

**Welcome Address by Professor Etienne Ehouan Ehile,
Secretary General, Association of African Universities,
At the inaugural International Conference on Advanced
Trends in ICT and Management (ICAITM)**

Jointly organized by AAU and BlueCrest College

Accra, Ghana, April 28, 2016

The Honourable Minister of Education - Prof. Jane Nana Opoku
Agyemang

The Honorable Deputy Minister for Environment, Science,
Technology and Innovation - Dr. Bernice Adiku Heloo

The Honorable High Commissioner of India to Ghana

The Executive Secretary, National Council for Tertiary
Education

The Chairman, Bluecrest College Governing Council

Vice Chancellors and Colleagues from the education sector,
Friends and Development Partners of African Higher
Education,

Partners from the Information & Communication Technology
Sector

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

All Protocol Observed.

It is my greatest pleasure to welcome you all, on behalf of the
Association of African Universities, to the inaugural
International Conference on Advanced Trends in ICT and

Management that has been jointly organized by the AAU and Blue Crest College.

The Association of African Universities is a network of 360 universities across Africa. Our mission is to support our member universities to enhance the quality and relevance of higher education in Africa.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this conference is in line with the goals of our ICT Outreach Program which has two components:

- a) Supporting the creation of regional / national research and education networks.
- b) Building the capacities of ICT technical personnel so that they acquire cutting edge skills to effectively support the ICT infrastructure in African Universities.

AAU believes that affordable bandwidth and related internet infrastructure are very key for the success and effectiveness of academic and research institutions.

I am optimistic that we are also well informed about the work that the AAU has been doing to promote the development of internet infrastructure for the African Research and Education Communities. In 2005 the member institutions tasked the AAU Secretariat to find ways of assisting them access larger volumes of internet bandwidth at cheaper prices. This is because there was a widening digital divide between African Higher Education and their counterparts in the more developed countries caused by prohibitive bandwidth prices and poor ICT infrastructure.

Our response was the creation of the Research and Education Network Unit (RENU) at the AAU Secretariat that has spearheaded the creation of national research and education networks. We have also championed the development of regional research and education networks such as the UbuntuNet Alliance and the West and Central African Research and Education Network (WACREN).

Distinguished Guests, this International Conference on Advanced Trends in ICT and Management is significant in several ways. We are privileged to have experts like you, bringing your experiences to bear in debating issues of Cloud Computing to support sustainable development in Africa.

The interdisciplinary nature of this conference is designed to facilitate a forum for exchange of knowledge on the latest experimental results and theoretical advances in Information and Communication Technology and Management.

I call upon our governments in Africa to continue prioritizing the development of internet infrastructure to enable the research and education sector provide quality education and services.

I cease this opportunity to reiterate the commitment and dedication of the AAU and its partners to continuously engage in effective collaborations with Higher Education stakeholders to implement quality and strategic programmes targeted at improving the quality of education on the continent.

With all these said, Ladies and Gentlemen it is my singular honor and pleasure, as the Secretary-General of the Association of African Universities with a membership of 360 higher education institutions on the continent, to once again welcome you to this two-day conference.

I thank you for listening and wish you fruitful deliberations.