



**THE ANNUAL RONALD H. BROWN
AFRICAN AFFAIRS SERIES
SEPTEMBER 22ND – 29TH, 2008**

**‘CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES
AND STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING
UNITY AMONGST AFRICAN
PEOPLES THROUGHOUT THE
AFRICAN DIASPORA’**

FINAL REPORT

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AMBASSADOR OF THE AFRICAN UNION
TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

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U.S. CONGRESSWOMAN**

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AABE - American Association of Blacks in Energy

AAUC - African American Unity Caucus

ADHI - African Diaspora Health Initiative

AGOA - African Growth and Opportunities Act

AU - African Union

BPIA – Black Professionals in International Affairs

CBA – Congressional Black Association

CBC - Congressional Black Caucus

CFA - Constituency for Africa

DOE – United States Department of Energy

HBCUs - Historically Black Colleges and Universities

IMF – International Monetary Fund

MCC – Millennium Challenge Corporation

NGOs – Non-Governmental Organizations

PEPFAR - United States President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

RBS – Ronald Brown Scholars

RHB – Ronald H. Brown

SMMEs – Small Medium and Micro-Enterprises

USAID – United States Agency for International Development

**Introductory Remarks by Melvin P. Foote
President and CEO, Constituency for Africa**

Greetings,

I am extremely pleased to present the Final Report of the 2008 Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series that was held September 22-29, 2008 in Washington, D.C. The Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series is planned and organized by the Constituency for Africa (CFA) each year in conjunction with the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) Annual Legislative Conference. The purpose of the Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series is to: (1) educate, inform and engage the American public on critical challenges, issues and concerns facing Africa; (2) to help link Members of the Congressional Black Caucus and their staff to African challenges, issues and concerns; and (3) to promote a pro-active and sustainable U.S.-Africa foreign policy agenda.

This year, again the Constituency for Africa (CFA) partnered with the Washington Office of the African Union (AU) to organize and present the Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series. The 2008 RHB Series focused on how the African Diaspora can participate and support the African Union's Sixth Region initiative. Accordingly, this year's theme was "Challenges, Opportunities and Strategies for Building Unity Amongst African Peoples Throughout the African Diaspora". The Chairperson for the 2008 RHB Series was Ambassador Amina Salum Ali, the African Union's Permanent Representative to the United States.

In addition, the Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series, which was named after the late Commerce Secretary Ronald H. Brown, acknowledges the significant contributions made by this champion for forging U.S. ties with Africa. Ron Brown opened the doors of recognition on the importance of a U.S.-Africa relationship, highlighting trade and investment opportunities, travelling to Africa and supporting organizations seeking to educate, advocate and build strategic ties with Africa. Both Americans and Africans owe a deep debt of gratitude for his visionary efforts.

CFA is a 501(c)3 non-partisan organization and its Board of Directors reflects some of the most respected voices on African affairs. For more than eighteen years, CFA has worked tirelessly to educate Americans about critical challenges affecting Africa, and to encourage a strong public and private partnership to address issues and concerns to the continent. The United States has a tremendous opportunity to strengthen U.S. partnership with Africa and CFA continues to urge the current Bush administration to build upon the substantive progress made over the past eight years in formulating and executing a robust U.S. foreign policy towards Africa.

In closing, on behalf of the members of the Board of Directors of the Constituency for Africa, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to CFA's strategic partners and sponsors in helping to make this year's Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series a tremendous success. We truly hope that our mission merits your continued support and financial assistance in years to come!

Background to the Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series

Having tirelessly dedicated his life to advocating the importance of Africa in the United States' foreign policy, it was only fitting that a special series focusing on African affairs be dedicated to the memory of **Ronald H Brown**. Accordingly, the Constituency for Africa (CFA), as a leading advocacy organization for Africa in the United States, created the **Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series**. The RHB Series has grown from strength to strength, having started as a one day event in 1996 to nineteen sessions spanning over eight days in 2008. The core aim of the RHB Series is to get **African-Americans and Africans in the Diaspora** talking about the most pressing political, economic, social and cultural issues and concerns affecting African development.

Themes and Objectives of the 2008 Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series

The overall theme for 2008 was '**Challenges, Opportunities and Strategies for Building Unity Amongst African Peoples Throughout the African Diaspora**'. Following the proposal of the African Union (AU) to include the Diaspora as its sixth region, the need for the Diaspora to intensify its understanding of the AU, its programmes and its institutional processes has become more urgent. Accordingly, the aim of the Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series was to build upon the ongoing efforts of the first AU Ambassador to the U.S., Her Excellency Amina Salum Ali, with the Diaspora while creating a forum for the Diaspora to mull its strategies for supporting the programmes of the AU and its sixth region initiative. The Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series was, however, not limited to the African Diaspora in the U.S. Delegates also represented the Diaspora in Canada and the Caribbean while Africans visiting the United States also took part. The RHB Series also cut across a diverse range of eighteen sub-themes.

THEME ONE

African American Unity Caucus Legacy Forum:
***“Challenges, Opportunities and Strategies for Building
Unity Amongst African Peoples Throughout the Diaspora”***

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Dr. Julius W. Garvey

Noted Pan-Africanist Speaker/Writer and Son of the Hon. Marcus Garvey

MODERATOR

Dr. Claire A. Nelson

Founder and President, Institute of Caribbean Studies (ICS)

The first session of the RHB Series was a breakfast meeting of the African American Unity Caucus (AAUC) which also included the attendance of African American and African students from twenty institutions of higher education across the U.S., who form part of the African Diaspora Next Generation Leadership Caucus. Dr. Julius Garvey over the years has achieved “legendary” status in the Caribbean community as a thought provoking speaker and writer on issues concerning African history and culture as well as the legacy of his father, the Honorable

Marcus Garvey in the United States, Canada and the Caribbean Islands. Dr. Garvey spoke passionately about the critical need for African-Americans and Africans in the Diaspora to embrace the cultural identity and values of their African ancestry.

The AAUC breakfast session also evaluated the historical and contemporary global conditions that necessitate unity among African peoples. To illustrate this need for unity, the ongoing challenges in Africa, Haiti and New Orleans were cited as examples of the inextricable political, economic and social plight of African peoples. Dr. Garvey stressed that upon establishing a sense of unity, African peoples should dedicate more effort towards supporting the African continent in its development efforts. A thought provoking and extensive questions and answers period followed Dr. Garvey's formal presentation, providing insight as to how the African American Unity Caucus might pursue a course of unity amongst the Diaspora in the United States in support of Africa and African development.

THEME TWO

African Diaspora “Next Generation” Leadership Luncheon: ***“The Role and Responsibility for Today’s Youth in Africa’s Future”***

GUEST SPEAKER

James M. Christian, Sr., Esq.
Principal, Christian and Associates

MODERATOR

Jeannine B. Scott
Senior Vice President, Africare

The objective of this luncheon session was to bring together African-American and African young professionals and students from various colleges and universities in order to dialogue on effective strategies for the next generation of leaders in the African Diaspora to participate in the economic and democratic development of Africa. Members of the AAUC have a strong commitment towards nurturing, counselling, training and mentoring young African American men and women who demonstrate a keen interest in African advocacy. Accordingly, the **AAUC’s Next Generation Initiative** was established to empower college and university students, as well as young professionals, by sharing the experiences and expertise of AAUC Members.

CFA’s partner at Howard University was the **Ralph J. Bunche International Affairs Center** and more than fifty students from various colleges and universities (i.e. – American University, Arizona State University, George Washington University, Georgetown University, Howard University, Maryland University, North Carolina A&T State University, Rutgers University, Temple University, and Winston Salem State University) participated in this year’s AAUC’s Next Generation Program.

During the session, these young leaders received advice from Attorney Christian’s speech while also using the platform to network among themselves. Valuable insights were shared on how the youth could gain competitive advantage in their chosen careers, tap into their advocacy spirit, and enhance their leadership skills. The ultimate goal of this initiative is to **‘Create a Constituency for Africa for the Next Generation’**. In closing, the following ideas were shared and discussed for further consideration by the AAUC Next Generation Committee:

- develop effective strategies to bridge the gap between next generation of leaders and existing Africa-focused non-governmental organizations by actively initiating advocacy programmes on the campuses of U.S. colleges and universities;
- seek out opportunities to build global African linkages at home (i.e. - town hall meetings, media outlets and internet resources);
- support efforts to actively influence policy on Capitol Hill and improve lobbying efforts across the United States;
- getting Black legislators to engage the African Union and its partnering institutions;
- engaging Black professional groups in the U.S. and linking them to those in Africa.

THEME THREE

Next Generation Leadership Roundtable: *“Empowering the Next Generation of Leaders in Africa”*

MODERATOR

David J. Saunders

Program Director, Constituency for Africa

PANELISTS

Kobina Aidoo

Freelance Film Documenter

Kevin Curry

Founder, African and American Diaspora Collaborative (AADC)

Eddie Burke

Public Affairs Team Member, British Embassy

Members of the AAUC Next Generation Committee have a strong commitment towards nurturing, counseling, training and mentoring young African American/African men and women who demonstrate a keen interest in African advocacy. Accordingly, the **AAUC’s Next Generation Initiative** was established to empower college and university students, as well as young professionals, by sharing the experiences and expertise of AAUC Members. During the session, these young leaders viewed a film documentary entitled **“The Neo African Americans: How Immigration from Africa and the Caribbean is Transforming the African American Narrative”**. After viewing the film a panel of speakers led the discussion on how people of African descent perceive themselves as a part of the African Diaspora. Kobina Aidoo spoke about his perception as an African in America; Kevin Curry spoke about his perception as an African-America; and Eddie Burke spoke about his perception as a Black European in America.

Interesting points of view ranged from the fact that most Africans grow up in an environment that is absent of racism whereas most African-Americans are still dealing with the vestiges of racism while most blacks in Europe come from a perspective focusing on class or wealth and not necessarily racism. The students spoke about the myriad of challenges that they face on their campuses as they seek to connect with the African ancestry. They also offered their viewpoints and insights about the impact of their generation on shaping U.S.-Africa foreign policy and their role and responsibility for Africa’s future. The main outcome of the session was to strongly recommend that this particular documentary film be utilized on their respective

college and university campuses as an **awareness and discussion tool towards facilitating a dialogue on how people truthfully perceive themselves as a part of the African Diaspora.**

THEME FOUR

African Diaspora “Next Generation” Leadership Reception:
“Building Relationships on U.S.-Africa Foreign Policy Agenda”

SPEAKERS:

Jeannine B. Scott

Sr. Vice President Africare and AAUC Coordinator

Adryan Wallace

Chairperson, AAUC Next Generation Committee

Angelique “Cindy” Mutombo

Executive Director, Black Professionals in International Affairs

Irene B. Schwoeffermann

President, Congressional Black Associates

This reception, co-hosted by the Constituency for Africa and the Congressional Black Associates (CBA), provided a networking opportunity on Capitol Hill for young professionals interested in international affairs to meet people working and studying policy initiatives that focus on Africa and the Diaspora. This session, attended by approximately one hundred individuals, was organized as a part of the AAUC Next Generation Initiative.

THEME FIVE

Institute for Caribbean Studies Forum:
“Discussion on the Exoneration Campaign”

SPEAKERS

Dr. Julius Garvey

Son of Marcus Garvey and Noted Pan-Africanist

H.E. Anthony Johnson

Ambassador of Jamaica

George Dalley

Chief of Staff, Office of Congressman Charles Rangel

The objective of this evening session was to bring together friends of the Caribbean community to discuss a congressional resolution **“expressing the sense of Congress to ask the President to grant a full pardon to Marcus Garvey”**. The discussion focused on the fact that Marcus Garvey, the Founder of the Universal Improvement Association: (a) was innocent of the charges made by the U.S. government and (b) that he should be recognized internationally as a leader and thinker in the struggle for human rights and dignity. This request calls upon the President of the United States to endeavour to restore Marcus Garvey’s name by granting him a full

posthumous pardon that proclaims to have been unjust and affirms his innocence. The **Institute of Caribbean Studies Embassy Evening Series** provides the opportunity for including young professionals to engage directly with experts on most pressing questions in current affairs.

THEME SIX

Ronald H. Brown Legacy Breakfast: ***“Tribute to the Legacy of Ron Brown”***

MISTRESSES OF CEREMONIES

Honourable Lauri J. Fitz-Pegado

Partner, The Livingston Group and Member of the CFA Board of Directors

Singleton B. McAllister, Esq.

Partner, LeClairRyan and Member of the CFA Board of Directors

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Hon. Rodney L. Slater, Esq.

Principal, PattonBoggs Law Firm and former Secretary of Transportation, Clinton Administration

RON BROWN SCHOLAR SPEAKERS:

Michael Mallory

President, Ron Brown Scholar Programme

Marco Ellis, MD

Ron Brown Scholar (1997), Northwestern University Medical Center

Ihotu Ali

Ron Brown Scholar (2007), Macalester College

Brennan Johnson

Ron Brown Scholar (2004), University of Iowa

Karla J. Hardy

Ron Brown Scholar (2001), University of Virginia Law School

Michael Brown, Esq.

President, Ron Brown Foundation and Member of the CFA Board of Directors

The objectives of this breakfast meeting was to bring together friends and associates of the late **Ronald H. Brown** from government, corporations and non-governmental organizations to **celebrate the ongoing positive impact of his legacy**. In 2008, this legacy was once again demonstrated through the work of the **Ron Brown Scholarship Program**. These scholarships are reserved for exceptional individuals who share Ron Brown’s traits of excellence, leadership, commitment to public service and a desire to make a difference. When asked about the **role of young people in a global society**, Ron Brown stated that “Politics, life and business are not spectator sports. You have to get involved to get ahead. Most importantly, when you reach that level of success, keep the door open and the ladder down for others to follow”.

The breakfast session was attended by more than one hundred and fifty people, including twenty-five undergraduate and graduate students from twenty U.S. colleges and universities. These students were provided with an opportunity to learn more about Ronald H. Brown and his impact on empowering African American youth to succeed in their academic and professional pursuits. To demonstrate this, four **Ronald H. Brown Scholars** spoke about the impact of Ron Brown's legacy in their lives and expressed their desire to engage many more of their colleagues in collaborations with the **AAUC Next Generation Committee Initiative**. While expressing appreciation for the ongoing honor bestowed on his father, Michael Brown urged the audience to not only focus on the message that Ronald H. Brown personified in his professional work. He recalled the strong family values and respect for human dignity that his father espoused in his private life and urged the Ron Brown Scholars and friends to keep that message alive.

THEME SEVEN

AAUC Next Generation Orientation at U.S. Peace Corps: “Introductory Review of U.S. Peace Corps Programs in Africa”

SPEAKERS

Henry McKoy

Director, Africa Region – U.S. Peace Corps

Rosie Mauk

Associate Director, Volunteer Recruitment Services

The U.S. Peace Corps provided an orientation of its programs on the African Continent. The students listened to the speaker's viewpoints and insights about the possibilities to have a meaningful impact by their generation on shaping U.S.-Africa foreign policy and their role and responsibility for Africa's future. The outcome of the orientation session was to receive information about how to prepare oneself (both academically and professionally) for a possible assignment in the U.S. Peace Corps as well as a potential career in the United States government with a particular focus on the Foreign Service or international development. It was further noted that **youth should not only limit their contribution to government but should help both public and private institutions of the United States to deal with Africa and the world respectfully.**

THEME EIGHT

Dr. Philip J. Rutledge Seminar on Africa: “Leadership and Governance in Africa” Developing High Performing Public Administrators to Manage Economic Growth and Social Prosperity”

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Dr. John-Mary Kauzya

Advisor of Governance Systems and Institutions, Public Economics and Public Administration, United Nations

PANELISTS

Dr. Blue Woolridge - Moderator

Professor, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond

Dr. Jeanne-Marie Col

Professor, John Jay College, New York

Dr. Berhanu Mengistu

Professor, Old Dominion University, Norfolk

Dr. Charles Washington

Dean and Professor (retired), Clark Atlanta University, Atlanta

The Africa Working Group is a sub-committee of the National Academy of Public Administration's Standing Panel on International Affairs. Established in 2001, under the leadership of the late **Dr. Philip J. Rutledge**, the working group's mission is to **enhance public administration in Africa through strategic collaboration with African partners**. The objective of the session was to feature a distinguished keynote speaker and panel composed of Academy Fellows, professors, and public administration specialists from state, national and international organizations. The Keynote Speaker was Dr. John-Mary Kauzya, Chief of Governance and Public Administration Branch, Public Administration and Development Management Divisions, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Dr. Kauzya spoke about his experiences with conducting senior management training in Africa. Next the panellists led an invigorating discussion on improving public administration and managerial capacity in Africa as well as provided their assessments and outcomes of selected programs to boost managerial capabilities among public administrators in African countries. A post-seminar reception was held in honor of Dr. Philip Rutledge.

THEME NINE

CFA African Diaspora Leadership Reception:

“Building on the Legacy of Competent African Leadership”

MISTRESS OF CEREMONIES

Dr. Gloria B. Herndon

President, GB Herndon and Associates

SPECIAL REMARKS

Dr. Julius C. Coles

President, Africare

Bernadette Paolo

President, The Africa Society

Melvin P. Foote

President & CEO, Constituency for Africa

CFA, in partnership with the **African Union** and **Africare**, sponsored this reception to celebrate successful political, economic and civil society leaders on the African Continent. The theme of this event was **“Building on the Legacy of Competent African Leadership”** and according

to Mel Foote, President and CEO of CFA, it was held **in recognition of Secretary Ron Brown's legacy that focused on political development, but more importantly the strategic relevance of trade and investment on the African Continent.** As the Secretary of Commerce, he made good on his belief in the importance of economic development and commercial ties by leading numerous trade missions to Africa including one to South Africa a few days after sanctions were lifted by the United States. He also opened a U.S. commercial centre in South Africa, now named after him; opened and expanded commercial offices in regional hubs throughout Africa; supported the passage of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA); rallied other U.S. government agencies around African issues; invited senior officials from those agencies to travel with him to Africa and to develop solutions to challenges in a co-operative manner. More than one hundred people attended this reception and the Constituency for Africa received a special proclamation from the **Office of the Mayor of the District of Columbia in recognition of its annual Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series.**

THEME TEN

Sanctuary of Moses Project Luncheon on Capitol Hill: *“Strategies for Addressing Issues of Child Labor in West Africa”*

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Dr. Ben K. Fred-Mensah

Assistant Professor, Department of Political Sciences, Howard University

OTHER SPEAKERS

Congresswoman Carrie P. Meeks (retired)

Honorary Board Chairperson, Sanctuary of Moses

Melvin P. Foote

President & CEO, Constituency for Africa

Len Morris

Filmmaker, Galen Films

Omar Arouna

Managing Director, Goodworks International, LLC

This Capitol Hill Luncheon was convened by the Miami, Florida based **Sanctuary of Moses** project in conjunction with the **Constituency for Africa.** The Sanctuary of Moses, a “faith-based project,” is an effort to address child labour and slavery issues through education and skills training. The Sanctuary of Moses has targeted Benin, West Africa for the construction of a comprehensive training and education project, which responds to children who have been victims of abuse and criminal labor practices. Representatives from scores of organizations, faith-based groups, institutions and companies as well as from various African Embassies, the U.S. government and from multi-lateral institutions, attended the luncheon, which was moderated by Carmen Morris, Founder of the Sanctuary of Moses Project. The luncheon provided thoughts and observations on what can be done to address the critical problem of child labor and slavery in West Africa with Dr. Ben K. Fred-Mensah who provided a white paper powerpoint presentation. In addition, there was an excerpt of the film “Rescuing Emmanuel” as well as a discussion of solutions to help vulnerable children in order to share lessons learned and recommendations which will be shared with stakeholders in the U.S. and in Africa.

THEME ELEVEN

African Education Strategy Roundtable: *“Developing a Coordinated African Strategy for Youth and Education”*

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Dr. Sarah E. Moten

Chief Education Division, Africa Bureau, USAID

Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala

Managing Director, The World Bank

PANEL ONE – NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Dr. Julie Sullivan - Moderator

President, International Foundation for Education and Self-Help

Vivian Lowery Derryck

Senior Vice President, Academy for Educational Development

Dr. Molly Roth

Executive Director, Opportunities Industrialization Centers, International

Jeanine B. Scott

Senior Vice President, Africare

PANEL TWO – DEVELOPMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Beldina Auma - Moderator

Chair, World Bank Group-IMF Africa Society

Jee Peng Tan

Education Advisor, African Region, The World Bank

Aleta Williams

Senior Education Advisor, Education Division, Africa Bureau, USAID

PANEL THREE – PRIVATE SECTOR

Walker Williams - Moderator

President, Leadership Africa USA

Terri O'Connor

Director of Global Government Affairs & Public Policy, Motorola Corporation

Tracey Duffet

Program Director, World Cocoa Foundation

Dr. S. Rangarajan

Sr. Vice President, Engineering Solutions, WorldSpace Corporation

This session was co-sponsored by the Constituency for Africa, Leadership Africa USA, the World Bank Group-IMF African Society, and the International Foundation for Education and

Self-Help (IFESH). It was comprised of two outstanding keynote speakers and three panels: (a) Multilateral Development Agencies, (b) Non-Governmental Organizations, and (c) Private Sector Organizations. Everyone spoke about their perspectives on the challenges and opportunities required to provide access to quality education throughout Africa. The conclusions and recommendations stemming from this educational session will form the basis of a report that will be shared with both Democratic and Republican Candidates for President in order to convey their recommendations for workable solutions and strategies to develop a comprehensive educational agenda on Africa.

THEME TWELVE

AAUC African Policy Briefing: ***“U.S.-Africa Policy Agenda and the Next Administration”***

MODERATOR

Ofield Dukes

President, Ofield Dukes and Associates

PRESENTERS

Republican Viewpoint - Dr. J. Peter Pham

Director of the Nelson Institute, James Madison University

Democratic Viewpoint - Dr. Witney Schneidman

Principal, Schneidman and Associates and former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for West Africa during the Clinton Administration

RESPONDENTS

Republican Response - Gregory Simpkins

Vice President, Leon H. Sullivan Foundation and former Professional Hill Staffer – Africa Sub-Committee

Democratic Response - Hon. Lauri J. Fitz-Pegado

Partner, The Livingston Group and former Assistant Deputy and Director General, U.S. Department of Commerce during the Clinton Administration

The AAUC Foreign Affairs Policy Roundtable was held at the National Press Club and focused on “U.S.-Africa Policy Agenda and the Next Administration”. The purpose of this session was to provide an open forum in which to feature a discussion of the Africa Policy Agenda for both Senator McCain and Senator Obama. The event was moderated by the highly respected Ofield Dukes and featured Dr. Witney Schneidman, speaking on behalf of Senator Barack Obama’s Africa Team, and Dr. J. Peter Pham, speaking on behalf of Senator John McCain’s Africa Team. In addition, Lauri J. Fitz-Pegado (The Livingston Group) and Gregory Simpkins (Leon H. Sullivan Foundation) contributed as “respondents”. More than one hundred people attended this newsworthy event. For more details about the entire remarks of both featured speakers please review AllAfrica.com. **The African Foreign Policy Forum truly showcased the African American Unity Caucus (AAUC) as an “emerging player” within the African Diaspora about U.S.-African Foreign Policy with the next administration.** Currently Senator Obama has more than fifty people on his Africa Team while Senator McCain has maybe only five persons on his Africa Team. It was further recommended that it would be very good idea if CFA could host such a foreign policy briefing each year during the Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series.

Following is a brief summary of the comments made by Dr. Witney Schneidman as recorded on AllAfrica.com: Senator Barack Obama understands Africa and understands its importance to the United States. As a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, he has engaged on many African issues. He has worked to end genocide in Darfur, passed legislation to promote stability and the holding of elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as well as to bring a war criminal to justice in Liberia and to develop a coherent strategy for stabilizing Somalia. Over the past 18 months, Senator Obama has worked with the Kenyan leadership to help resolve the post-election crisis in that country, called for an increase on pressure on Robert Mugabe for stealing elections and sponsoring violence against his own people in Zimbabwe and continues to speak out against Khartoum's ongoing war of genocide in Darfur as well as has called on Ethiopia and Eritrea to walk back from the brink of war.

Regarding the Diaspora, Senator Obama is the product of the African Diaspora being the son of a Kenyan father whose grandmother still lives in Kenya. He strongly believes that a more active dialogue with the various African Diaspora communities and organizations in the United States will generate a better strategy to develop its agenda and accomplish its objectives on behalf of Africa. The Obama Campaign is also witnessing an unprecedented surge of support and excitement from African-American as well as African Diaspora communities, and this support will be critical to Barack Obama's ultimate success in November. **Senator Obama's Africa Agenda will be based on three fundamental objectives on the African Continent:** (a) accelerate Africa's integration into the global economy, (b) enhance the peace and security of African states, and (c) strengthen relationship with those government, institutions and civil society organizations committed to deepening democracy, accountability and reducing poverty in Africa.

In support of this Africa Agenda, key areas of concerns will focus on: (1) Conflict Resolution, (2) Africa and the Global Economy, (3) Deepening Democracy and Ending Poverty, and (4) Maintaining a Bi-Partisan Policy. Above all he firmly believes that Africa problems require African solutions and the United States should function as a facilitator of humanitarian assistance and developmental guidance to African nations.

Following is a brief summary of the comments made by Dr. J. Peter Pham as recorded on AllAfrica.com: Senator McCain believes that the African Continent holds incredible promise despite the many challenges facing Africa (i.e. – political instability, violent conflict, economic stagnation and poverty, diseases and malnutrition) all of which are well-known impediments to Africa's growth and prosperity. Senator McCain believes that together in partnership, American and Africans can promote a true renaissance of liberty, security, and prosperity that can be shared by all African nations. He does however acknowledge that the challenges confronting Africa can only be overcome in partnership with Africans. **Senator McCain applauds the historic steps taken by President George W. Bush on the African Continent to engage the nations and leaders on the continent and his administration, working in collaboration with Congress, has lunched a number of significant initiatives whose impact will be felt for many years to come.**

These would include the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), and the African Education Initiative (AEI) among many others. Senator McCain shares this belief that nurturing freedom is an essential component of the process of development as well as believes that the long path to prosperity for Africa lies in Africans becoming full participants in the global marketplace. Senator McCain firmly believes that looking beyond AGOA will require putting an end to the subsidy-ridden U.S. agricultural policies in order to build realistic openings in trade and investment opportunities between America and Africa. Senator McCain is also a supporter of the establishment of a unified combatant command, AFRICOM, which is motivated by a desire to better focus defense resources, previously divided across three different commands, to support American initiatives to help African governments and regional organizations on the African Continent to enhance

their own capacities to provide security and respond to humanitarian emergencies as well as carry out their own responsibilities of peacekeeping.

As a result of this highly successful African Foreign Policy Roundtable, the AAUC Policy Committee will follow-up with both Senator Obama and Senator McCain's Africa Teams in order to further discuss the recruitment, screening and confirmation hearing process for potential applicants. In addition, the AAUC Policy Committee's Plum Book is in the process of being updated in order to consider employment opportunities in not only government agencies but corporations and NGOs that have Africa-advocacy interests. Also, based on the emerging awareness of the AAUC's Plum Book Initiative, plans are underway to convene a briefing with the members of the African Diplomatic Corps in order to inform them on how to advocate for the continuation of several critical African initiatives established during the Bush administration that should be continued in the next administration. These would include the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) and the African Education Initiative (AEI) among others. Lastly, Melvin P. Foote proposed that the U.S. government should consider a \$5 million dollar grant to educate Americans about Africa.

THEME THIRTEEN

African Trade and Investment Roundtable:
“Strategies for the Next Administration to
Encourage Trade and Investment Opportunities in Africa”

MODERATOR

Gregory Simpkins

Vice President, Policy and Program Development, Leon H. Sullivan Foundation

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Charles “Mike” Williams

Chairman, TransAtlantic Integrated Development Corporation, LLC and former Chief of Staff to Congressman Jim McDermott (D-WA)

Hon. Rosa Whitaker

President, The Whitaker Group and former Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Africa

Congressman Jim McDermott (D-WA)

Co-Sponsor of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA)

SPEAKERS

Hon. Florizelle Liser

Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Africa

Jayne White

Legislative Director, Office of Congresswoman Jim McDermott

Angela Ellard

Minority Deputy Staff Director and Counsel, Trade Committee, House Ways and Means Committee

Viji Rangasswami

Majority Deputy Staff Director and Counsel, Trade Committee, House Ways and Means Committee

Claude Fontheim, Esq.
Chairman, Trade, Aid and Security Coalition

Carol Pineau
Africa Filmmaker and Journalist

Marietta Bernot
Global Trade and Customs Advisor, Mars, Inc.

Matthew K. McLean
Vice President, Congressional and Public Affairs, Millennium Challenge Corporation

The African Trade and Investment Roundtable was held on Capitol Hill and the co-sponsors were the Constituency for Africa and the Trade, Aid and Security Coalition (TASC). The purpose of this session was to discuss the progress made in the **African Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA)** and brainstorm innovative ways to improve the next phase of this trade preference agreement. It was also a very special occasion featuring Charles “Mike” Williams, Rosa Whitaker and Congressman Jim McDermott who spoke about their unique perspectives on both the legislative process to establish and advocacy efforts required to successfully implement the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). Each of them stressed the critical need to have these three components: (a) Market Access, (b) Access to Capital, and (c) Technical Assistance involved in order for Africa to be successful in the global marketplace and African nations must continue to improve upon these areas. In addition, African countries must institutionalize a similar government entity such as the Small Business Administration (SBA) in order to provide the necessary resources and technical assistance to African entrepreneurs for them to be able to take advantage of AGOA and beyond.

Moreover, they all agreed that while training and capacity development are important, there needs to be many more American entrepreneurs “on the ground” in order to truly understand the “culture of doing business” in Africa. Africa culture is the most dominate factor in trade on the continent but unfortunately it does not lend itself properly to doing business in the global marketplace. It was also agreed that the role of agriculture as an economic stimulator of jobs and poverty alleviation on the African Continent is very important. They also agreed that the way forward would suggest that America remain engaged in the process required for AGOA to become ultimately successful. This would include building a stronger constituency base to advocate on behalf of AGOA with the next administration. Lastly, they were all in agreement that the next administration should consider the creation of a Global Development “cabinet-level position” versus strengthening existing government organizations (i.e. – Small Business Administration and US Agency for International Development) although they currently are doing many things right.

The other speakers highlighted the fact that four main concerns about the past and future implementation of AGOA needed to be considered. The first concern related to the time frame for AGOA. It was noted that **AGOA would end in 2015** and this might make potential investors ambivalent to seize the opportunity due to fear of the competitiveness of their products in a post-AGOA market. The second concern related to the looming threat of the World Trade Organization (WTO) halting the implementation of preferential trade agreements. Nevertheless, AGOA was still seen to present opportunities for Africa to enter the U.S. market and build solid business relationships before more developed countries like China and India begin exporting their goods duty-free. In view of this, it was proposed that **the range of duty free imports from Africa be extended to include value added goods and other manufactured goods such as electrical and telecommunications equipment** which are produced in some African countries.

The third concern related to the general poor publicity of AGOA in government, business and NGO sectors in Africa and the United States. NGOs, business groups and the office of the United States Trade Representative for Africa undertook to **continue the drive to better publicize the opportunities presented by AGOA** through various means, including websites, trade expos, and discussion forums. The fourth concern related to the persistent low levels of American investment in Africa. One suggestion was that there be **investment incentives** from the U.S. government for American companies that want to invest in Africa. However, there was a sense that Congress was unlikely to pass such legislation. Consensus was reached that there was need for greater effort to be put into **educating U.S. businesses**, especially Small Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) about the benefits of doing business in Africa. In order to create economies of scale that present a better business case for investors to focus on Africa, the **need for African countries to increase trade among themselves** was also identified as crucial. The African Union's Regional Economic Councils (RECs) were cited as an ideal vehicle for such an effort. U.S. buyers should also be made aware of and taken to **pan-regional and pan-continental trade expos**.

Lastly, Matthew K. McLean from the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) provided special remarks about how the MCC could be useful in increasing trade and investment opportunities on the African Continent. He stated that no developing country has ever brought its way out of poverty by cashing its aid donor checks. Africa needs to instead develop its own successes in the global marketplace. He suggested that perhaps the MCC could be used as a template for re-designing trade and investment strategies between the United States and African countries.

THEME FOURTEEN

AAUC Scholars Roundtable:
“Enhancing Pan-African Scholarship in the African Diaspora”

This special session explored strategies to improve scholarly opportunities for faculty and students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) who have an interest in African Affairs. The session generated a number of ideas relating to strategies and incentives to increase the scholarly interest of African Affairs on the campuses of HBCUs. One identified strategy was to make better use of **available technology** and the other was to develop further **scholarship sources**. Consensus was reached that the importance of the task warranted ongoing meetings after the RHB Series, in order strategize on the structure and work methodology of the proposed AAUC Scholars Roundtable.

THEME FIFTEEN

African Energy Roundtable:
“Addressing Africa’s Energy Challenges – The Role of the African Diaspora”

SPEAKERS

Frank Stewart

President and Chief Operations Officer, American Association of Blacks in Energy

Hon. Katherine A. Fredriksen

Acting Assistant Secretary, Office of Policy and International Affairs, U.S. Department of Energy

Hon. Alemayhu Tegenu

Minister of Mines and Energy, Republic of Ethiopia

George L. Person, Jr.

Director, Office of African and Middle Eastern Affairs, U.S. Department of Energy

Hon. Muktar Kedir

Vice President, Oromia Regional State, Republic of Ethiopia

Audifax Chomas

Senior Economic Advisor, Embassy of Tanzania

Melvin P. Foote

President & CEO, Constituency for Africa (CFA)

This session was well-attended by a number of African-Americans who are currently involved in the energy sector, mostly members of the American Association of Blacks in Energy (AABE). In addition, three Black students from North Carolina State A&T University who specialize in energy-related fields attended the session with their faculty advisor. This forms a part of building a young generation of African Americans who can make better-informed policies on matters that are key to the relationship between Africa and the United States. The session held meaningful discussions on U.S.-Africa energy development and how the African-American community can and should positively impact this issue and create business opportunities for U.S. and African small and medium-sized businesses (SMMEs) and women-owned firms.

The participants also discussed energy challenges on the African continent and how the African Diaspora can assist in addressing those challenges. Potential outcomes would be identifying how the African Diaspora can assist in the development and improvement of laws and regulations on energy issues, implement educational resources to build a quality energy workforce, and assist in project development to increase the percentage of electrification on the African continent, including renewable energy development.

The following concrete action plans were suggested for increasing Diaspora involvement:

- **furthering training of Africans in Africa** on various technical aspects related to the energy sector;
- **playing a more active role as investors** since development banks are not enough to push the African energy sector forward, private capital will be needed;
- members of the **Diaspora must school themselves on country-specific facts and business practices** by visiting those countries in which they intend doing business;
- explore opportunities with institutions like USAID to implement **programs that focus on long-term sustainable development** through their various energy projects that they're currently engaged in.

THEME SIXTEEN

CBC African Foreign Affairs Braintrust:

“U.S.-Africa Policy and Ongoing Challenges in the 21st Century”

HOST

Hon. Donald M. Payne

Chairman: Subcommittee on Africa

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

HE Dr. Jean Ping

Chairman, African Union Commission

Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala

Managing Director of the World Bank

OTHER SPEAKERS

Ambassador John D. Negroponte

Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of State

Nicole Lee, Esq.

Executive Director, TransAfrica Forum

Angelique Kidjo

Grammy Award Song Writer/Soloist & United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Goodwill Ambassador

Dr. Witney W. Schneidman

Co-Chair, Africa Experts Group-Foreign Policy Advisory Team for Obama-Biden Campaign for President

H.E. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete

President of the United Republic of Tanzania

The Africa Affairs Braintrust, hosted by Congressman Donald Payne, is part of the Annual Legislative Conference of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC). This year's theme was **"Challenges and Opportunities for the Next Administration"**. It cuts across the political, social and economic challenges and opportunities facing Africa and the role that the Diaspora can play. The need for a move away from labelling Africa as a 'basket case' was emphasised as a starting point for engaging Africa. In order to do this, the **progress that Africans themselves have brought about** of late in their own countries has to be acknowledged. A glaring example of this is the growing success of regional and continental initiatives to resolve a number of long-running conflicts. At the same time, however, it was noted that African solutions for African problems **do not absolve the United States from responsibility**, especially in providing technical and financial assistance, and through solution-driven policies. Lessons from the Liberian experience were highlighted to demonstrate the **role that the CBC can play** in positively influencing policy, especially with the current atrocities in the Darfur region of Sudan and the eastern areas of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Regarding the practical implementation of Pan-African ideals, a number of proposals were made for the integration of the Diaspora in the work of the African Union. The **CBC was invited to attend the summits that the African Union holds** twice a year. It was also mentioned that Libya, Senegal and Uganda have proposed that the **Diaspora be represented at the level of Heads of State** during these Summits, with one individual being a representative from the Diaspora. Other panellists gave progress reports on what was happening in Africa in the areas of strengthening democracy; conflict resolution and prevention; building human capacity and improving food security.

THEME SEVENTEEN

African Union's Official Launch of the African Diaspora Health Initiative:
***"Improving the Health and Well-Being of Africans:
The Role of Africans in the Diaspora"***

WELCOME REMARKS

Ambassador Amina Salum Ali

Ambassador of the African Union to the United States

Melvin P. Foote

President & CEO, Constituency for Africa

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

H.E. Dr. Jean Ping

Chairperson of the African Union Commission

PANALISTS

Dr. Chinua Akukwe - Moderator

Chair, Africa Diaspora Health Initiative Strategic Planning Committee

Hon. Dr. Obiageli “Oby” Ezekwesili

Vice President for Africa at The World Bank

Dr. Winnie Mpanju-Shumbusho

Director of the HIV/AIDS/STI Initiative, World Health Organization

Jeannine B. Scott

Senior Vice President, Africare

Dr. Richard Schiere

Senior Economist, The African Development Bank

Dr. Roscoe M. Moore, Jr.

Former Assistant Surgeon General of the United States

The objective of this session was to introduce the **African Union’s Official Launch of the Africa Diaspora Health Initiative (ADHI)**, to members of Congress, health industry officials and other interested stakeholders. It was emphasized that any U.S. plans to engage in African health issues would do well to be cognizant of the African Union’s health strategy since it will be the guiding strategy for the African health sector during the period 2008-2015. The vision of the ADHI is to develop a healthy and prosperous Africa free of the heavy burden of disease, disability and premature death. The main focus of the initiative is to link specific health expertise among Africans in the Diaspora with health needs in designated geographical locations in Africa. Africa is experiencing unprecedented growth; however, continued economic development and prosperity without reducing the burden of disease throughout the continent is counter-productive. Through effective implementation of the ADHI, the African Union and its partners will be able to positively impact the health, well-being and ultimately the futures of all those on the African Continent. By concentrating on clinical, public health and health workforce issues affecting Africa, the initiative aims to mobilize clinicians, public health experts, dentists, pharmacists, nurses, scientists and other members of the health workforce in the Diaspora to work in the continent.

The mission of ADHI will be realized through support of short-and-long term training programs to increase the number and quality of health professionals in the continent; through the support of best practices in clinical care and public health; and, through sustained advocacy for better health in Africa by partners in the United States, the Caribbean, Latin America, and in Africa. By creating an alliance of organizations engaged in efforts to improve health in Africa,

ADHI will ensure that specific goals and objectives are met and that the target populations benefit from the initiative. Partners include African Diaspora and Africa health-focused organizations and their Africa-based counterparts. To achieve its mission, the ADHI will work with the African Union and other continental institutions, African governments, the private sector and civil society in the continent. To ensure transparent operational activities and regular updates on progress made on the ground in Africa, ADHI's Steering Committee – comprised of highly respected leaders in the healthcare industry and business fields – will provide strategic and operational leadership. Membership for ADHI is open to all African Diaspora and Africa health-focused organizations operating in North America, the Caribbean and Latin America, as well as to individual members with demonstrable expertise on health and development issues impacting Africa. For more information about membership, visit www.africanunion-adhi.org.

THEME EIGHTEEN

AAUC Women's Caucus Strategy Roundtable:
***“Follow-Up Review Report on The Role and Progress of African Women
in the Democratic Process on the African Continent”***

SPECIAL GUEST

Eddie Burke

Public Affairs Team, British Embassy

MODERATOR

Jeannine B. Scott

Senior Vice President, Africare

SPEAKERS

Hon. Vivian Lowery Derryck

Senior Vice President, Academy for Educational Development

Dr. Gwendolyn Mikell

Professor of Anthropology and Foreign Service, Georgetown University

Dr. Jeanne Toungara

Associate Professor of History, Howard University

The Women's Unity Caucus is a part of the African American Unity Caucus (AAUC) and the purpose of this session was to discuss next steps forthcoming from the **Report on “Ideas to Support Women's Leadership Roles in the Democratic Process in Africa”**. In 2007, the British Embassy, in partnership with National Geographic hosted a one-day conference at the National Geographic Society in Washington, D.C. The conference examined the role and progress that NGOs, media, government and academia have made in their efforts to promote gender equality and empowerment of women issues and concerns central to development policy on the African Continent. The **election and subsequent governance successes of Africa's first woman president, H.E. Dr. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf**, was hailed as a beacon of light for women throughout Africa and the Diaspora while the **achievements of a number of African countries and of the African Union** in substantially increasing the number of female decision-makers, was also commended. **Progress was also reported in the Caribbean**, although concern was raised that it has yet to meet the target of 33% of women in leadership which was initially set for 2005. It was noted that African women were moving quicker than African-

American women into positions of leadership and there was an ever-growing need to learn from each other.

Eddie Burke mentioned that the British Embassy was quite eager to collaborate with the AAUC Women's Caucus in the co-hosting of a follow-up two-day conference in conjunction with International Women's Day in March 2009. The proposed conference would cover the role of Africa women in government, industry and academia. Both Dr. Mikell and Dr. Toungara supported this effort but also emphasized the need to link the cultural aspects of women empowerment with political and sustainable development initiatives. This was referred to as "social engineering" by which African women are engaged in their own societies. This would be in keeping with the **Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of Gender Empowerment in the Political Arena**. It was also noted that greater emphasis must also be placed on decreasing violence and insecurity of women due to armed conflict in their communities and nations which would include not only civil unrest and wars but food security and environmental security. Another matter of interest was to emphasize the impact of health in advancing women empowerment.

Eddie Burke agreed to take all of these recommendations under consideration and suggested that the AAUC Women's Caucus establish themselves as a sub-committee of the Conference Planning Committee for International Women's Day. Vivian Lowery Derryck also spoke passionately about the impact of educational opportunities for girls and young women to empower African women. She emphasized the following areas of focus: (a) political training, (b) elimination of school fees, (c) issuance of feminine hygiene products, and (d) informal/continuing education programs. Lastly, she suggested that perhaps the U.S. Agency for International Development could learn some important lessons from the British Government's Department for International Development (DFID).

Jeannine B. Scott stated that the Women's Caucus should also consider how the next U.S. administration will deal with the gains made over the past eight years regarding the empowerment of African women. It was agreed by everyone that a follow-up briefing, similar to what was done by the AAUC Policy Committee of U.S.-Africa foreign policy agenda, should be conducted on Gender Development. Eddie suggested that this might also be an integral component of the International Women's Day Conference. Action items forthcoming from this session included an agreement to conduct a **Policy Agenda Forum on Women in Africa with the next administration and collaborate with the British Embassy on the International Women's Day Conference**.

As an aside, there was a discussion about the AAUC Women's Caucus participation with the upcoming African Women's Conference to be held in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo that is tentatively scheduled for July 25-August 1, 2009. Patricia Faraut, the Founder of Africa Femmes Performantes, suggested that there needed to be much more networking of African and African Diaspora women at the higher levels with grassroots women, so that they have role models from whom to learn strategies and share insights. Accordingly, many areas of interests were discussed for collaboration to include: (a) training workshops for women entrepreneurs, (b) peace and conflict resolution, (c) health sector, (d) eco-tourism initiatives, (e) youth outreach initiatives, and (f) community service. It was suggested that potential areas of collaboration also exist with the AAUC Next Generation Initiative and the American and African Business Women's Alliance (AABWA). To this end, Jeannine suggested that perhaps the AAUC Women's Committee could tie-in through linkages and networking between the International Women's Day Conference in March 2009 with the African Women's Conference in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in June 2009. Vivian also suggested that the AAUC Women's Committee might want to participate in the upcoming Women's Conference to be held in Monrovia, Liberia March 7-8, 2009. Eddie volunteered to work with the AAUC Women's Caucus to develop a timeline for all three women conferences.

THEME NINETEEN

African American Unity Caucus Cultural Event: *“Tribute to the Culture of the African Diaspora”*

SPEAKERS

Eurica Huggins Axum - Moderator

Founder, African Diaspora Ancestry Commemoration Institute

Lafayette Barnes

Executive Director, DC Office of Partnerships and Grants Services

Dr. Germon Miller

Founder, Afrikan Cultural Arts and Disciplines Science System

Orisade Awodola

Founder, The Ancestral Healing Institute

Andrew Laurence

President, Ethiopian-American Cultural Center

The objective of the cultural session was to increase the awareness and understanding of the cultural heritage of our African ancestry. Far too often, the local citizenry of the District of Columbia are not connected with the cultural aspects of Africa during the Congressional Black Caucus. While there are many sessions that deal with political, economic and social elements on the African Continent there really needs to be a more concerted effort to re-introduce the knowledge of both cultural and historical aspects of the African Diaspora. Participants were introduced to various speeches and presentations as well as African music, dance and cuisine. It is envisioned that eventually the cultural session will become a stand-alone event that enables people of African descent to celebrate the rich diversity of their African heritage and cultures.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Overall, the 2008 Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series successfully created a platform for robust dialogue among members of the African Diaspora and the African Union. The vibrant exchange of ideas and the concrete resolutions for action that emerged from the conference ensured that, in keeping with the theme of the conference, the Diaspora in the United States will indeed be **'Working with the African Union to Build Diaspora Links'**. The Constituency for Africa looks forward to welcoming even more members of the African Diaspora to evaluate progress and collectively forge a way forward during the 2009 Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series in Washington, D.C.

END

COMPILED BY

DAVID J. SAUNDERS

Program Director,

Constituency for Africa

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