



Pan African Chamber of
Commerce and Industry



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SUMMIT

AETF/ADM/COMM/PR/02

PRESS RELEASE

AAU-PACCI INAUGURATES

AFRICAN EDUCATION TRUST FUND ORGANISING COMMITTEE

The Association of African Universities (AAU), the Pan-African Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PACCI) and the African Private Sector (APSS) have inaugurated a committee to establish an African Education Trust Fund (AETF). The Committee comprises eminent African scholars, business executives, some representatives of African institutions, an Indian former Vice-Chancellor of an East African university, and two senior advisors.

The Association of African Universities (AAU), Africa's apex higher education body with a membership of over 400 universities across the continent, and the Pan African Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PACCI) representing the collective interest of Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the business community in Africa, signed a Strategic Partnership Agreement in March 2021 to promote deeper discourse on improving academia-private sector relationships on the continent. The ultimate goal of the Agreement is to expand cooperation towards the integration of Africa through education, trade and investment under Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

In this Partnership Agreement, the Parties agreed to launch a special African Education Trust Fund (AETF) to raise funds to develop and strengthen a resilient African education system that produces the right skills set required to transform the continent into an economic powerhouse through human capacity development, academic scholarships, development of responsive curricula in all disciplines and infrastructural development in African higher education and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) systems.

The AETF is one of several tenets in the AAU-PACCI Agreement that is being lifted by the African Private Sector Summit (APSS) for actualization. One other is the Bill of Rights for an enabling business environment in Africa which is currently being drafted and is funded by United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).

In a brief but memorable virtual meeting held on 3rd February 2022 and coordinated by the APSS, which has been mandated by the two Parties to coordinate programmes in the



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Agreement, an Organizing Committee of Fifteen (15) experts in African higher education was inaugurated by the Deputy Chair of the APSS, Mr. Ben Acheampong. The Committee is chaired by Dr. Ekwow Spio-Garbrah, a Ghanaian diplomat and former Minister of Education, and also former Minister of Trade and Industry. The other 14 members of the Committee are:

1. Prof. Dr. Raju Chandrasekar (Chancellor Emeritus, Uganda/ India)
2. Mr. Kebour Ghenna (Executive Director, PACCI)
3. Prof. Theresia Nkuo-Akenji (Vice President, AAU)
4. Prof Jonathan Mba (Former Director of Research & Academic Planning, AAU)
5. Prof. Dr. Margret King (President/CEO, Global Institute of Planning and Sustainable Development, USA)
6. Prof. Dr. Sam Ndogo (APSS)
7. Prof. Goski Alabi (President of Laweh Open University, Ghana)
8. Jeannine Uwimana- Nicol (Snr Researcher, Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences, Stellenbosch Univ, S/Africa & Univ. of Rwanda)
9. Prof. Brahim Elbhiri (Professor of IT & Director of SMARTILAB, a lab of research development and innovation)
10. Mr. John Binnie Kauya (Group MD, Global Business Network, Botswana)
11. Mr. Ousman Touray (Student Ambassador, University of The Gambia)
12. Mr. Adedayo Dayo-Dunmoye (Principal Partner, ThinQfam Consulting Services)
13. Mr. Jones Williams – Public Policy and Development Professional
14. African Business Council (TBA)

The Committee also has two Advisory Members, namely:

1. Abu Bako (President of RHEMA, Nigeria)
2. Dr. Francis Mangeni

Mr. J. Wendell Addy, the Chair of APSS, applauded the AAU and PACCI for committing to implement the MOU, and acknowledged the important roles other sister organizations such as the African Business Council (ABC) have to play to actualize the goals of the MOU. He posited that addressing the skills set needs of the continent is an indispensable enabler, particularly in the conversion of its raw materials for the success of the RECs and AfCFTA.

In his brief remarks, the Executive Director of PACCI, Mr. Kebour Ghenna noted that industry and academia working in tandem becomes a powerful engine for innovation and economic growth for which reason PACCI commits wholly to this initiative and gives full support. Both the Vice President of the AAU, Prof. Theresia Nkuo-Akenji, and the Secretary-General of the Association, Prof. Olusola Oyewole, also assured the Committee of the AAU's full support in recognition of the synergies in university-industry linkages.

In his acceptance speech after the inauguration, the Chair, Dr. Ekwow Spio-Garbrah, promised professionalism and efficiency in their work and to embrace the expertise of other experts as



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well as work with other agencies with similar initiatives, such as the African Development Bank, which has also set out to run an education trust fund to build capacity in African higher education institutions.

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