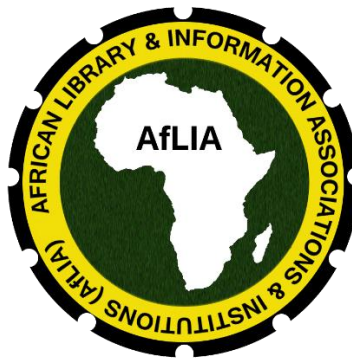


African Library and Information Associations and Institutions (AfLIA)



**Report on the 3rd Roundtable Meeting of Ministers Responsible for
Public Libraries in Africa 28-30th October 2019**

20th February, 2020

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1.0 Opening Ceremony

AfLIA in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, Ghana, Ghana Library Authority and the African Union, hosted the **3rd Roundtable Meeting of Ministers in charge of Public Libraries in Africa** at Labadi Beach Hotel, Accra-Ghana from 28-30th October, 2019. The theme for the Summit was **Libraries on the African Development Agenda- Progress Made**. The purpose of the summit was to discuss the progress made by Libraries towards achieving the African Development Agenda. It was also to emphasize the fact that access to information is crucial for development in Africa, and to reiterate that Libraries are best suited to perform that role. The occasion was graced with about twenty-five (25) representatives from different African countries, Fourteen (14) of them as Ministers responsible for Libraries in their countries. (Angola, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe).



*Ghana's Hon. Minister of Education- Dr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh
delivering his Welcome Address*

The meeting was chaired by the Ghana's Hon. Minister of Education Dr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh. The two-day brainstorming session afforded the Ministers an opportunity to discuss issues on how governments can integrate Libraries in their National Development Plans and ensure the

allocation of resources to Libraries towards the achievement of the Development Agenda.

Other dignitaries from the Information profession who graced the summit include the IFLA Secretary General Mr. Gerald Leitner, the immediate past President of AfLIA Dr. John Tsebe, Current AfLIA President Mr. Mandla Ntombela, the Executive Director of AfLIA Dr. Helena Asamoah-Hassan, the AfLIA Governing Council Members, Directors of National Libraries in Africa as well as Emerging Young Library Professionals.

In his welcome address, the Chairman iterated the purpose of the meeting which is related to the two existing Documents (Cape Town Declaration and Durban Communiqué). He stated that the development of Africa depends on effective access to information which does not just happen but requires proper planning, availability of funds, good equipment coupled with the skills of information custodians (Librarians).



Ministers of State in Charge of Libraries in a Picture

He called on all African Ministers of States in charge of Libraries to include Libraries in their National Development Plans to enable the achievement of the AU 2063 Aspirations. Members at the Summit received goodwill speeches from the IFLA Secretary General and the President of AfLIA, Mr. Mandla Ntombela.

1.1 Pre-Conference

Prior to the Roundtable meeting, a meeting was organized at the Erata Hotel in Accra for Directors of National Libraries in Africa to discuss the progress of National Libraries in their countries as well as the efforts they are making to help achieve the various Developmental Agendas especially the AU 2063.

Thirty- two (32) National Librarians attended the meeting. They had the opportunity to interact among themselves, their Ministers as well as Emerging African Library Leaders who attended the summit.

2.0 Presentations

Several presentations made at the roundtable meeting included a **progress report on countries since Cape Town Declaration and Durban Communiqué** by all the Ministers of State.

The IFLA Secretary General Mr. Gerald Leitner centered his presentation on the **Expectations from governments in support of Access to Information and Libraries for UN 2030 and AU 2063 Agendas**. The Executive Director of AfLIA, Dr. Helena Asamoah-Hassan



IFLA Secretary General - Mr. Gerald Leitner

highlighted on **AfLIA and library human capital for Africa's development**. She used the opportunity to reveal how African Libraries are driving development across the 7 Aspirations of the AU 2063 Agenda. She said AfLIA is deeply committed to the advancement of Libraries in the continent and firmly believes that this high-level advocacy will bear numerous tangible fruits for Libraries of all types in Africa. Report from the Meeting of the Directors of Libraries was read by the Director of Training, AfLIA, Dr. Nkem Osuigwe.

The Director of Research and the Research Coordinator of AfLIA also gave an insight on the **ALVA Data Project – Now and the Future TASCHA/AfLIA**. Opportunity was also given to the Young Library Professionals to share knowledge and ideas at the ongoing 3rd African Ministerial Roundtable meeting. The Young Library Professionals made a fantastic presentation on **AU 2063 Agenda, Libraries and Pathways for creating the Africa We Want**.



Young Library Professionals making a presentation at the Library Ministers

Finally, a video of **impact stories on how libraries meet the development agenda in Ghana** was shown for the delegates to see how the Ghana Library Authority is impacting the society through its services nationwide.

3.0 Social Activities

The Summit did not end without delegates tasting the hospitable nature of Ghanaians. A dinner was organized in honor of the Ministers at the Ghana's National Theatre to entertain them. It was a night of merry making as Ministers of State had the opportunity to socialize with other delegates. Present at the dinner to entertain the Ministers and their guests were the Ghana Police Band and the Abibigroma cultural group. The Chairperson for the Summit Hon. Dr. Matthew Opoku-Prempeh welcomed delegates to the dinner.

He was also the first to open the floor for delegates to dance. Below are a few pictures from the Dinner.



Dr. Matthew Opoku-Prempeh dancing with a delegate



Ministers dishing their Food



Ministers showing their dancing skills having fun



A Minister showing his drumming skills and having fun

4.0 Closing

The Summit ended on a good note as all the Ministers and representatives from various countries agreed on the eight main decisions made during their roundtable discussion which became the Accra Declaration 2019. Basically, there was a decision to scale up advocacy for the inclusion of Libraries into National Development Agendas; to promote the ideals and support the African Library and Information Associations and Institutions as the leading continental mouthpiece for ensuring favourable policies for the work of Libraries and the building of professional expertise in African Libraries.

They also agreed to urge the African Union (AU) to create a Desk to oversee the inclusion of Libraries and their activities in National Development Policies and Plans, and put on its annual calendar a two-day annual meeting of African Ministers responsible for Libraries.

All the fourteen Ministers of States responsible for Libraries who attended the Ministers Summit in Accra, Ghana from 29-30th October 2019 appended their signatures to the Declaration and made it a formal Document for submission to the African Union.

A Closing Cocktail was organized by Ghana's Minister of Education for all the delegates to bid them safe travels to their various countries.

20/02/2020