



The ADEA Triennale begins in Ouagadougou in the presence of four African Heads of State

The Presidents of Burkina Faso, Blaise Compaoré, of Côte d'Ivoire, Alassane Dramane Ouattara, of Mali, Amadou Toumani Touré (ATT) and of Nigeria, Issoufou Mahamadou, took part on Monday in the official opening of the 2012 Triennale of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) at the International Conference Center in Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso.

Declaring the gathering to be officially open in the presence of the special representatives of the Presidents of Benin, Boni Yayi, and Rwanda, Paul Kagamé, Sam Ogeri, Chairman of the Conference of African Education Ministers and also Kenya's Minister of National Education, the Chair of ADEA's Executive Committee, Dzingai Mutumbuka, His Excellency Blaise Compaoré considered that the holding of the Triennale provided an opportunity to the sons and daughters of Africa to find time for forward-looking reflection on the conditions to be met for the sustainable development of the continent's nations.

In the view of Burkina Faso's President: *"The most prosperous nations are those that have successfully relied on universal education and established a general system of education and training and life-long learning. We need not look far therefore for explanations in understanding that the key to change and the engine for major social transformation is to be found in education and training."*

During the round table that followed the opening ceremony he also proposed the setting up of a committee of Heads of State to provide follow up on the recommendations and conclusions of the Triennale, the central theme of which is "Promoting critical knowledge, skills and qualifications for sustainable development in Africa: How to design and implement an effective response by education and training systems."

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President Compaoré assured the gathering that *“It would be a good idea for us to assess the results of the implementation of our conclusions today one year before the next Triennale. For my own part, I undertake, with the support of my peers here today, to raise the awareness of the continent’s other Heads of State and to convey the results of our proceedings to the African Union.”*

Presidents Alassane Dramane Ouattara, Amadou Toumani Touré and Issoufou Mahamadou each underscored in turn the importance of education, vocational and technical training and science in the economic development and building of Nations.

Several other speakers, among them ADEA’s Chair Mr. Mutumbuka, the Assistant Director-General of UNESCO in charge of the Africa Department, Lala Ben Barka, and Burkina Faso’s Minister of National Education, Koumba Boly Barry, each reiterated the positive benefits for national development offered by education, training, research, innovation and the new information and communication technologies.

Taking his own country as an example, the Korean Vice-Minister for Education, Sang-jin Lee, urged Africa to drive the development of Education, Science and training forward in order to consolidate its economic growth and guarantee the wellbeing of its peoples.

“Korea is willing to share with Africa its experience in the field of education and training. We are willing to go forward hand in hand with you. We are willing to share with our partners to help them avoid making the same errors as ourselves”, added Mr. Lee, who had come to Burkina Faso as the head of a large official delegation comprising representatives from his country’s principal teaching, research and training institutions.

A representative of the technical and financial partners and a delegate from the private sector presented their analysis of the issues raised by the Triennale, and they themselves also underlined the need to grant to education, vocational and technical training and the new information and communication technologies all the attention they merit.

The proceedings of the Triennale will continue until next Friday with a focus on three sub-themes:

- Common core skills for lifelong learning and sustainable development in Africa.
- Lifelong technical and vocational skills development for sustainable socioeconomic growth in Africa.
- Lifelong acquisition of scientific and technological knowledge and skills for Africa’s sustainable development in a globalized world.

The three sub-themes will be covered by a general introduction in plenary session before being examined in greater depth in parallel sessions and round tables led by political decision-makers,

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education specialists, participants from the private sector, actors in the education world and representatives from civil society.

The conclusions reached in these various groupings will then be discussed in plenary session with a view to agreeing on Friday the messages, recommendations and decisions from the 2012 Triennale, this being the first to be held since the decision in 2008 in Maputo, Mozambique, by ADEA's Steering Committee to transform the Biennale into a Triennale.

At least 800 people from around the world, among them 60-70 government ministers, will be participating in the 2012 Triennale's five days of debate.

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