



AFRICA FORUM OF TEACHING REGULATORY AUTHORITIES
(Le Forum d' Afrique d'Enseigner Régulateur Autorités)
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COMMUNIQUE

**Of the 3rd Teaching and Learning in Africa Conference
held at the Mensvic Grand Hotel, East Legon, Accra, Ghana,
June 9-13, 2014
(GHANA 2014)**

THEME:

HOLISTIC EDUCATION FOR CONTEMPORARY AFRICA

1. PREAMBLE

Africa Forum of Teaching Regulatory Authorities (AFTRA) is an association of the Teaching Regulatory Authorities open to all African countries. AFTRA is also a subset of the world body of Teaching Councils, called the International Forum of Teaching Regulatory Authorities, IFTRA. (Please visit IFTRA's website: www.iftra.org)

The organisations that make up AFTRA and IFTRA are established by the statutes of the respective countries to regulate the teaching profession in the countries. The key aims of AFTRA and IFTRA are to promote professionalisation of teaching globally, set international standards for the profession and facilitate co-operation among member nations for the benefit of the education systems and teachers of the various countries.

2. OPENING CEREMONY

The Conference was officially declared open by the Minister of Education, Republic of Ghana Professor Jane Naana Opoku-Agyemang, represented by the Deputy Minister of Education (Pre-Tertiary), Hon. Alex Kyeremeh (MP). The Opening ceremony was chaired by the AFTRA President and Chief Executive of the South African Council for Educators, Mr Rej Brijraj. The AFTRA Secretary General and Chief Executive of the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria, Professor Addison Mark Wokocha, members of the AFTRA Executive Board and other dignitaries also took part in the Opening Ceremony.

In his welcome address, the host and Executive Secretary of the Ghana National Teaching Council,

Dr Augustine Tawiah, expressed the joy of his Council for being given the opportunity to host the AFTRA 3rd International Conference and 5th Roundtable. He stated that his Council's commitment would be total and ensure that AFTRA moves unto higher grounds. The General Secretary of the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) and Vice President of the Education International, Ms. Irene Duncan-Adanusa, praised AFTRA for the impact it is making across the continent. She said the belief of GNAT in AFTRA motivated it to invite AFTRA to host the 2014 events in Ghana and that GNAT was extremely happy to see the huge success of the events.

The AFTRA President, Mr Brijraj, stressed the implications of holistic education which was the theme of the conference. He called on all stakeholders to ensure that the education of the child in Africa takes cognisance of all aspects of the human being both cognitive, physical, skills and spiritual dimensions. He also said that Africa and its philosophy of education must be at the centre of curriculum reform and education development agenda. The Honourable Minister of Education, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Chief Barrister Ezenwo Nyesom Wike also sent a goodwill message read on his behalf by the TRCN Registrar/Chief Executive, Professor Addison Mark Wokocha. The Minister stated that Nigeria was proud hosting the Headquarters of AFTRA and will work with other frontline countries which are currently leading AFTRA, particularly South Africa, Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda to ensure that AFTRA attains its noble goals in the African continent.

Declaring the conference open, the Minister of Education, Republic of Ghana stressed that teacher welfare and high quality education remain priorities. He promised co-operation with AFTRA to build a continental network that could impact positively on education in Africa. He urged African countries to take the opportunity presented by AFTRA to come together to promote synergy and best practices and to collectively raise the status and competitiveness of African teachers.

The Opening ceremony also featured Ghana's rich culture displayed by the Ghana National Troupe. The conference participants came from several countries which included Ghana, Nigeria, Botswana, Cameroon, Togo, Tanzania, Namibia, Kenya, Japan, United Kingdom, Uganda, Angola, South Africa and Rwanda. In attendance also were AFTRA partners - Teacher Education in Sub Saharan Africa (TESSA); The Open University, United Kingdom; University of Cape Coast; University of Education, Winneba; Ghana National Association of Teachers and UNESCO. During the conference, papers were presented and discussed.

3. PAPER PRESENTATION

There were four key speakers at the conference who addressed various aspects of the conference theme. The speakers and their topics were as follows:

- Rej Briraj – The professionalization of teaching in Africa and relevance of Africa in the global body of teaching councils, IFTRA;
- Professor Addison Mark Wokocha – Safety in Nigerian schools: Issues and strategies;
- Dr Steve Nwokeocha – Reflections on the concept and implications of holistic education for contemporary Africa; and
- Professor Nuhu Yaqub – Ethical issues in the teaching and learning processes.

Over fifty other scholars, among them Professors and renowned experts presented theoretical and well researched papers that covered the subthemes of the conference.

4. EMERGING ISSUES FROM THE PRESENTATIONS

- i. Africa remains a continent of infinite opportunities with immense natural and human resources capable of being as competitive as any other continent but for armed conflicts, diseases, hunger, poverty and illiteracy;
- ii. There is increasing insecurity in African countries which today affects schools and schooling adversely;
- iii. The future is not secure because of diminishing African values and threats to life in school;
- iv. The Millennium Development Goals are at the end of tenure yet leaves much to be achieved by African countries;
- v. There is continuous downward trend in ethics as far as the teaching profession and society as a whole are concerned such that education systems seem to witness increasing conflicts rather than resolving them;
- vi. Globalisation increases competition and individualism leading to selfishness and tends to go against African values; and
- vii. The above notwithstanding, education remains the most powerful weapon and a potent tool for transformation and re-engineering citizens for a “New Africa”.

5. RESOLUTIONS

It was therefore resolved that:

- i. Holistic education which goes beyond science or arts education in the classroom but which has more emphasis on the affective domain and is responsible for producing individuals capable of dealing with life as a whole be given prominence and be embraced as a solution to contemporary problems in Africa.
- ii. African countries should ensure that globalisation does not erase the ‘*Africanness*’ in them. A typical African is known to love peace, respect, honesty, discipline, community living, hard work and above all be his brother’s keeper.
- iii. Governments in all African countries must rise to the challenge of diminishing access to school because of insurgency. They must close ranks and fight the abduction, massacre and intimidation of school children and teachers. Education should be given its pride of place.
- iv. In supporting the African Union as a catalyst for holistic education, there should be vigilance, cooperation and partnership among countries within Africa. Teachers should be empowered and supervised to be committed to work as a means of achieving professional goals.

6. CONCLUSION

The conference rose with the hope that sufficient enlightenment has been given to the appropriate authorities on the state of the art of teaching and learning in Africa. The resolve of all and the participants are to trace a new Road Map through holistic education towards functional teaching and learning in Africa. The conference commended efforts of AFTRA towards the professionalization of teaching in Africa

and charting of a new course in teaching and learning in the continent. The conference further commended the host country, Ghana, especially the host (Ghana National Teaching Council) and other partners of the conference (Ghana Education Service, Ghana National Association of Teachers, the University of Cape Coast, and the University of Education, Winneba,) for bringing the AFTRA events to Ghana and making the events memorable.



Rej Brijraj
AFTRA President
& Chief Executive
South Africa Council for Educators



Prof Addison Mark Wokocha
AFTRA Secretary
& Registrar/Chief Executive
Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria

For more information on AFTRA, please log on to:
www.trcn.gov.ng/aftra; www.sace.org.za; www.tsc.go.ke.