REVIEWING AFRICAN TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP ROLES

821st and 22nd July 2010
ICC Convention Centre, Durban, South Africa
“Let me emphasize that traditional leaders have a key role to play as partners with government, to build a better life for all our people. I come here today with that message. I am here to request a stronger partnership between us, a partnership for progress and sustainable development, especially in rural areas. We urge traditional leaders to be proactive and engage government on what exactly the priorities of the people are in their areas, working with the people. This is your opportunity.” (South African President Jacob Zuma, Official Opening of the National House of Traditional Leaders, Old Assembly, Parliament, Cape Town, 23 February 2010)

CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

The role of traditional leadership in modern Africa, especially modern African democracies is complex and multi-faceted. The traditional leaders’ continuing importance in the social and political life of their communities is virtually indubitable. In many countries, they still play a major role in managing land tenure. Local justice, property inheritance, and the implementation of customary law, as well as conflict resolution, also continue to be important spheres of responsibility. Traditional leaders are often perceived as the guardians of their communities culture; playing an important role in cultural events and rituals.

However, customary law, traditional governance, hereditary rule and communal land tenure are sources of much debate and tension in most African countries today. The Ubuntu Institute’s (based in SA) most recent study, conducted in South Africa, Swaziland, Botswana and Lesotho, found that traditional leaders felt marginalized and circumvented by government and donors and all were eager to become more involved in the development and health improvements in their areas of domain. The same report unearthed that traditional leaders felt that tensions still exist between indigenous systems of traditional leadership and the modern political systems of governance.

CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES INCLUDE

- To strengthen traditional governance institutions and giving them the capacity to undertake reforms
- Initiating collective action to preserve, protect and promote the histories, culture, tangible and intangible heritage of our societies
- Adopting and periodically reviewing strategies that will promote the realization of the goals of the Union of African Traditional Leaders
- To use this forum to compare and contrast experiences from throughout the African continent on current traditional leadership roles
- Encourage the formation of regional groupings of African Traditional Leaders
- Show that systems of traditional governance have a great deal to contribute to African democracies
- Promoting and protecting the general norms and cultural values within an African Society
- Review the challenges of incorporating traditional leaders in sustainable development and nations building
- Appreciate and enhance African traditional leadership roles in Agriculture and Food Security
- Promoting the role played by African Traditional Medicine in primary health care.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- African Traditional Leaders i.e. Chiefs, Kings, Headmen, etc.
- National Houses of Traditional Leaders
- African Traditional Healers
- Researchers
- Academics
- College and University lecturers
- Members of Provincial and National Parliaments
- Officials from Ministries/Departments of; Local government, Traditional Affairs, Health, Environment and Forestry, Justice and Constitutional Affairs
- SADC Secretariat officials
- African Union officials
- Councillors
- Rural District Council Officials
- Municipal Managers
- Mayors
- Premiers
- National AIDS Councils officials

OUR PANEL OF SPEAKERS

- Ms N. Dube: MEC for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
  KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government
- Cllr Nokwanje Selina Leeto: Executive Mayor
  Lejweleputswa District Municipality
- Dr. Lovemore Mbigi: CEO; African Intellectual Resources
  CEO; Nehanda Managing Consultants, Professor of Business Administrators.Director of Education, Maharishi Leadership Institution. Scholar in Residence; Leadership Centre of More House College (USA)
- Senator Chief Fortune Charumbira: President; Council of Chiefs of Zimbabwe, Former Deputy Government Minister of Local Government and Urban Development, Member of Pan African Parliament
  Institutional Change and Public Reform Sector Expert; World Bank Projects. Member of SADC Council of Traditional Leaders
- Ms Emily Sikawe: Managing Director
  Women for Change, Zambia
- Dr. Motlalepula: Indigenous Knowledge Systems Health Director
  Medical Research Centre South Africa
- Hosi Phyllis Tiniyiko Nwamitwa
  Valoyi Traditional Authority
  Limpopo Province, South Africa
- Mr. Zolani Dabulalwandle Mkiva
  Chairperson; Makhonya Royal Trust, South Africa.
  Imbongi Yesizwe/Poet of Africa.

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DAY ONE

08:00 MORNING COFFEE & REGISTRATION

08:30 WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS

08:45 Keynote Speech: Traditional Leadership for a progressing Africa

Ms N.Dube: MEC for Co-operative Governance & Traditional Affairs KZN

09:45 Spirit of African Traditional Leadership: Challenges & Possibilities
• Societies develop by drawing their own inspiration from their indigenous cultures
• There is no recorded case in history where a society developed by abandoning its culture
• Therefore, modern African governing institutions can only develop by being inspired by its African indigenous traditional governing systems otherwise the institutional risk for still birth is high

Dr Lovemore Mbigi: CEO African Intellectual Resources
CEO Nehanda Managing Consultants Professor of Business Administrators, Director of Education Maharishi Leadership Institution Scholar in Residence Leadership Centre of MoreHouse College (USA)

10:45 MORNING REFRESHMENTS & NETWORKING BREAK

11:00 Can Democracy and The African Chief/King Co-Exist?
• The context of traditional chiefs in Modern Africa
• Analysis of perceptions traditional leaders in comparison to elected officials
• Evaluation of impacts of modernization and other factors on these perceptions
• Popular perceptions of traditional leaders
• Attitudes toward restoration of traditional rulers
• Traditional leaders versus Elected leaders

Senator Chief Fortune Charumbira: President of the Council of Chiefs of Zimbabwe
Former Deputy of Government & Urban Development
Member of Pan African Parliament
Institutional Change & Public Reform Sector Expert (World Bank Projects) Member of SADC Council of Traditional Leaders

12:00 Workshop: The Role of African Traditional Leadership in Agriculture and Food Security.
• Challenges to food security in Africa
• Food security interventions by African states
• Community-based food and nutrition programmes
• The Chief’s Field concept (isiphala se lizwe/Zunde raMambo)
• Contingencies covered by this field
• Capacity and viability of this scheme
• Conflicts between political and traditional leaders in community-based agriculture
• Ways of strengthening the Chief’s field
• Challenges of African Traditional Leadership in Agriculture and Food Security.

Emily Sikawe: Managing Director
Women for Change

13:00 LUNCH AND NETWORKING

14:00 Workshop: The Role of Traditional Leadership in Land Administration
• Overview of current scenario in selected African countries
• Customary land rights in historical perspective
• Dynamics of African Land tenure
• Re-distribution of land and restitution for forced removals
• Customary land rights in contemporary South Africa
• Dilemmas of tenure reform in democratic Africa
• Dynamics of customary land rights in Southern Africa
• Change and continuity in contemporary land tenure across Africa
• The role of chiefs/kings in land reform and management: what are the challenges?

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15:00 AFTERNOON REFRESHMENTS

15:15 WORKSHOP CONTINUES...

16:00 CHAIRPERSON’S CLOSING REMARKS

END OF DAY ONE
08:45 The Role of the Traditional Praise Singer (Imbongi) in Contemporary Africa.
- A chronicler of events.
- Mediates between the people and the ruler
- Acts as the voice of the people
- Communicates national and international contemporary events to the nation.
- Makes complex situations easy.
- Music and poetry act as an inspirational force

Mr. Zolani Dabulalwandle Mkiva: Chairperson; Makhonya Royal Trust, South Africa.

10:45 IKS Competitiveness for Sustainable Community Enterprise Development & Wealth creation with special reference to medicinal plants

Dr. Motialepula Gilbert Matsabisa
IKS Health Director
Medical Research Centre

14:00 Workshop: The role of African Traditional Leadership in Local Governance and Sustainable Development
- Do traditional leaders feel excluded from the participatory processes in local government?
- Capacity building programmes for local government and traditional leadership structures
- Chiefs as community advocates
- Local government turn-around strategies in Africa
- Participatory Development Committee networks
- Traditional leaders role in service delivery
- Challenges facing African traditional leaders in local governance today

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