



**KENYA DIASPORA HOMECOMING
CONVENTION (KDHC-2015)**
DECEMBER 9-11, 2015, NAIROBI, KENYA



Background

The Kenya Diaspora Alliance (KDA) wishes to announce the annual Diaspora Convention to take place in Nairobi from December 9-11, 2015. Kenyans who are domiciled in Europe, United States, Canada (the Americas), Australia, the Middle East, Africa and Asia, among others, will congregate in Nairobi to deliberate on a wide range of important national and global issues. The Convention intends to engage local political and economic actors on areas of mutual interest to foster development in Kenya and strengthen bilateral/multilateral relations and democratic growth. Kenyans abroad believe that they are key stakeholders in Kenya's socio-economic welfare, but there is increasing concern among them for the apparent poor engagements by policy makers on various matters of mutual interest. The Kenyan Disaporans also believe that the Kenyan government (including devolved structures) and the corporate sector should open up clear and well defined engagement strategies to harness the various academic and professional skills possessed by the country's overseas professionals for the common good.

Invited Keynote Speakers

Among confirmed Key Speakers to grace the occasion is the Speaker of the Senate, Hon. Sen. David Ekwe Ethuro, MP, EGH, the Chief Justice, Hon (Dr) Willy Mutunga, EGH, who is also the President Supreme Court of Kenya, the Secretary General, UNCTAD, Hon (Dr) Mukhisa Kituyi, the Africa Union (AU's) Vice Chairperson, H.E. Erastus Mwencha, Founding Chair, East Africa Business Council, Dr Manu Chandaria, OBE, 3 Excellency Governors (Nairobi, Migori and Machakos), and Mr Kipruto Kittony, National Chairman of the Chamber/KNCCI. Other invited Key Guests include the Cabinet Secretary, Foreign Affairs & International Trade, Hon (Amb) Amina Mohamed, Chairperson, Council of Governors, H.E. Peter Munya, who is also the Governor of Meru County, Excellency Governors, Excellency Ambassador of the Netherlands in Kenya, Chairperson, Parliamentary Committee on Defence and Foreign Relations, Hon Ndungu Gethenji, MP, Resident Representative, Hanns Seidel Foundation, Country Director, VSO-Jitolee, Former Foreign Affairs Assistant Minister, Hon Richard Onyonka, MP, Regional Representative, IOM, Chairperson of Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), Chairpersons and/or CEOs of Key State Agencies and Independent Commissions, including IEBC, CIC, KenInvest, BrandKenya, KIPPRA, Vision 2030, KRA, HELP, NTA, PPP Unit, Youth Development Fund, Huduma Centres, etc, Chairperson, Donor Group on Elections, World Bank, UNDP & USAid Representatives, scholars/academic, civil societies, and Diaspora youth/women representatives, among others.

Former Rangwe Member of Parliament Dr. Shem Ochuodho who is KDA's Global Chairperson, and Prof Kefa Otiso, President of the Kenya Scholars & Studies Association (KESSA/Ohio, USA), who is also Co-Chairperson of the Global Planning Committee (GPC), will play the Key Hosts.

Thematic Areas

During the Convention, the Diasporians and Stakeholders will discuss, among other key thematic issues:

- Diaspora Investments in the 47 Counties
- Public, Private, People's Partnerships (PPPP's)
- Youth, Women, Disabled Empowerment, Entrepreneurship and Employment (3'Es)
- Governance¹, Diaspora Representation & Voting in 2017
- Knowledge, Talent, Skill Management & Innovation
- Implementation of the National Diaspora Policy & Harnessing Diaspora Input in the WTO Ministerial Conference

Diaspora Investments in the 47 Counties:

Kenyan Diasporians intend to launch massive investments in real estate, securities market, financial services, infrastructure, and technology. There is increasing desire among Kenyan professionals abroad to bring home their talents and skills to uplift Kenya's economy and strengthen their fellow citizens at the national as well as county levels. They are also targeting banking and other service industries. Kenyans abroad believe the devolved units of governance bring unique opportunities for investment, hence the need to explore areas of interest with stakeholders to identify priority projects to embark on.

Public, Private, People's Partnerships (PPPP's):

In this area, the Diaporans will tap and deepen the concept of collaboration and direct engagement for Development among the various actors, including but not limited to public sectors (multi-level), private corporate, and civil societies. Kenya pioneered in the region the public-private-partnership (PPP) Framework, Policy and legislation. KDA adds the concept of "People's", to include individual professionals, consultants, Diaspora associations, professional & business/trade associations, youth, women, etc. As a pilot, through its business and investment arm (DICL – Diaspora Investment Club), KDA and other partners is pursuing a Solar Power & Water Project in Turkana County. More projects will be explored in partnership with county and national governments, as well as local communities.

¹ The major issues under this theme are issues believed to be holding Kenya back from the next big leap: impunity, corruption, insecurity, inequalities, ukabila/national cohesion (or its lack thereof).

Youth, Women, Disabled Empowerment, Entrepreneurship and Employment (3'Es)

Perhaps borrowing from Rwanda's rural development concept, the Diasporians believe that women, youth and even the disabled have a key role to play in the development of Kenya's economy – not only both rural and urban areas, but also among the Diaspora. The government has introduced several pro-women and pro-youth programs, including 30% tenders to the youth, women entrepreneurship fund, and youth development fund. However, very often Diaspora youth and women are often forgotten, and not factored in. Besides, there are several other areas to create jobs and wealth, including but not limited to sport, creative arts, and foreign labour placement. Senior Diaspora professionals and professors, can also leverage technologies to mentor, tutor, take up short-term adjunct positions, joint research projects, identify scholarship opportunities, offer career counselling, internships/attachments, exchange programs, entrepreneurship coaching/incubation, supervise graduate students and projects, etc. The Diasporians will engage with elected leaders and home-based academia to identify areas of partnership and roll out a program of empowerment to this special class of populace, and advocate for pro-Diaspora youth/women policies and programs.

Governance, Diaspora Representation & Voting in 2017:

KDA has identified good governance (or the lack of it) and insecurity are at the core of challenges holding Kenya to realize the great goals espoused in Vision 2030. In particular, the Convention will ventilate on impunity, runaway corruption, inequalities, ukabila and national cohesion.

Besides, Diaspora voting and representation are important issues that have dominated Diaspora discussions since 2010 when the new constitution that provides for Diaspora voting was promulgated. In May this year, the Supreme Court ordered the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission to initiate immediate process to facilitate Kenyans who reside overseas to participate in the next general elections due August 2017.

During the Diaspora convention, the Diasporians will engage with the electoral officials to establish how far the commission has moved in preparing the ground for the realization of the exercise. There is growing fear among the Diasporians that despite the court orders, IEBC has done very little, if at all, to initiate the basic processes in time to avoid the last minute rush. Kenyans around the world expect the IEBC to have embarked on voter registration, voter education, facilitate updating of the national identity cards and setting up polling units especially in the expansive USA, Europe and Africa.

Kenyans in the Diaspora are patriotic and believe that the right to participate in voting is part of their civic duty as specified in the constitution. It is therefore important for the IEBC to come up with a practical formula that would lead to the full realization of this constitutional right. Encouragingly, IEBC is beginning to open up and engage. It is hoped that some concrete and practical actions will emerge during the Convention to ensure Diaspora vote in 2017.

There is also a determination by Kenyans abroad to discuss the steps necessary to facilitate creation of a county to be known as the 48th County – or at a minimum, Diaspora constituencies through delimitation and boundaries review that should happen every 8 years. There is growing demands among Kenyans overseas and at home—Africa—that creating a Diaspora constituency will be used as a convenient locomotive to engage in meaningful dialogue for change in governance, public accountability and justice.

Knowledge, Talent, Skill Management & Innovation

As narrated above, one of the main areas in which Diaspora can contribute is through knowledge, expertise, skill and talent. There is no reason, for instance, why Diaspora cannot be leveraged to promote sport, culture, tourism and diplomacy, and vice versa. Besides, collaborative research and scholarly work between home-based faculty and their counterparts abroad should be explored. Emerging communications technologies can greatly enable “brain gain” and reverse brain drain. That Africa produces only 2% of the global academic publications, of which 70% is from South Africa and Egypt, is not surprising. The narrative can be changed, however, to interrogate the other 98%, and find out how much of it is Africa’s Diaspora, and how it can be leveraged. Besides, Kenya’s prowess in mobile technology, driven by the mobile money (M-Pesa) revolution is world-acclaimed. Yet we have barely scratched the surface. Partnerships can be evolved to deepen Kenya’s leadership in science, technology and innovation (STI), through engagement of Diaspora and home-based tech-preneurs.

Implementation, of the National Diaspora Policy & Harnessing Diaspora Input in the WTO Ministerial Forum

The National Diaspora Policy was launched by H.E. the President in February, 2015. KDA was a major stakeholder during its conception and development. During the Convention, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, where Diaspora Affairs are anchored, shall enlighten participants on how far its implementation has gone, planned activities, any challenges encountered, mitigations, and any upcoming or attendant opportunities. This will be emboldened by the new Constitution that also offers opportunities to the Diaspora.

Besides, the Convention will be held against the back-drop of Kenya’s as a hot-bed for hosting eminent global leaders. Just in July this year, it hosted both President Obama (USA), and the Italian Prime Minister. End of November, it shall be hosting the People’s Pope, coming to Africa for the first time. In the same vein, the week after the Convention, Kenya shall host the WTO Ministerial Conference, being WTO’s highest decision making body. This too will be taking place for the first time ever on Africa’s soil. Indeed, the Convention was purposely designed to precede the WTO Conference so that Diaspora inputs can be harnessed and channelled into the WTO process through Kenya’s Delegation, as well as KDA’s participation as one of the accredited civil societies.

Why Participate in KDHC-2015?

This year's *Diaspora Homecoming Convention (KDHC-2015)* builds upon last year's Event, as well as the "Diaspora Engagement Strategy Workshop" held on 4th August, 2015. It further comes behind the backdrop of KDA's historic victory in both the Appeal and Supreme Courts that secured Diaspora Voting, an outcome that is still being celebrated across diverse Diaspora communities. This year also heralds the emergence of various Diaspora-targeted products by the Stakeholders, some of which will be unveiled during the Convention.

KDHC-2015 promises unique opportunities for Kenyans in the Diaspora to effectively integrate their contributions in the national and county development agendas, while providing a unifying platform to engage with all key partners including policymakers, public, private, academia, civil society and development partners. The moment is propitious to interrogate the contribution of the Diaspora in light of Kenya's quest for economic transformation as espoused in Vision 2030. The impact of these new factors on domestic demand, trade, job creation, and more generally inclusive growth are yet to be put in their proper perspective.

The 2015 Kenya Diaspora Homecoming Convention, like its predecessor, is being organized around the Motto: "Connect! Empower! Invest!"

It is unique in that while thousands of Kenyans from the Diaspora will be visiting home during their December vacation, not to mention yet the other historic visit by the People's Pope. KDHC-2015 offers the rare opportunity and platform for the following:

- Knowledge, experience, and information exchange for banking/financial services and products, realtors, investments, development partnerships, government operational policies, procedures, and guidelines, and engagement with other non-state actors
- Both face-to-face as well as virtual learning environments and discussion forum for the Diaspora. The Event will be live-streamed and web-cast online to tens of thousands of Diaspora across the globe
- Business and investment promotion networks to enhance access to development funds e.g., through organizing Development Marketplace competitions
- Knowledge exchange between home-based Kenyans and the Diaspora on entrepreneurship, business development, and international trade, networking and/or partnerships
- Developing a model Diaspora Investment Fund in conjunction with the Diaspora Investment Club (DICL) based on global initiatives that exploit the benefits of Diaspora remittances
- Engaging Diaspora professionals in the implementation of government development projects, both at national and sub-national/county levels
- Establishing a Diaspora business investment, management, and service center
- Exploring appropriate loan, credit, savings, and pension schemes for Diaspora entrepreneurs, etc
- Business development assistance instruments for Diaspora entrepreneurs
- Marketing platform for various goods, products and services to the members of the Kenya Diaspora and other stakeholders.

Major Partners & Sponsors

Title Sponsor is (tbc). The Key Partners are VSO-Jitolee, Embassy of the Netherlands, HSS, KNCCI, KEPSA, Council of Governors, the Senate, IOM, Dahabshiil, GeoNet Communications, Charleston Travels, among others.

Media Partners

The Main Media Partner is (tbc).

Technology Partners

The Technology Partners include Oracom Company Ltd (Webmaster & Social Media Webcasting), Efficax Company Ltd (Live-Streaming), GeoNet Communications and Abari Communications (Platform Providers).

Event Coordinator

The KDHC-2015 Event Coordinator is Scenery Adventures Ltd, represented by Ms Monica Musungu (CEO), Isaac Oprong (Head of Programs??), and Ms Toni Wanga (Consultant??).

Members of the Planning Committees

Global Planning Committee (GPC)

1. Prof Kefa Otiso, President, KESSA (Ohio, USA), Co-Chairperson
2. Dr Bernard Marasa, President/Chairperson, Kenya Baltimore Association (USA), Co-Chairperson
3. Dr Shem J. Ochuodho, Global Chairperson, KDA (Juba, South Sudan)
4. Ms Rosemary Musumba, UNICEF, (Bangui, CAR/New York, USA)
5. Henry Ongeru, Advocate of the High Court, Kenya/Minneapolis (USA)
6. Peter R. Makori, MPA, Kansas City (Missouri, USA)
7. Ms Caroline Ayuya, KDA Trustee/Lecturer, Daystar University (Nairobi/Ex-Burundi)
8. Eng. Peter M. Maina, CEO, GeoNet USA/Kenya, New Jersey (USA)
9. Andrew Matasyo, Chairperson, Kenya Diaspora Talent Secretariat (KDTS), Netherlands/Benelux
10. Stephen Muli Kilonzo, Student Leader, Russia
11. Dr Emmanuel Mutisya, Chairperson, Kenyans in Japan, Tokyo (Japan)
12. Prof Bernard S. Aete, KDA's Representative, Germany
13. Eng. Maxwell Okeyo Odhiambo, Secretary, Kenya Qatar Diaspora SACCO, Doha (Qatar)
14. Thomas Musau, Executive Director, UK Diaspora Community Projects, London (UK)
15. Cornelius Ole Sikawa, CEO, County Media, Michigan (USA)
16. James Ololo, Coordinator, Kenya Experts.org/EU Representative, Brussels (Belgium & Luxembourg)

17. Sammy Ratemo, Ministry of Agriculture/World Bank Advisor, Juba (South Sudan)
18. Ms Fridah Mutunga, Medical Consultant, Peterborough (UK)
19. Vincent Lelei, UNOCHA-Somalia (Mogadishu/Nairobi)

Local Organizing Committee (LOC)

1. Francis Opondoh, Immediate Past Secretary, Kenyans in Nigeria (KINs), Co-Chairperson
2. Ms Maureen Njeri wa Kinyi², Immediate Past Secretary, Association of Kenyans in Tanzania (AKIT), Co-Chairperson
3. Joshua Karani, Lecturer, Daystar University (Ex-USA)
4. Julius Musandu, KDA Secretariat (Ex-Canada)
5. Dominic Milla Menga, Consultant
6. Robert Mmaiti, VSO Volunteer/KDA Secretariat (Ex-Mozambique)
7. Ms Rita Waganagwa, Embu, Kenya (Ex-Texas, USA)
8. Njeru Mbogo, Embu, Kenya (Ex-Netherlands)
9. Eugene Wandabwa, Entrepreneur, Kakamega, Kenya
10. Ms Pamela Ten Wolde, KDA Strategy Advisor/VSO Volunteer, Amsterdam (Netherlands)
11. Ms Elizabeth Atieno Muchembre, KDA/Discover.us/VSO Volunteer (Secretary)

Finance & Budget Sub-Committee

1. Ms Rosemary Musumba, UNICEF, (Bangui, CAR/New York, USA) – Chairperson
2. Paul Gitonga, Global Chairperson, DICL, Juba (South Sudan)
3. Ms Caroline Ayuya, KDA Trustee/Lecturer, Daystar University (Nairobi/Ex-Burundi)
4. Dr Frank Mwaniki, KDA Trustee/Past President, Kenya Community Abroad, KCA (USA)
5. Dr Kathurima Gitonga, Immediate Past Chairperson, Association of Kenyan Community in Zimbabwe (AKCIZ)

Technical & Logistics Sub-Committee

1. Prof Kefa Otiso, President, KESSA (Ohio, USA), Co-Chairperson
2. Dr Bernard Marasa, President/Chairperson, Kenya Baltimore Association (USA), Co-Chairperson
3. Dr Shem J. Ochuodho, Global Chairperson, KDA (Juba, South Sudan)

² Succeeded Eng. Chris Njenga, Retired Senior UN Staff & Transport/Logistics Consultant