the implementation and institutionalizing of Pan-Africanism at the UN through the celebration of the **International Decade for People of African Descent**.
- xvii. Build bridges between Africa and the Diaspora by deepening relations between the African Union (AU) and Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), among others in realizing the Diaspora as the 6th region of the AU.
- xviii. Explore and engage the contributions of Diaspora skills, particularly in scientific knowledge and technology transfer.
- xix. Mobilize Diaspora savings and Diaspora philanthropic contributions and harness migration, remittances, and Diaspora investment contributions for sustainable development.
- xx. Enhance participation of the Diaspora in Africa's development process to support the development of the roadmap for the Diaspora as the 6th Region of Africa towards the attainment of **Africa Union's Agenda 2063**.
- xxi. Advocate for policy and practice changes conducive to more effective integration of Diaspora-led actions in the national development plans of countries of origin through organizations such as the OACPS.

1.5 The Symposium had over three hundred (300) participants in physical attendance and over two hundred (200) persons online via Zoom, YouTube, Twitter and other streaming platforms from over sixty-four (64) countries; International Organizations including high-level participants from the **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)**, **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**, **African Development Bank (AfDB)**; Institutions and Academia; Diplomats; Diaspora Groups; Politicians and Policy makers; Government officials; the Business Community; different Business representations from the African, African American community and the historical African Diaspora; as well as other relevant stakeholders.

1.6 The Symposium featured insightful presentations from three (3) Keynote Presentations, two (2) Panel Discussions and Nine (9) Sectoral Discussion Sessions on the following sectors: Science and Technology; Agriculture; Trade, Industry and Manufacturing; Energy and Infrastructure Development; Tourism and Culture; Health; Information and Communication Technology; and Education and Youth Development.

1.7 The highlight of the Opening Ceremony was the **Keynote Address** delivered by the representative of **His Excellency Muhammadu Buhari GCFR**, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, to declare the Symposium open, in which he highlighted the potential of the Symposium in facilitating and building stronger and lasting connections between Africa and its Global Diaspora.

2.0 OBSERVATIONS:

Consequent on the presentations and intensive interactive sessions, participants made the following observations:

- i) As long as Africa does not develop as it should, the world will continue to undermine and denigrate the continent, thus the need to emulate other races by harnessing the expertise and other resources of African Diaspora by African governments, institutions and policymakers at all levels, irrespective of where they may be found, noting particularly the unique role women and youth have to play in this engagement process with African Diaspora;
- ii) Opportunities abound on the continent for the African Diaspora to structure and jointly execute projects and programmes with African Governments and the Private sector in Public Private People's Partnership (PPPP) arrangements, such as are being fully exploited by others like the Chinese, Indians, Lebanese and Americans;
- iii) There are numerous investment opportunities within the Regional Economic Blocs, as well as country investment programs, to engage with the Diaspora for impact in African countries as the African Diaspora, acting in concert, have the intellectual and financial capital to undertake program-specific financing of projects and programmes of the AU;
- iv) Diaspora intellectual capital and individual influence could be used to develop value chains in multi-million-dollar industries in Science & Technology, Agriculture, Trade & Manufacturing, Energy & Infrastructure Development, Tourism & Culture, among others;
- v) The Diaspora can, by virtue of their skills, expertise, economic power, diplomacy, business networks, market access and global exposure, lead in the promotion of quality primary health services delivery through developing synergies between several structures of governments at all levels, and a broad array of non-state actors including professionals, trade associations, trade unions, NGOs, other CSOs and community-based formations;

- vi) The Diaspora however face challenges such as unfavourable disposition by some Governments, lack of access to funding, deficient business asset acquisition, unfavourable policies for the Diaspora desiring to open accounts in their home countries as well as vulnerability to fraud and mismanagement arising from their unfamiliarity with the contemporary host terrain, with concerns about the safety of Diaspora investments and remittances, as major issues hindering a massive return of financial investments to the continent;
- vii) The absence of appropriate structural continental policies to ease entry and movement for the Diaspora into and within Africa has also hindered effective harnessing and utilization of Diaspora skills for the development of the continent, bringing to fore the need to re-visit the protocols and extant laws on movement into and within Africa, particularly of the African Diaspora and especially as it relates to asset accumulation;
- viii) The need for greater collaboration between Diaspora, government institutions, policy makers and multilateral organizations to enable smooth assimilation of the Diaspora into Africa's development process;
- ix) The total absence of a clearly defined continental strategy for engaging and integrating African Diaspora in Africa's developmental process was noted, with the historical Diaspora, especially African-Americans, not being fully factored into this engagement process, thus the importance of actualizing the aspirations, goals and priorities of the Africa Agenda 2063 through greater engagement with the Diaspora was stressed;
- x) The Symposium was hailed as a veritable platform for the promotion of the African Diaspora as the main resource for positively projecting and developing Africa; and
- xi) The effort of the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in accepting to finance and host the Diaspora Centre of Excellence in Abuja, Nigeria was hailed.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS:

In the light of the observations made by participants, a host of valuable policy ideas, recommendations and follow-up activities for an effective implementation of the laudable objectives, set out to be achieved by the Symposium, were put forward as follows:

- i) African Diaspora should engage with African Parliaments to ensure Diaspora matters and areas of interest are entrenched and appropriately anchored in individual African country's National Policies, with gender mainstreaming and inclusiveness as a priority.
- ii) African countries should explore and harness their comparative advantage rather than engaging in unproductive competition that hinders the continent's development.
- iii) The **Continental Policy for the Diaspora** developed by the African Diaspora Policy Centre (ADPC) should be mainstreamed to promote Africa to be the center of innovation utilizing research and innovation, to reduce cost of learning and harnessing innovative mediums with cutting edge technology and promoting a mind shift from funding of education to educational investment.
- iv) African Diaspora experts are enjoined to work with Ministries of Health in individual African countries to deepen affordable healthcare and encourage communication with all health sector stakeholders in preventive and promoting measures for good public health, utilizing technology and skills transfer to plug into developing a robust ecosystem with ICT. Provision for community role in Universal Health Coverage to promote ownership and input by the Diaspora to healthcare is encouraged.
- v) The Diaspora are invited to work with all stakeholders to change African mindset on agriculture as 'subsistence farming', to its being practiced as veritable means of wealth creation and mobilization of human labour to boost food security, agribusiness and agro-processing, through the deliberate and methodological examination of the entire value chain and the utilization of opportunities offered under schemes such as the African Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA).
- vi) Engagement with the Diaspora, while leveraging investors locally, to support the Green and Blue Economy, Creative Industry, Environmental Management, IT-enabled Services and other industries for trade and development, should be vigorously pursued.
- vii) African Diaspora formations are to work with relevant Chambers of Commerce across the world to create bridges for investments and facilitate access to the available investment funds for Africa's development with the Diaspora encouraged to invest in more viable projects that have greater

- impacts on the African Continent. In this regard, the Diaspora are encouraged to engage with the **AfDB** to serve as consultants on programmes and projects across Africa in line with the Bank's procedures for recruitment of consultants.
- viii) Working with investment experts, African governments and the Africa Diaspora should develop investment vehicles through which the Diaspora can invest in the opportunities existing in African Countries in specific sectors of the economy. African countries should therefore provide assurances for Diaspora investments through securitization of remittances, by use of security documents such as Diaspora specific Bonds, which will serve as cheap source of financing for development, as well as through handholding to encourage business development and growth.
 - ix) African Governments should put in place institutions and systems that will protect Diaspora businesses in their home countries and recovery mechanisms that will aid them in recovering their funds quickly and efficiently in the event of fraud.
 - x) The Diaspora should support ICT development including digitization of jobs, connections with investors, business-to-business (B2B) mediation, e-learning, e-commerce, exchange visits, and partnering in SME development using digital platforms across sectors and industries in Africa.
 - xi) African Governments should do more to develop policies that support Diaspora engagement which include the creation of Diaspora-focused institutions and support for Diaspora-led organizations and networks such as the Africa Diaspora Alliance (**AfDA**).
 - xii) The African Union should implement a framework within existing multilateral organizations in the Continent to facilitate ease of entry and movement for Africans in the Diaspora, bearing in mind that the Diaspora is the sixth region of the African Union.
 - xiii) African governments should go beyond advocacy and admonishing of Diasporans, to investing in incentives that will stimulate and increase the interest of more Diaspora in Africa's development process.
 - xiv) Stakeholders should build on the outcomes of the Global Diaspora Summit held in Dublin in 2022, which calls for the institutionalization of Diaspora participation in policies and programmes, and for support of the Global Diaspora Policy Alliance.

- xv) Government institutions such as **NiDCOM**, policy makers and multilateral institutions, including the **AU**, **CARICOM**, **IOM** and **OACPS**, should collaborate with credible Diaspora formations, such as **AfDA**, to enable the smooth assimilation of the Diaspora into Africa's development process.
- xvi) A cooperation framework of all interested participating institutions should be evolved in collaboration with **AfDA**, **DTCA**, **NiDCOM**, **IOM** and **OACPS** within the next one year, preparatory to the next Symposium in 2025.
- xvii) The Global African Diaspora Symposium should be adopted by the African Union and institutionalized as Biennial Diaspora Summit to develop mechanism for the actualization of the aspirations, goals and priorities of the Africa Agenda 2063.
- xviii) The establishment of the Diaspora Centre of Excellence in Abuja, Nigeria should be encouraged and supported by all stakeholders in order to ensure it takes off on solid footing.

4.0 CONCLUSION

4.1 Throughout, it was evident to participants that the Symposium generated the impetus for the ongoing process of fostering effective engagement between the Diaspora and local actors in Africa. This has been initiated through ongoing dialogue, building personal relationships, and prioritizing transparency and accountability in development initiatives by emphasizing a shared culture of collaboration, mutual respect, and responsibility for sustainable development efforts.

4.2 There was also renewed motivation towards enabling the African Diaspora to have a central role in shaping sustainable development initiatives in Africa by ensuring that Diaspora-led organizations and networks are supported to lead and implement development projects in partnership with local actors, rather than being relegated to a secondary role. This approach can help to ensure that the perspectives, experiences, and expertise of the Diaspora are fully harnessed and used to drive sustainable development efforts in Africa.

4.3 The Symposium secured a commitment by African countries to create enabling policy environment that recognizes the role of the African Diaspora in sustainable development across the continent, and to do more to develop policies that support Diaspora engagement, including the creation of Diaspora-focused initiatives, streamlined investment procedures, and support for Diaspora-led organizations and networks. The

Symposium produced valuable policy recommendations and follow-up activities for effective implementation towards achieving the laudable objectives set out *ab initio*.

4.4 The Symposium agreed to reconvene next year, 2024, in Kampala, Uganda for a mid-term review of the progress so far on the conclusions of the Symposium, while the next Global African Diaspora Symposium (GADS) 2025 is proposed to hold in Kingston, Jamaica.

Made and adopted this 28th day of April, 2023

Mrs. Ibukun Odusote

Chairman

Global Organizing Committee

Global African Diaspora Symposium (GADS) Abuja 2023

Dr. Malcolm Beech,

Co-Chairman,

Global Organizing Committee

Hon. Dr. Shem Ochuodho

President, KDA and Global Chairman,
African Diaspora Alliance (AfDA)

Amb. Rabi'u Dagari mni

Director-General,
**Directorate of Technical
Cooperation in Africa (DTCA)**

Hon. Dr. Abike Dabiri-Erewa OON
Chairman/Chief Executive Officer,
**Nigerians in Diaspora Commission
(NiDCOM)**

H. E. Georges Rebelo Pinto Chikoti
Secretary-General,
**Organization of African, Caribbean
and Pacific States (OACPS)**

**ATTENDANCE AT THE 2-DAY GLOBAL AFRICAN
DIASPORA SYMPOSIUM (GADS) HELD IN ABUJA,
NIGERIA FROM 27TH - 28TH APRIL, 2023**

S/N	SURNAME	FIRST NAME	ORGANIZATION
1	ABAH UKPOJI	ENEMA	MFA
2	ABAKAR	SALEH C	Chad
3	ABUBAKAR	DABAI	Federal Ministry of Transportation
4	ABUBAKAR	MUHAMMAD	Embassy of Nigeria, Brussels
5	ABUBAKAR	ABUBAKAR YAHUZA	ARCP
6	ABUBAKAR	BAWA UMAR	DTCA
7	ADADOU	MOUMOUNI ILIASSAU	MAE/C Niger
8	ADAM	ABDUMSISI	FMT AID
9	ADAMU	ABIODUN JIJ	
10	ADDA	ZARA OUSMAN	Chad
11	ADEAGBO	IBIRONKE	IA- Foundation UK
12	ADEBAYO	ESTHER FOLASAYO	WAPAGEIN
13	ADEBUDO	AUGUSTINE	DTCA
14	ADEGOKE	JIMMY, Prof.	Missouri State University, Kansas City USA
15	ADEJOH	BANK SUNDAY	Action for Clean Street Organization
16	ADELUA	MARY WURAOLA	
17	ADERINTO	SAHEED, PROF	Florida International University
18	ADESIDA	DOYIN	Adesidare.com/WTC-TOUR/
19	ADESOLA	ADERINWALE OLAPADE, Rev.	Bethlehem City Church of God Ministry
20	ADETUNMBI	OLUKANYISOLA	NiDCOM
21	ADIGUN	SEUN, Dr.	
22	ADZEGE	ZIPPORAH, Dr.	Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria
23	AHMODU	STEPHEN	AfDB
24	AÏSSATA	KANE	IOM
25	AJAGBE	HALIMA	NiDCOM
26	AJAGBE	SODEEQ	WEMA Bank
27	AJEWOLE	OMOLOLA OLUKEMI	DTCA
28	AJIBIKE	ABDULAZEEZ ABIOLA	
29	AKANBI	ABIODUN	NiDCOM
30	AKAWU	HARUNA	DTCA
31	AKINBOBOYE	WANLE, Otunba	La Campagne
32	AKINFEMI	FEMI	Ondo State
33	AKINSUNMADE	AKINNIYI, Dr.	
34	AKINTOYE	OLUSEGUN	DTCA
35	AKINTUNDE	JALEEL	
36	AKOH	JACOB	Medical Association of Nigerian Specialists
37	AKOR	BEN	United Arab Emirates

38	AKPAN	MARY	LASHMA
39	ALBADRI	IBRAHIM	Iraq Embassy
40	ALBERT	BARAUCH	Federal Ministry of Transportation
41	ALEGBELEYE	SULAIMAN	Mobi Health International
42	ALIGBA	ABUJE	NIDO
43	ALLEN	ZHANG	China Embassy
44	AMADI	ARTHUR	Youth in Diaspora
45	AMINU	MARYAMU	Access Corporation
46	AMODU	ONEH	NiDCOM
47	AMOKEODO	TONY	
48	ANAELE	CHIMA	NiDCOM
49	ANAELECHI	DEBORAH	NiDCOM
50	ANEKE	SIMEON	NLEE
51	ANIMASHAUN	AYO	HTP7V
52	ANINGO	FELICIA	FMBN
53	ARAK	DOUGLAS	DTCA
54	AREO DAVID	SARAH	F.C.T SDFPO
55	ARULOGUN	FUNMI M.	NiDCOM
56	ASANGA	JACKSON	DTCA
57	ASEMOTA	ERNEST OSAYAMEN	
58	ASOKA	MARGARET	DTCA
59	ATKINSON	GILL	British High Commission
60	ATTEH	FESTUS	NiDCOM
61	AYANGADE	RISIKAT	Private Sector
62	AYENI	KOLAWOLE	WEMABOD LTD
63	BABA-GANA	MUSTAPHA	NIDO-EUROPE
64	BAKRE	ADENIYI	ICMPD
65	BALASUBRAMANIAN	G. Amb.	Indian High Commission
66	BALOGUN	TUNDE	Tourism Business
67	BAMALLI	KHADIJA	NiDCOM
68	BANBA	N'VADRO	Anbassade CI Powxollo consellor
69	BAREYEI	JOHNSON	Federal Ministry of Finance Budget and National Planning
70	BASSI	SULE YAKUBU, Engr. Dr.	NiDCOM
71	BEECH	MALCOLM, Dr.	AfDA
72	BENJAMIN	MORONKE MERCY	NiDCOM
73	BIBI ANNICK	OTIAKONYA	Congo Embassy
74	BRAMAMAN	BALASU G.	HCI ABUJA
75	BUNKAYA	BOYIGA	NiDCOM
76	CAMPBELL	LESLIE, Hon	Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Foreign Trade Jamaica
77	CELISEB	HUMPHREY, H.E.	Namibia High Commission
78	CHIKOTI	GEORGES H.E.	OACPS
79	CHIWUNEDU	ANDERSON	WEMA Bank
80	CHOAT	B. DAVID, Amb.	South Sudan
81	CHUKWUEMEKA	FRANCIS	AfDB
82	CISSOKO	SIACA	Embassy of Guinea

83	DABA	TOMMINA BALOGUN	Royal Calamus Company
84	DABIRI-EREWA	ABIKE, Hon.	NiDCOM
85	DADOME	PATIENCE YAWA	Ghana Investment Promotion Centre
86	DAGARI	RABIU, AMB	DTCA
87	DAMIAN	CYRIL MUSA	DTCA
88	DARIHA D.	ARABI	NiDCOM
89	DAUDA	LAMIDI AYODELE	NiDCOM
90	DAUDA	MOSES	Taraba SDFPO
91	DICKSON	HELEN	Africa Policy Conversations
92	DILLI	SERGE	OACPS
93	DOGARA	ALI HADIZA	NIMC
94	DOSSO	ABOU, Amb.	OACPS
95	DRELI	SOLOMON	Vanuatu Government
96	DRISON	AMU	AfDB
97	EDDY-OROK	MARY	DTCA
98	EDWARDS	AYODELE, Dr.	NIDO UK
99	EGAHI	OWOICHO	Royal Calamus Company
100	EJIKAME	WILLIAMS	Mobihealth international
101	EJIKEME	TAGBO	Ecowas Commission
102	EKPEYONG	ATEM	Mobi Health International
103	ELAGWU	ELIJAH	IOM
104	ELEAS	SUNNY	African League Organization
105	ELOKA	OKONJO	NiDCOM
106	ELUAMEH	HABIBAT PATRICIA	Ministry of Justice
107	ENDRIS	MOHAMMED, DR.	Ethiopian Diaspora Service, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia
108	EROGBOGBO	AJ	NCR Corporation
109	ESSIET	VICTOR	NiDCOM
110	EZEAKA	CHIDOZIE	NiDCOM
111	FAGOROYO	FELIX	NiDCOM
112	FAYE	AMATH	OACPS
113	FELIX	IMOLOGHOME	NiDCOM
114	FEMI	ODERE	Ekiti State
115	FOOTE	MELVIN	Constituency for Africa (CFA), Washington DC, USA
116	FRIDAY	EZE	Africa Association for SMEs (AASME)
117	GAFAH	MOAVE N.	Access to Sustainable and Qualitative Edu. Foundation
118	GALADIMA	BEN	Federal Ministry of Finance Budget and National Planning
119	GEORGE	THOMAS	Synergy Projects and Managers Nigeria Limited
120	GEORGE	SANUSI	NiDCOM
121	GITHINJI	MORGAN	OACPS

122	GOAGOSES	MARBELINE	Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation of the Republic of Namibia
123	GONAP	RETSAT	DTCA
124	GORACI	MONICA	IOM
125	GUICHARD	ERIC	Homestrings Inc., Washington D.C., USA
126	HAMA	ALIYU MUHAMMAD	Kano State Investment Promotion Agency and Diaspora
127	HANNATU	DANKAR-IRMIYA	MFA
128	HIBBAT	ANDRE	Jamaican High Commission, Nigeria
129	HOUNKPATIN	HONORE	Union of Beninese Resident in Nigeria
130	IBEKIE	CHINENYE	Federal Ministry of Information
131	ICHUKI	PETERS Rev.	Benue State
132	IDIAGBONOYA	SAM, Dr	FMT
133	IDIO	ELYON	NiDCOM
134	IDRIS	MUHAMMAD LAWAL	NiDCOM
135	IDRIS	IBRAHIM	FMT
136	IGBINADOLOR	PHILLIP U.	
137	IGOCHE	JOB	State House
138	IGWE	UCHENNA MICHAEL	Pearls Learning Hub
139	IKENNA	FRANKLIN	
140	IKOKWU	CHIOGO	
141	IMAM	ISIKA, Amb.	Developing Eight Organization for Economic Development (D8)
142	IMARHIAGBE	FESTUS D. I.	
143	IMEH	EMMANUEL	Read to Lead Africa
144	INEDITO	LIMA	Angola Embassy
145	INNIH	ANTHONY	
146	INONI	OGHENETEGA	NiDCOM
147	INYANG	HILARY, Prof.	US. Ambassador Distinguished Scholar to Ethiopia
148	ISMAIL	ALUMA UMAR	Qatar Nigeria Business Council
149	ISONG	JOHN DAVID	
150	IYOO	JOHNMARK MHENGA	
151	IZUNWANNE	DOMINIC BOWH	Royal Calamus Company
152	JACKSON	ARNOLD	Nigeria Export Promotion Council
153	JAZULI	MAHMOUD MUHAMMAD	NiDCOM
154	JIMOH	MURTALA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
155	JOGO	POLYCARP LORDYE	
156	JOHNSON	OLATUNDE	Diplomat
157	JOHNSON	BAREYET	FMFBMP
158	KALANGO	GRACE	High Commission of India
159	KALEBO	THEO WABENGA, Amb.	Congolese Abroad, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Congo

160	KALU	DARLINGTON ONUOHA, Amb. Dr.	Africa Association for Small and Medium Enterprises (AASME)
161	KAMSALEM	AMINA	Association of Algerian Students in China
162	KANAYO	UMOH	Zenon
163	KASASA	AYA	OACPS
164	KEHINDE	BISIRIYU	FIRS
165	KHAN	SOPHIA	Tourism Business
166	KINGSLEY	BENNETH JOSHUA	
167	KIZIGHA-ONEBAMOI	CATHERINE	OACPS
168	KOLLEY	ABDOU, HON.	Ecowas Commission
169	KOTUN	DANIEL	Federal Ministry of Transportation
170	KWA	FEDERIC	OACPS
171	KWIBISA	SUSAN	Zambia High Commission
172	LABINJO	TOSIN	NIDCOM
173	LAMPTEY	MARINA	Ghana Investment Promotion Centre
174	LAURENT	DE BOECK	IOM
175	LILAS	ORLOV	Angola Embassy
176	LORDSTADT	JIDEOFOR, Sir Mazi	Ugonma Foundation, Utako, FCT
177	LOWE-KHAN	AWAMARY	The Woman Boss Innovate Gambia
178	MADAKI	MIRIAM	NIDCOM
179	MAGAJI	SEKINAH	Hanikis Global
180	MAGAJI	IBRAHIM	DTCA
181	MAIDABINO	MUKTAR	Naija Agro Vitals Services, Zone 5, Abuja.
182	MAKUBA	TAPIWA	Zimbabwe Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.
183	MALIK	IDRIS	
184	MANZO	BRYAN	West Birmingham Trade, Abuja.
185	MASUDUR	RAHMAN	Bangladesh High Commission
186	MBAKWE	NELSON	
187	MBOBOU	SEID	Chad
188	MCPHERSON	CHIEF	
189	MGHAMBA	ANNA LUKIO	Tanzania High Commission
190	MICHAEL	ADEYEMI	
191	MIKA	HANNATU	DTCA
192	MISBAHU	YUNUSA	GISDAAD
193	MODU	ALHAJI	Yobe State Government.
194	MOHAMMAD	ADAMOU ABUBAKAR	MHC
195	MOHAMOUD	AWIL, Dr.	African Diaspora Policy Centre (ADPC), The Netherlands.
196	MORDI	GENEVIEVE, Dr.	Delta State Government
197	MOUKTAR	IBRAHIM	DTCA
198	MU'AZU	JAJI SAMBO	FMT
199	MUHAMMAD	SANTURAKI	Qatar Nigeria Business Council
200	MUHAMMAD	AMIR A.	Private Sector
201	MUHAMMAD	AHMAD GABDO	DTCA

202	MUHAMMAD	RAHMAT	Tipple-E Consulting Partners
203	NELSON	KAFIKIM	Angola Embassy
204	NIMA	TAMADDON	
205	NJERESE	ISABELLA	Mercy Corp
206	NKANGA	G. CONNY	Botswana High Commission
207	NNACHI	MICHEAL AMA, Sen. Ph.D.	National Assembly
208	NNAJI	BART, Prof.	Geometric Power Limited
209	NNAWEGBO	ALOY	London
210	NNAWENGO	ALOYSIOUS	
211	NUGRAHA	PUNJUL SETYA	Developing Eight Organizations for Economic Cooperation (D8).
212	NWANERI	IFY	African League Organization
213	NWANKWO	ERNEST	ECO.6
214	NWEMFURA	SANDRINE	OACPS
215	NWOSU	COLLINS EZEIRUAKU	International Trade Facilitation Association (ITFA)
216	NWOSU	VIOLET	NiDCOM
217	NYANTEKYI	ELIZABETH	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Ghana.
218	OBARO	STEPHEN, Prof.	University of Nebraska, Omaha, USA.
219	OBASEKOLA	BASHIR, Dr.	Nigerians in Diaspora Organization, Europe (NIDOE)
220	OBIEKEZIE	HELEN	NASRDA
221	OBIENU	TOBECHUKWU	NiDCOM
222	OBISESAN	TIMILEYIN	WEMA Bank
223	OBUTE	JENNIFER	World Trade Centre
224	OCHUODHO	SHEM, Dr.	Kenya Diaspora Alliance
225	ODU	GABRIEL	NiDCOM
226	ODUSOTE	IBUKUN	Pearls Learning Hub
227	OHUAKANWA	JUDE	Development Measures
228	OJEME	TOPE, Dr.	Master of Ceremony
229	OJO	BIDEMI	Pearls Learning Hub
230	OJOGBANE	JOANA	Hazina Bespoke Treasure Stores
231	OKAFOR	ASIKARALU	Village Farmers Initiative
232	OKE	ADEKAYODE TOPE	Private Sector
233	OKE	TESTIMONY ONAJITE	NiDCOM
234	OKEAGU	OBINNA	DTCA
235	OKEYIM	MATTHEW, Dr.	Cross Rivers SDFPO
236	OKOCHA	SAM	NIMC
237	OKONKWO	UBA	
238	OKORIE	OBIOHA	NiDCOM
239	OKORO	CLEMENTINA EBRE	
240	OLADAPO	GREATNESS	African Centre for Global Entrepreneurial Leadership (ACGEL)
241	OLALERE	YOMI	

242	OLANGWA	EZEKWU BAR.	SPA Enugu
243	OLANREWaju	MUDASIRU QUADRI	
244	OLATUNJI	ROTIMI	LASHMA
245	OLATUYI	JIDE	
246	OLISA	BOBBY DIGI-BAMIDELE, Hon.	NIDO New Jersey Chapter, USA
247	OLOGBEJE	BOYE, Hon.	RI-SDR
248	OLOWOLAYEMO	JOEL	Pearls Learning Hub
249	OLOWOSALE	DAYO	Daytop Multicultural Centre
250	OLOYE	OLUFUNKE	NiDCOM
251	OLUBODE	PHILIP	NiDCOM
252	OLUCHI	ROSEMARY	
253	OLUMIDE	SHOLA OGUNTADE	Acclaim Nig
254	OLUTOYE	DANIEL IBUKUN	DTCA
255	OLUYEMI	MINISOLA	WEMA Bank
256	OMIYE	CHARLES	RI-SDR
257	OMODAMWEN	OSASU	World Trade Centre
258	OMORAGBON	PETER, Pastor	
259	OMOSOLA	OLUFUNKE	NiDCOM
260	OMUSA	OHYOMA BABA	
261	ONI	RAPHAEL	
262	ONISAROTU	IBI FAUZIA D.	Private Staff
263	ONOJETA	THOMSON	DTCA
264	ONOWU	OBINNA, Amb.	Embassy of Nigeria, Brussels.
265	ONUORAH	CHRISTIANA	World Trade Centre
266	OSAMGBI	ISICHIE	NIMASA
267	OSEI-SARPONG	KWABENA	RIFE International, Maryland, USA
268	OSENI	EMMANUEL	DTCA
269	OSIBONA	LANRE, Dr.	Foresight Group
270	OSIGWE	AISHA	NIDO UKS
271	OUSMAN	SAUDA B.	MAE/C Niger
272	OYEDIJO	SEGUN, Aare	
273	OYEKAN	GBENGA	DTCA
274	PELSHAK	TROY	AGS-ATLAS ZEN
275	PENINNAH	RIDLEY	UNDP
276	POAGE	ELIZABETH	IOM
277	RACHEAL	NANBAL	ICJ
278	RAMADHANI	DITOPILE	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tanzania
279	SAID	HALIRU	
280	SALAU	FUNKE	WEMABOD
281	SALAU	IBRAHIM, Dr.	Zumumta, USA
282	SALLAH	MAIMUNA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Gambians Abroad
283	SALUM	JUMA ALI	Embassy of Tanzania
284	SANKARA	M. JEAN. B.	Foreign Affairs
285	SARFATU	ANDREW	

286	SARKI	LINUS	DTCA
287	SCOTT	JEANNINE B.	CFA/America to Africa Consulting LLC (A2A)
288	SEFIA	OKEOGHENEMARO THEODORE P.	DTCA
289	SESESLAW	HAMIET, H.E.	Ghana Rep. to EU
290	SHAKIR	QUADRI-ADU KEHINDE	Afro-Caribbean Chamber of Culture and Tourism
291	SHANE	RICE	Embassy of Ireland
292	SHOBANDE	IBRAHIM	NiDCOM
293	SHUAIBU	AHMAD HALIRU	DTCA
294	SHURONG	GENG	
295	SIAW-BOATENG	SENA, Amb.	Ghana Embassy, Brussels
296	SILAS	JOHN-UBONG	Integer Consulting
297	SIPIWE	GOGO-PETERS	Zambia High Commission
298	SOREMEKUN	OLUSEYI, Dr.	United Nations
299	SOUSA	JOSEPH JAMBA	OACPS
300	STANLEY	IKECHUKWU	
301	SULEIMAN	A. J., Dr.	
302	SULU	OLABISI	NiDCOM
303	TAIWO	BISIRIYU	FIRS
304	TAIWO	ADEKANYE	US Africa Trade Council
305	TOE BOUDA	FRANCELINE	Prime Minister
306	TOURAY	OMAR ALIEU, H.E, Dr.	ECOWAS Commission
307	TSUMBA	UKUME	NiDCOM
308	TUKUR	BASHIR BUHARI	DTCA
309	TUNGULU	N. MAVIS	Namibia HC
310	UCHECHI	OGBUCHI-DANIEL	NELS Daily
311	UDOBI	SIMON	FMFBMP
312	UDOLYAK	MICHEAL	MFA
313	UGHULU	MARCUS ODIANOSE	
314	UGOCHI	DANIELS	IOM
315	UKAONU	CALEB	NYSC
316	UMAR	ISA IBRAHIM	NiDCOM
317	URAMA	KELVIN C.	AfDB
318	USANGA	JOHN J.	Ambassador
319	USMAN	JAMILU	
320	WALSHAK	NANBAL JIM	Interconnected Justice, Jos
321	WALUSIMBI	ABBHEY, Amb.	Republic of Uganda (SPA - Diaspora Affairs)
322	WAYA	SUSAN NGUVEREN, Hon. Amb	Nigerians in Diaspora UK-South
323	WAYAMDI	BING J.	Classic Antidots Consultant
324	WILKS	LLOYD, Dr	Diaspora Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Jamaica
325	YAKIVU	PASCALINE, H. E.	Delta State Government
326	YOSASE	PRINCESS FAVOUR	Ready to Lead Africa
327	ZABSONRE	CLAUDE	Embassy of Burkina Faso

328	ZARINA	MOHAMAD ALI	High Commission of India
329		EMMANUELLA	Aso Savings and Loans PLC

INDEX OF NAMES