

THE AFRICA FUND

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IMPACTING A NEW AGE

STATE LEGISLATORS SEEK DEVELOPMENT AND DEMOCRACY



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Tennessee Representative Lois DeBerry, President of the National Black Caucus of State Legislators.

They came from California, Connecticut, New York and South Africa. Over 50 state legislators and representatives from key human rights and development organizations gathered in Washington, D.C., on Saturday, April 18 for 24 hours of intense discussion at The Africa Fund's National Consultation on U.S. Policy Toward Africa. The Africa Fund convened the meeting to explore ways to strengthen U.S. aid, trade and investment ties and support for human rights and democracy in Africa.

The Consultation was made possible by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York as part of the broader Africa Fund program to promote the involvement of state and municipal elected officials with U.S. Africa policy. Africa Fund staff worked closely with the National Black Caucus of Legislators, its President, Tennessee Representative Lois DeBerry, and International Affairs Committee Chair, Arkansas Representative Irma Hunter Brown, to plan a program, which included plenary sessions and two nuts-and-bolts workshops which enabled legislators to exchange ideas and information about their on-

going local initiatives. The National Consultation will be replicated in at least three regional forums in 1998.

Strengthening the bonds of friendship and understanding between the people of Africa and the United States was a recurring theme as participants designed strategies, prioritized themes and built an agenda to keep Africa in the forefront of American foreign policy.

While the expanding role of the U.S. in Africa and trade partnerships were key discussion items, delegates sought to temper the Clinton Administration's singular focus on trade with a shared commitment to development with equity coupled with a hope that democracy keeps pace with expanded economic activity.

AFRICA IN THE 21ST CENTURY

South Africa's Minister of Trade and Industry Alec Erwin set the upbeat tone of the Consultation in the first few minutes of the opening plenary. Although the image of Africa portrayed in the news media may not often reflect it,

Salih Booker, Senior Fellow, Africa Studies Program, Council on Foreign Relations, and Africa Fund Trustee.

there is a new economic reality in Africa, he told participants. A former trade unionist and anti-apartheid activist, Erwin depicted a southern Africa that is leading the continent's economic revival, reminding participants that Africa is a continent of "massive wealth" and opportunity.

Stressing the importance of his country's development to the entire region, Erwin added, "South Africa cannot be healthy unless our neighbors grow. We will build and build and not come begging to anyone. Soon the world will come to us."

South Africa's transition to democracy is one of the decade's most dramatic developments. This development offers hope not only to the rest of the continent of Africa, but to all nations on their maiden voyage to democratic rule.

Pointing out that the dismantling of apartheid opened South Africa's economy to the world and catalyzed the onset of an African renaissance, Erwin stressed that as we delight in Africa's tremendous economic potential, we must be ever steadfast in our dedication
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Wisconsin Representative Spencer Coggs.

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South African Minister of Trade and Industry Alec Erwin with Arkansas Representative Irma Hunter Brown.

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South African Ambassador Franklin Sonn welcoming Massachusetts State Senator Mark Montigny at a reception at his home.

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Andrea Johnson of the Carnegie Corporation of New York with Africa Fund Chair Tilden LeMelle.

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Texas Representative Helen Giddings.

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to equalizing opportunity and meeting the basic needs of all peoples.

Thelma Awori, Deputy Assistant Administrator of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in its Bureau for Policy and Program Support struck similar themes as she looked at the challenges ahead. By 1999 one third of the world's poor will be in Africa, she said. That is a grim reality, but she went on to stress the many initiatives, often at the grassroots level, now emerging in Africa. U.S. policymakers must be certain that the economic growth and development they urge must go beyond narrow elites to improve many lives.

SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT

Two plenary sessions, *Aid, Trade and Investment — Getting the Mix Right* and *Promoting Constructive Trade and Investment*, provided formal time for input, analysis and discussion on public and private U.S. economic policy and its impact on Africa. Longtime supporters of sanctions on South Africa were eager to discuss new strategies for positive economic engagement.

Carol Peasley, Acting Assistant Administrator for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) acknowledged that "a new generation has rejected the failed economic approaches of the past" and that such trends are altering the way the United States works in Africa. While "trade not aid" is a new slogan, Peasley stressed that "trade will not work alone" and "requires healthy and educated people who can participate in development." Several speakers and participants ex-

pressed concern at the constant Congressional attacks on assistance for Africa, and a consensus emerged on the importance of supporting White House efforts to preserve both the levels of funding and the special earmarking of such funds through preservation of the Development Fund for Africa.

Speakers reviewed the new mood and initiatives encouraging doing business in Africa. Corporate participants took advantage of opportunities for informal exchanges to share their positive experiences and express their support of the African Growth and Opportunity Act, championed by Congressman Charles Rangel and analyzed for legislators by Rosa Whitaker, Rangel's chief aid on African development. The bill would stimulate increased trade by opening U.S. markets to African goods and support U.S. investment in Africa.

Trying to balance the need to create American jobs and expand trade and economic cooperation with Africa generated lively discussions about how we pursue the parallel goals of business development and freedom. Massachusetts Senator Mark Montigny cautioned, "Friends of commerce cannot be our partners if they are the enemies of justice."

Whether in the hallways or exchanging ideas in the sessions, policymakers spoke of the tensions between fostering black-led free-market governments and meeting the needs of citizens whose only dreams may be for food and shelter. Michigan Senator Virgil Smith reminded fellow legislators that "the empowerment of African women who face multiple barriers to human rights and economic well-being" is central to Africa's future.

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Congresswoman Maxine Waters, Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, with Dumisani Kumalo, Director of U.S. Relations for South Africa; Africa Fund Chair Tilden LeMelle; and Africa Fund Executive Director Jennifer Davis.



Michigan Senator Virgil Clark Smith listens to California Senator Diane Watson.

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Growing public and government interest in trade and investment in Africa is reflected at the state and municipal level. Legislators talked about their own initiatives, including encouraging trade missions, opening African trade offices and encouraging exchanges, but also stressed the need for strategies that result in humane and just trade agreements. Connecticut Representative Reginald Beamon urged a more active participation in U.S. policy toward Africa, noting that, "Four years ago international trade was only a State Department issue. Now, with investment portfolios and pension funds, state governments are involved in trade policy."

During two hands-on sessions, legislators emphatically agreed with Senator Smith's assertion that "while the critical forces for change come from within every country, they need our help and support." Texas Representative Helen Giddings, who has led several trade missions to South Africa, described 1998 plans to bring 100 African business and NGO representatives to Dallas. Oregon Senator Avel Gordly described her efforts for the opening of a trade office in Africa. California Senator Diane Watson and many others contributed descriptions of a wide range of ongoing projects.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND U.S. POLICY

Congresswoman Maxine Waters, Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, sparked lively debate following her stirring message, which challenged the United States to redefine its relationship with the world. Assessing U.S. policy toward Africa, Waters told the legislators that it is time for the

VIEWPOINT

The following excerpt from Salih Booker's comments at the National Consultation examines the role of aid in stabilizing democracy in Africa. Booker is Senior Fellow of the Africa Studies Program at the Council on Foreign Relations and a Trustee of The Africa Fund.

"USAID does not have enough resources to do the job they would like to do. Currently they are operating with a \$670 million budget. It was never more than \$1 billion for all of Sub-Saharan Africa, which is not much for 54 countries. If the U.S. had a commitment along the lines and scale of the Marshall Plan, USAID professionals could have a wider vision. These are committed people working in a very limiting political framework. Let's look at this framework.

"Aid is not charity — that is emergency assistance, in the same way as responding to floods is in the United States. Critics point out that aid is a form of market penetration, used to oblige countries to purchase U.S. goods and services. The challenge is for African countries to negotiate arrangements where both sides' interests are served. During the Cold War, aid was a political instrument — a way to buy the allegiance of governments, many corrupt ones. Most aid went to Somalia, Zaire, Liberia, Sudan, Kenya — the very countries that are now most traumatized.

"This political framework can be changed by the people in this room; we have a responsibility to make clear that U.S. people support a different kind of engagement, one that allows the professionals to do the job properly.

"Aid is investment: it creates conditions for other types of economic activity. It

allows countries to address basic conditions of poverty and economic underdevelopment. In this way it is comparable to the allocations to poor African-American and Latino communities in the state budgets in the United States. Aid to Africa is considered social welfare, giveaway to poor black people. The U.S. Congress says cut assistance; let them stand up on their own. Cuts to foreign aid are the same as welfare reform, which provides no resources, no jobs. We are facing a cruel situation domestically and internationally; it is all part of the same struggle, the same issues.

"Trade and investment: not aid versus trade. All of these are normal activities of U.S. and local communities and businesses — all aimed to raise standards of living, here and in Africa.

"The U.S. needs to bring capital to Africa as it does to its own states — to repair roads and expand health services. The issue is what kind of investment takes attention. People feel intimidated by Africa, but again, its struggles are so similar. African Americans want to identify with Africa, but we never learn anything about it except negative images from television. We lack the vehicles, political or economic or educational, to act on identification as African Americans. Again, here too we are told we are doing well, but what do we see? The assault on social welfare, education, health and our communities devalued — black life portrayed in negative ways.

"U.S. foreign policy is always defined as promoting national interests. But what is this? It is whatever the people who participate in defining it decide it should be. If we in this room do not start defining what it is, those who don't care will keep saying we have no national interest in Africa." ■

IMPACTING A NEW AGE (continued from page 3)



Karen Boykins-Towns of Pfizer, Inc. and New York Assemblyman Al Vann with Gugile Nkwinti, Speaker of the Legislature of the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa.



Oregon Senator Avel Gordly with Alabama Representative Joseph Mitchell.

United States, and particularly African-American leaders, to break with African dictators such as Nigerian military ruler Sani Abacha and (former) President of Zaire Mobutu Sese Seko.

Nigerian government lobbyists, Waters noted, spend "tremendous amounts of money" buying support in the African-American community. "I am constantly contacted by African-American ministers, heads of organizations and business people" on Abacha's behalf. "We are allowing them to advance the wrong leaders — leaders not about democracy, leaders that are starving people, leaders that are killing people. The plight of the world's poor ranks at or near the top of the economic and national security issues we face internationally."

Lively discussion in the plenary session *Democracy and Human Rights in Africa* focused in part on ways to support the Nigerian democracy struggle. Key-note speaker and eminent human rights lawyer Gay MacDougall stressed the surge of human rights activity in Africa despite continued repression in many countries. "There is a growing human rights and governance movement. More and more countries are under democratic governance," she said, stressing the importance of the rule of law and the need to support civil society.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The engagement of elected officials outside of Washington is key to catalyzing constituencies for African issues, said Dumisani Kumalo, former Projects Director for The Africa Fund, linking the importance of old friends and the new circumstances in Africa. Now serving as Chief of the U.S. section of South Africa's Foreign Ministry, Kumalo paid

a moving tribute to those who had been part of the anti-apartheid struggle. "The ones who work with me in the night, I only thank them in the morning," he said. "There are many to be thanked for working with us throughout the night," he continued, and he urged the audience "please do not tire of us."

Building on this theme of continued friendships to meet the challenges ahead, Jennifer Davis, Executive Director of The Africa Fund, affirmed that "we were fortunate to have with us many of the state legislators who helped end U.S. support for apartheid South Africa. Now, we want to work in effective partnership with the new democracies in southern Africa, keeping faith with African people in countries like Nigeria who are struggling for democracy. To achieve these goals U.S. policy-making must itself become more inclusive and more democratic. With

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CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE

Background papers on issues of current interest are available to policy-makers and the general public. For a complete list of publications, please contact The Africa Fund. Titles include:

- *Mobil in Nigeria: Partner in Oppression*
- *Human Rights Activism in Africa: A Frog's Eye View*
- *Making a Difference in Africa: A Report on USAID Assistance to Africa*
- *A Report on The Africa Fund Delegation of Southern African Legislators to the United States*



Maryland Delegate Nancy Kopp.



Connecticut Representative Reginald Beaman.



Bill Moore of Enron Corporation.

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BUILDING THE LINKS

GUGILE NKWINTI MEETS WITH TWO GOVERNORS

Gugile Nkwinti, Speaker of South Africa's Eastern Cape Provincial Legislature, who came to the U.S. to represent South Africa's provincial legislators at the National Consultation, also traveled to Massachusetts and New Jersey to promote expanded ties between these states and the Eastern Cape. This is a period of unique opportunity for both the U.S. and Africa, as national and local governments seek business partnerships with local enterprises and expansion of African access to U.S. markets. Speaker Nkwinti was the special guest of New Jersey Governor Christine Todd Whitman at the Governor's Minority Business Conference. The Commission of New Jersey's Department of Commerce and Economic Development and prominent CEOs of New Jersey companies offered insights on the role of small and minority businesses in local job creation and building the skills capacity of the unskilled workforce.

Meeting with Nicholas Rostin, Director of the Massachusetts State Office for International Trade, brought attention to employing educational institutions in the Eastern Cape to replicate MIT, Harvard and other colleges' functions in promoting high technology investment to create employment hubs. Eastern Cape has five technical and academic universities which could serve as focal points for economic development. Massachusetts' formation of trade offices that serve as a "one-stop" shop for permits and other government approv-



Mike Fiechtner/Africa Fund

Gugile Nkwinti with Salim Aziz, Deputy Consul General of South Africa, and New Jersey Governor Christine Todd Whitman.

als presented a novel approach that sparked ideas about application of this technique in the Eastern Cape.

Massachusetts Lieutenant Governor Argeo Paul Cellucci, who has since become Governor, welcomed the Speaker to the state where he also spoke before the members of the Legislative Black Caucus and was hosted at a State House reception.

Massachusetts and the Eastern Cape Province have a formal sister state relationship signed by former Governor

William Weld and the Cape Premier. Speaker Nkwinti met with Massachusetts Senator Dianne Wilkerson, who was heading a trade delegation to the Eastern Cape to foster new business opportunities for small minority consulting and service companies. Senator Wilkerson reported on their return that Nkwinti's advice had proved invaluable, and that the delegation had benefitted greatly from the Speaker's introductions to key government, political and private sector leaders. ■

BUILDING SUPPORT FOR NIGERIAN DEMOCRACY

MAYORS SUPPORT HUMAN RIGHTS

In June, Africa Fund Executive Director Jennifer Davis saw the 1,000-member U.S. Conference of Mayors adopt a resolution calling for the swift restoration of human rights and democracy in Nigeria after she addressed the International Affairs Committee.

Mayors co-sponsoring the resolution included: Hon. Willie L. Brown, Jr. (San Francisco, CA); Hon. Shirley Dean (Berkeley, CA); Hon. Roosevelt Dorn (Inglewood, CA); Hon. Robert B. Ingram (Opa-Locka, FL); Hon. Thomas E. Jennings (Roswell, NM); Hon. Thomas Menino (Boston, MA); Hon. Marc Morial (New Orleans, LA); Hon. Norman B.

Rice (Seattle, WA); Hon. Sheila Doyle Russell (Cambridge, MA); and Hon. Wellington Webb (Denver, CO).

KUDIRAT ABIOLA CORNER

In October, the New York City Council voted to rename the street corner in front of the Nigerian Consulate in honor of Kudirat Abiola, the slain wife of Moshood Abiola, who was elected President of Nigeria in 1993 but has been imprisoned since 1994 by the military government of Sani Abacha. The idea of naming the corner after Mrs. Abiola was raised by The Africa Fund and a New York City-based Nigerian democracy group, the United Committee to Save Nigeria.

In September, Executive Director Jennifer Davis joined Hafsat Abiola, daughter of Kudirat and Moshood, Nobel Prize winning Nigerian playwright Wole Soyinka and former New York City Mayor David Dinkins in testifying in favor of the renaming before the international affairs committee of the New York City Council, chaired by Reverend Wendell Foster, a long time supporter of African freedom. Opposition orchestrated by the Nigerian Consulate led to a second hearing, where former U.S. Ambassador Walter Carrington told the Council he was convinced the military dictatorship was behind Kudirat Abiola's murder. The City Council voted 43-1 in favor of the renaming. ■

SUSIE M. JOHNSON APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF PROJECTS



Susie Johnson

Clark Jones/Impact Visuals

The Africa Fund has appointed Susie M. Johnson as its new Director of Projects. In her new position she will have overall responsibility for The Africa Fund's program to promote the involvement of state and local officials with U.S. policy toward Africa.

Johnson is the former Director of Small, Minority and Women's Business Development in the Office of the Bronx Borough President. She has worked for the Ms. Foundation for Women, American Express, Women's World Banking, the New York Mayor's Office of Economic Development and the California

State Legislature. She holds a B.A. in Political Science from Gettysburg College in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, an M.C.P. in City Planning from University of California at Berkeley and is currently pursuing post-Masters Studies in International Affairs at Columbia University.

Johnson replaces Dumisani Kumalo, The Africa Fund's longtime Projects Director, who is now Director of U.S. Relations in South Africa's Department of Foreign Affairs. ■

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this Consultation we have taken a step in that direction."

At a delightful reception hosted at the home of South African Ambassador and Mrs. Sonn at the end of the day for Consultation participants, several legislators, reviewing the discussions, commented that they felt revived, redirected and empowered to play a consequential role in the new age of African progress.

The Africa Fund thanks the Carnegie Corporation, Enron Corporation, Pfizer, Inc. and Xerox Corporation for their support of this event. ■

STATE LEGISLATORS SUPPORT AFRICAN DEBT RELIEF

In December, Susie Johnson attended the National Black Caucus of State Legislators annual meeting in Milwaukee. She addressed the International Affairs Committee on issues ranging from Nigeria to debt and development and reviewed the Clinton Administration's emerging Africa policy, describing the increasing focus on trade and investment and the decreasing emphasis on aid. Briefing materials on the aid issue and Nigerian human rights were distributed.

Prior to the meeting, The Africa Fund staff provided background materials to several state legislators on three resolutions that came before the Committee, one on debt relief for African countries, one on African development and U.S. aid, and the third on Nigeria. There was significant support for the first two and both were reported favorably out of the Committee and approved by the whole body. The Nigeria resolution was more controversial, with some legislators supporting stringent measures for democracy and others opposing on the grounds that Nigeria is no worse than China, and the U.S. has not imposed sanctions on China. ■

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