

COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE 4TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 6TH GENERAL MEETING OF ASSOCIATION OF WEST AFRICA UNIVERSITIES (AWAU) HELD AT UNIVERSITE FELIX HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY, ABIDJAN, COTE D'IVOIRE, 2ND – 6TH OCTOBER 2016

1.0 PREAMBLE

The 4th Conference & general meeting of the Association of West African Universities was held at Universite Felix Houphouet-Boigny (UFHB), Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire from 2nd - 6th October 2016 with the theme: "West African Universities as a Catalyst for Regional Development".

The conference attracted participants from eight (8) countries namely, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo. Goodwill messages were delivered at the opening ceremony by Representative of the Honourable Minister of Higher Education and Research Cote d'Ivoire, the ECOWAS Commissioner of Education Science & Technology, the Secretary General of Association of African Universities (AAU), Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'enseignement Superieur (CAMES), the National Universities Commission (NUC, Nigeria), and the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund, Nigeria).

The keynote address was delivered by Prof. Aidara Daouda, President, Academy of Sciences, Cote d'Ivoire, while Prof. Hamidou Boly, the ECOWAS Commissioner for Education, Science and Culture was the Special Guest of Honour.

The Honourable Minister of Higher Education and Research, Cote d'Ivoire, Prof. Ly Ramata Bakayoko and the President of Universite Felix Houphouet Boigny were present on the second day of the conference and both made some remarks.

Papers presented addressed issues of Financial Governance, University Administrative Governance, Communicating Research Results, Streamlining University Research and Output, Restructuring of Scientific Research for National Development and Role of Internet Services in Universities.

2.0 OBSERVATIONS

1. The role of Universities is indispensable as a catalyst for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in West Africa.
2. Good governance is a key to management of Universities.

3. Underfunding of Universities Education (low budgetary appropriation) by various government (West African Region).
4. Research activities are largely focused on promotion and academic purposes.
5. Lack of synergy between research output and national development.
6. Weak linkages between research output in the Universities and industry.
7. Weak multi-disciplinary collaborations among researchers in the West African sub-region.
8. The West African sub-region has only fourteen (14) Universities in the top 100 Africa Universities ranking by 2015 (4icu).
9. No coherent policy on research in many West African Universities.
10. The role of TETFund (Nigeria) and GETFund (Ghana) in supplementing Universities funding was highlighted.
11. Lack of fast and reliable internet services in West African Universities.
12. Inadequate information coordination and synergy among West African Universities.

3.0 RESOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. West African Universities are encouraged to play an active role in the attainment of the SDGs.
2. West African governments should adequately fund University education.
3. Universities should seek for other sources of funding such as Alumni, Philanthropy, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Donor agencies...
4. Regional integration (Research, staff and students exchange, teaching/learning) among West African Universities should be promoted.
5. Management of Universities across the West African region should be accountable, transparent and adhere to best global practices in University governance.
6. ECOWAS should encourage member countries to establish Special Intervention to supplement University education similar to TETFund (Nigeria) and GETFund (Ghana).

7. Universities in West Africa should collaborate with WACREN in ICT infrastructure and establishment of a formidable Internet Service Providers (ISP).
8. Research activities in West African Universities should be adequately funded and be industry-driven.

4.0 ELECTIONS

1. Prof. Abdulganiyu Ambali Chairman
Vice-Chancellor University of Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria.
2. Anglophone Prof. Ebenezer Oduro Owusu Vice Chairman I
Vice Chancellor University of Ghana, Leon Ghana.
3. Prof. Abou Karamoko Vice Chairman II
President Universite Felix Hophouet-Boigny. Abidjan. Cote d'Ivoire.
4. Prof. Habibou Abarachi. Vice chairman III
President University of Niamey. Niamey. Niger republic.
5. Prof. Musbau. A. Akanji. Treasurer
Vice Chancellor Federal University of Technology Minna, Nigeria.
6. Prof. Abdullahi Yusufu Ribadu Secretary General
Vice Chancellor Sule Lamido University Kafin Hausa, Jigawa State Nigeria.

5.0 APPRECIATION

The conference expressed its appreciation and gratitude to the Government and the people La Cote d'Ivoire, especially the Minister of Higher Education and Research, Prof. Ly Ramata Bakayoko, management and Staff of UFHB for hosting the event and the warm reception extended to the participants. The Conference also extended special gratitude to the co-sponsors which included; National Universities Commission (NUC) Nigeria, Committee of Vice-Chancellor (CVC) Nigeria, University of Ilorin, Nigeria and Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), Nigeria. Gratitude was also extended to the International and Local Organising Committees and all participants.

6.0 COMMUNIQUE COMMITTEE

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|-------------------------|---|-----------------|
| 1. Prof. A.Y. Ribadu | - | Chairman |
| 2. Prof. O. A. Omotesho | - | Member |
| 3. Dr. A. Z. P. Kuupole | - | Member |
| 4. Prof. M. O. Ibrahim | - | Secretary |
| 5. Umar Imam | - | Co-opted Member |

Signed:

Prof. Abdullahi Yusufu Ribadu, FCVSN
Vice-Chancellor, Sule Lamido University, Kafin Hausa
& **Secretary-General, AWAU**