



First Pan African International Research Congress on Knowledge Generation and Dissemination (PAIRC 2018) **NEWSLETTER** 18 JUNE '18

First Pan African International Research Congress: Harnessing Research Output for Sustainable Development



Kenya, Kisumu - Hosted by Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, the First Pan African International Research Congress on Knowledge Generation and Dissemination (PAIRC 2018) Kick started with the Vice-Chancellors round table discussion.





Foreword

As the Chairperson of the Congress Oversight Committee, I am grateful to note that the First Pan African Congress which was conceptualized in 2016 has become a reality. There had been intensive planning sessions and I would like to express my profound gratitude to all members of the Organising Committee for their commitment to ensure that we have a successful Congress.

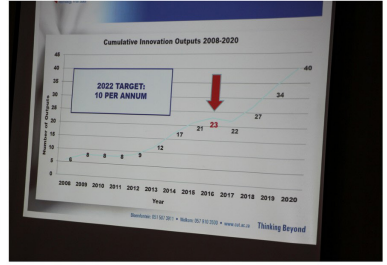
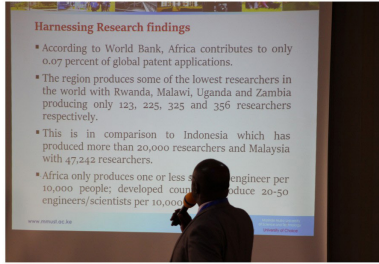
The decision to have an International Research Congress in Africa was hatched by five Vice-Chancellors during the 2nd UNIVEN – WSU International Research Conference held at The Ranch Hotel in Polokwane, South Africa on the 5th – 7th October 2016. The five Vice-Chancellors from the collaborating universities include:

- Vice-Chancellor, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST) – Professor Eng. Fredrick A. O. Otieno;
- Vice-Chancellor and Principal (Acting), University of Venda (UNIVEN)– Professor Jan Crafford (then Professor Peter Mbatj);
- Vice-Chancellor, Walter Sisulu University (WSU) – Professor Rob Midgley;
- Vice-Chancellor, University of Ibadan (UI) – Professor Abel I Olayinka; and
- Vice-Chancellor, Botswana International University of Science and Technology (BIUST) – Professor Otlogetswe Totolo.

During the deliberations, it was agreed that the five institutions have a rotational hosting of major activities. In my capacity as the Vice-Chancellor of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, in the spirit of Pan Africanism, I willingly offered to play host to the first congress. This maiden International Research Congress takes place from 18-22 June 2018 at the Grand Royal Swiss Hotel in Kisumu, Kenya.

The Organising Committee is excited to see a mammoth gathering of scholars drawn from all types of disciplines under the theme “Harnessing Research Output for Sustainable Development” to address challenges affecting Africa. I am optimistic that this maiden Congress and future Conferences should give Africa a strategy for sustainable development.

Prof Eng. Frederick A. O. Otieno
Chairperson of the Congress Oversight Committee



PAIRC - Harnessing Research Output for Sustainable Development

African universities have an obligation to disseminate any information which can benefit the society and this includes findings from research they conduct

Kenya, Kisumu- Hosted by Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, the First Pan African International Research Congress on Knowledge Generation and Dissemination (PAIRC 2018) Kick started with a round table session by Vice-Chancellors, academics and representatives from various African Universities. The Vice-Chancellors round table session took place on Monday, 18 June 2018 at Grand Royal Swiss Hotel in Kisumu, Kenya under the theme 'Harnessing Research Output for Sustainable Development'. This round table discussion considered critical issues relating to challenges faced by African researchers and institutions of higher learning.

The focus of the presentations and discussions were on collaboration and networking of

African universities to promote and share knowledge emerging from the scientific research and how it can influence development in Africa in line with the Millennium Development Goals. Besides the Vice-Chancellors, other participants in the symposium included deputy vice-chancellors, professors, deans and directors from the partner universities. Other participants included research and development institutions. These institutions shared their work and role in the promotion of research and knowledge dissemination within the development framework agenda for Africa.



Photo Above: Prof Eng. Frederick Otieno, Vice-Chancellor of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST)

Prof Eng. Frederick Otieno, Vice-Chancellor of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST) highlighted that, research outputs should be aligned to Millennium Development Goals. One of the reasons cited by academics in limited research activities is the burden of combining teaching as



Photo Above: Professor Mbatlana, Deputy Pro Vice Chancellor Academics and Quality, Botho University in Botswana

a core function and research. He advised academics to never cease to learn. Prof Eng. Otieno further said African universities have an obligation to disseminate any information which can benefit the society and this includes findings from research they conduct. However, he continued to raise some of the factors restraining research outputs such as lack of adequate budgets for research and equipment.



Photo Above: Dr Elphinah Cishe, Acting Director of the Directorate of Research Development at Walter Sisulu University

Dr Elphinah Cishe, Acting Director of the Directorate of Research Development at Walter Sisulu University, on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor of Walter Sisulu University, Prof Rob Midgely described the three types of South African Universities and their mandates. She continued to speak about the collaboration of the five African Universities and how it started which is traced back in 2016 during the UNIVEN-Walter Sisulu second International Research conference which took place in Polokwane, South Africa. Dr Cishe highlighted the importance of the collaboration of the five universities in research. She also alluded the fact that South African universities are ranked according to research output. In respect of how universities can harness research, she highlighted that it is important for research to inform policies and contribute towards development. "As a result, universities should

ensure that research findings are communicated with the affected communities." She reiterated that this collaboration of the five universities should influence development in the continent.



Photo Above: UNIVEN Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic, Senior Prof Base Khoza

Addressing the delegates, the Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic, Senior Prof Base Khoza on behalf of Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Venda Prof Jan Crafford said that harnessing becomes too complex to answer

the how part. However, she said that institutions should go back and determine as to how they could harness research. She further shared the importance of incentives in research in order to boost the morale of the researchers. The University of Venda introduced the Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Awards to reward the best performing researchers which also led to the increase of the research output. In order to achieve student throughput, Masters and PhD students were encouraged to complete their studies within stipulated time. She acknowledged that the experiences and challenges presented during the Vice-Chancellors' round table session are universal. She also shared with the delegates the increase of

graduation throughput wherein in 2017 alone Univen graduated 39 PhD candidates.



Photo Above: Deputy Vice-Chancellor of MMUST and Vice-Chancellors' session Chairperson, Professor William Shivoga

The Vice-Chancellors' session chairperson, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of MMUST, Professor William Shivoga acknowledged the presence of the former Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Venda, Prof Peter Mbatlana who was instrumental when the First Pan African Congress was conceptualized in 2016. Professor Mbatlana is now the Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor Academics and Quality, at Botho University in Botswana.

There were presentations from other African institutions which confirmed that African institutions share common research challenges.



Partnering Institutions



Kenya



University of Venda
Creating Future Leaders

South Africa



South Africa



Botswana



University of Ibadan
NIGERIA'S PREMIER UNIVERSITY

Nigeria

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www.mmust.ac.ke/congress/
www.univen.ac.za/pairc/

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Sharing of Experiences from other institutions

**Busitema University, Uganda,
Prof. Okwakol, Vice-Chancellor**



The Vice-Chancellor of Busitema University in Uganda said that the University comprise of six campuses specializing in different areas which include engineering, agriculture, management sciences, environment, education. Although the focus is on Science, Technology and Innovation, the University's flagship programmes are aligned to government agenda as well as Sustainable Development Goals and African Union Vision 2063. These programmes are relevant to Uganda and the continent.

The University focuses on top imports e.g. automobile, pharmaceuticals, textiles, mobile phones, computers. This is because Africa exports raw materials like petroleum, while the United States and China export finished products. This has resulted in trade imbalance. The research, development and innovation are the solution to this situation. The Vice-Chancellor acknowledged that global research output is still the lowest although South Africa leads in Africa. The production of PhD graduates is very low in Africa. Africa produces less than 1% of global patents, which are a necessity for development. Africa should therefore focus on relevant doctoral programmes for Sustainable Development Goals. The importance of creation of joint programmes, synergies in Research and Development, and increased funding by the government as well as improved infrastructure and staff working conditions was reiterated.



University of Nairobi, Kenya, Prof. Madara Ogot, Representing the Vice-Chancellor

The representative of the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Nairobi, Kenya shared with the audience the importance of making contribution to national development by academic researchers in Africa. Prof Ogot acknowledged low demand for scientific research in industry and the fact that usable knowledge for economic development is not adequate. Therefore, public policy should interlink with research. Prof Ogot highlighted that several universities have increased without evidence for increase in research outputs.

In his address he noted that there is little funding to some key areas of research, yet this directly relates to Gross Domestic Product. Participants were urged to develop research networks at different levels, from research themes, making them multi-disciplinary by borrowing from policies such as Sustainable Development Goals. He called on University Vice-Chancellors to improve on staff training, grant proposal and research publication writing, student supervision, publication and research plans. The participants noted the importance of ensuring that science and technology park run independent of universities to allow private sector, local and international companies to easily collaborate. The MoUs should be based on active projects and not mere signed documents between Vice-Chancellors.

Botho University, Botswana, Prof. Peter Mbatlana, Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor: Academics and Quality



The Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor of Botho University in Botswana, Prof Peter Mbatlana shared with the audience the University's endeavor to create an entrepreneurial University and the critical role that Botho University plays to expose students to industry. Through this initiative, the University prides itself in ensuring that their students are employable and viable.

Central University of Technology, South Africa, Prof. Muthoni Masinde Representing the Vice-Chancellor



The Central University of Technology in South Africa is industry-focused, research in approach. The University produces robots and artificial limbs/appendages. Prof Masinde also shared with the audience that the University has invented drought prediction tool that incorporates traditional knowledge. It was also interesting to note that the University has aligned research to Sustainable Development Goals and connect to world economic challenges (world economic forum).



**Laikipia University, Kenya,
Prof. Joseph Rotich,
Vice-Chancellor**

The Vice-Chancellor of Laikipia University stated the importance of focusing on national resources and food Security as part of Kenya's Presidential Big 4 Agenda. Also, of critical importance is the Sports Science, as the location's climate is suitable for athletes.



**Kibabii University,
Kenya, Prof. Isaac Ipara
Odeo Vice-Chancellor**

The Kibabii University mainly focus on Computer science and acquired equipment for a forensic laboratory as well as climate change and environmental degradation.

**Ball State University,
USA, Prof. Winnie
Muchera**



Prof Winnie Muchera said that Ball State University has been working with Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology to enhance research through Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship Programme. The need to actualise quality research and innovation, which is contained in most mission statements was noted. There is also a need to ensure that research informs teaching and policy development. Institutions should therefore create time and conditions for professors to teach and do research. "Early Childhood Development is the foundation of any nation, and more research should be invested there," Prof Muchera observed. Prof Muchera informed the audience that Ball State University has been working with Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology to research on Sickle Cell Anaemia, to create awareness, and establish centre for diagnosis.

Morendat Institute of Oil and Gas (MIOG), Kenya Pipeline Company; Visiting Professor, University of Johannesburg, South Africa, Prof. Jane Catherine Ngila, Deputy Director, Training, Academic & Linkages

In her presentation, Prof Jane Catherine Ngila did not hesitate to highlight the great difficulty for experts in the diaspora to be absorbed back home. She mentioned the importance of developing a regional institute of petroleum research that would be housed by Kenya Pipeline Company. According to Prof Ngila, Morendat Institute of Oil and Gas has developed collaborations through MoUs with institutions like MMUST, Turkana University College (TUC-MMUST), Technical University of Kenya (TUK), National Industrial Training Authority (NITA) etc.



Kenya National Academy of Sciences, Prof. Ratemo Michieka, former Vice-Chancellor Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology

Prof Ratemo Michieka from Kenya National Academy of Sciences urged Vice-Chancellors present to help identify and grow niche areas and to venture into serious research and other productive activities. Vice-Chancellors and other senior academics present were further urged to develop serious specific programmes to address various challenges they commonly go through daily.