



HELD IN GHANA
OCTOBER 31 TO NOVEMBER 5, 2022
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF

ALL AFRICA CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES



AACC-CETA

THEME: AFRICA: My Home, My Future

REPORT

BY

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BACKGROUND

The institution of All Africa Youth Congress (AAYC) could be traced to the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) General Assembly held in 2018 at Kigali, Rwanda. Realizing the significant role of African youth in promoting a peaceful and sustainable growth of the continent to a desirable level of the “Africa we want”, delegates to the Kigali meeting were encouraged to put in place groupings of young Africans representing various Churches associated with AACC and other ecumenical faith entities as well as civil society organizations to congregate for a Congress. The Church leaders also were cognizant of the rising desperation among many young Africans concerning the continent’s relatively slow pace of growth, migration to developed countries, political instability and conflicts resulting in unstable democratic regimes. This worrying situation has been hindering attainment of the “Agenda 2063” with the campaign slogan “The Africa we want” declared by African leaders in 2013. The AACC General Secretary, Rev. Dr. Fidon Mwombeki described this state of affairs as, “The images and stories of young people are dying while trying to flee from Africa to other continents”. In line with AACC’s strategy (2019 – 2023) the General Assembly set a stage for a youth congress to roll out a campaign of African Patriotism in alignment with the “Africa we want”. The maiden congress slated for 2020 in Ghana was postponed due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and the Ukraine-Russian War.

Following the easing of COVID-19 restriction and decline of the pandemic’s impact, AACC and its partner organizers rescheduled the Congress to October 31 to November 5, 2022 in Ghana. This maiden Congress, held on the theme, “AFRICA: MY HOME, MY FUTURE,” brought together more than Nine Hundred young people drawn from Forty Four Anglophone and Francophone countries in Africa and beyond. The participants represented various stakeholder organizations including Churches and relevant Christian faith ecumenical organizations under the jurisdiction of AACC as well as relevant stakeholders such World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC), World Council of Churches (WCC), Council for World Mission (CWM), Evangelism Lutheran Church of America (ELCA), Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), TearFund and Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA), among others.

The venue for the Congress, Pentecost Convention Center (PCC) located at Gomoa Fetteh, near Accra, the capital city of Ghana, was thrown into a state of rejuvenation, ecstasy, hype and inspiration among the teeming youth participants for six days beginning from Monday October 31 to Saturday November 5, 2022. The out of session break periods witnessed cheerful exchange of pleasantries among many of the participants, while some were also engaged in photo shots with colleagues and various forms of entertainments depicting the socio-cultural characteristics of their respective countries. The five-day official programme of major activities included the Official Opening, Four Plenary Sessions, Three Workshops/Side Events (group break ups within the main conference auditorium and adjourning halls) and the Closing Ceremony.



DAY ONE OF THE CONGRESS OFFICIAL PROGRAMME OF MAJOR ACTIVITIES

DATE: TUESDAY NOVEMBER 1, 2022

SUB THEME: "PROMOTING YOUTH AND AFRICAN PATRIOTISM

OFFICIAL OPENING ENGAGEMENTS

A. FLAG TROOPING AND TORCH BEARING:

The official opening of the Congress kick started with a flag trooping procession by the AAYC Matching Party into the main auditorium. The colorful episode saw the Party troopers dressed in their respective countries' traditional costumes and displayed national flags of countries and organizations they represented. The ceremony also witnessed the bearing of the "Climate Justice Torch" that had toured different countries ahead of 2022 COP 27 Climate Change summit. The torch was scheduled to arrive at its final destination, Sharm El-Sheikh in Egypt, venue for the Climate conference.

Soon after this brief but inspiring ceremony, igniting an overwhelming enthusiasm among participants, the Ghana National Anthem and the Africa Union Anthem were sang to pave way for the commencement of the Congress proceedings.



B. OFFICIAL OPENING - SPEECHES, FRATERNAL MESSAGES, ETC

1. **WELCOME ADDRESS:** Most Rev. Dr. Paul Bofofo, Vice Chairman of Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) and Presiding Bishop of Methodist Church, Ghana presented the Welcome Address on behalf of the substantive Chairman of CCG, Rt. Rev. Prof. J.O.Y Mante.

Highlights:

- On behalf of CCG, Most Rev. Dr. Paul Bofofo expressed appreciation to AACC for mobilizing the youth on the continent to share best practices and create space for the exhibition of creative talents.; adding, that the Congress provided opportunity to instill in the youth core values of Christian faith and the spirit of patriotism for the African continent as well as building network among stakeholders.
- The Bishop interpreted the theme, "Africa, My Home, My Future", by depicting the African continent as a place where opportunities are created for a better future, noting, that "A home is a house having a conducive atmosphere to train, and nurture children to become responsible adults and contribute immensely to the development of the society. He urged the youth of Africa to serve as agents of change by upholding virtues of discipline, creativity, integrity to build an exemplary home.

- Most Rev. Dr. Boafo identified the following four essential ingredients that could contribute to facilitating building a better Africa:
 - **SPIRITUAL WITNESS** – As Christians the youth should develop closer and deeper relationship with God to be inspired by the Spirit of worshipping Him in dignity and honesty. This Spirit of submissiveness to God would inspire brighter opportunities in difficult situations.
 - **MORAL WITNESS** – The need to shape the moral fibre of the youth for them to be equipped with values of integrity, modesty, selflessness, dedication, diligence and self-discipline required to build a safer and better Africa.
 - **SOCIAL WITNESS** – The need to create a society and sense of charity support to the less privileged including orphans, widows, physically challenged and the poor deprived and impoverished
 - **ENVIRONMENTAL WITNESS** – The Bishop urged the youth to be advocates and ambassadors of a healthy, clean and green environment, by guarding and campaigning against unpleasant environmental sanitation and degradation.

In conclusion, Most Rev. Dr. Boafo expressed optimism that the Congress would serve as a reliable and favorable platform to sensitize the participating youth to be more inspired in championing the crusade of making Africa a better home and a better future.

2. **KEYNOTE ADDRESS** – Rev Dr. Fidon Mwombeki, General Secretary of All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC)

Highlights:

- The AACC General Secretary traced the background of circumstances leading to the institution of the All Africa Youth Congress (AAYC), saying, the proposal was tabled by AACC at its General Assembly held at Kigali, Rwanda in 2018 and promulgated for adoption by delegates and member Churches. He said AACC strategy proposal took into consideration “Africa Patriotism” and “Pan Africanism” as key areas for engagement with active involvement of the youth to serve as lead actors for the “African We Want” in line with the Africa Union Agenda 2063. It therefore became imperative to institute the All Africa Youth Congress (AAYC) as a platform to set the stage for championing the crusade on the theme, “Africa, My Home, My Future.”
- Throwing more light on the institution of AAYC, Rev Dr. Fidon Mwombeki was of the view that if given the opportunity, the youth of Africa can change the destiny of the continent, and reposition it as the next source and engine of growth and prosperity of the world. He however expressed regret at the state of desperation and anger among many youth, considering the Continent’s high level of impoverishment, conflicts, unemployment, bad governance, etc, thus comparatively relegating Africa to a lower status among the community of technologically advanced continents globally. This worrying situation, he observed is giving rise to hopelessness among the youth, compelling some of them to engage in social evils including violent extremism, human trafficking, radicalism, etc. He condemned the appalling spate of ill-treatment, discrimination and torture perpetuated against some people of African descent by some foreign countries. He also denounced acts of xenophobia meted out to nationals of some African countries by their colleague Africans. He urged all nationals of Africa to

demonstrate love of neighborliness at each other devoid of hatred and prejudice. “Africa, all of Africa, is a home for all of us and it belongs to us together. We should see borders between countries as borders between neighbours in the same village, or beacons of plots of land in a city”, he underscored.

- The AACC General Secretary admonished young people of Africa not to be desirous and enthusiastic to leave their countries in search of greener pastures and comfort abroad at the neglect of their native home, cautioning, that “the world is increasingly against migrants, particularly those of African descent, hence ill-treatment of people of African descent across the world.” He also encouraged the youth of Africa to be hopeful of the future of Africa, noting, that the trend of development of the continent based on its potential human and natural resources should not be underestimated. “Africa is my future not because I am not wanted in other places. But it is my future because indeed there is tremendous development in the continent after independence. The young people have no idea how Africa was like fifty to sixty years ago. Africa is our future of prosperity because indeed we have the needed resources” he assured.
 - Rev Dr. Fidon Mwombeki further portrayed a vivid scenario of Africa as providing a huge world market for imported goods and services from the world’s most industrial and advanced countries. “Many countries worldwide develop interest in Africa because we are a big market. That is why all famous brands and producers have Africa strategy. Our youthful population is a huge potential market,” he remarked. He urged the youth of Africa to compel their governments to invest in building skills and capacities as well as grooming them and their local entrepreneurship into viable and proficient technological entities. “Young people must push their governments to use their enormous procurement power to invest in their own people, their own entrepreneurs, their own innovators, and make sure they are enabled to succeed. I was impressed by my late President, John Joseph Pombe Magufuli who banned government offices from buying imported furniture. That decision alone, stimulated a lot of production activity and employment for local young people. I saw the Kenyan young people on the streets making high end hospital beds during Covid19 when nothing could be shipped in. The future is here, in Africa”, he stressed.
 - Concluding his address, the AACC General Secretary entreated the youth of Africa to join forces together and commit to work towards ensuring prosperous, integrated, and peaceful Africa anchored on reliable and sustainable democratic leadership, with the hope of attaining the Agenda 2063, leading to the Africa we Want.
3. **ADDRESS AND OFFICIAL OPENING** – By Alhaji Mustapha Usif, Ghana’s Minister for Youth and Sports

Highlights:

- He commended the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) for leading the organization of the All Africa Youth Congress and the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) for hosting of the event in Ghana as local organizers. He expressed delight at the choice of the theme, “Africa: My Home, My Future”. According to him, it will increase awareness on the tremendous potentials and opportunities of young Africans and inspire them to be more patriotic to the countries and committed to utilizing their talents and gifts aimed at building a thriving Africa.
- He was pleased to note that the official opening of the Youth Congress coincided with Africa Youth Day instituted by African Union Commission scheduled for celebration on 1st

November annually per the Africa Youth Charter (2006). The Youth Day which was synonymous to the AAYC in significance was aimed at bringing together young people of Africa under the umbrella of Pan African Youth Forum to strengthen alliances with relevant stakeholders and build African-centric innovation.

- The Ghanaian Youth and Sports Minister was however of the view that even though the youth of Africa constitute the majority of the continent's population, their presence can only make a positive impact and translate into the Africa we want by investing in their education, skills development, health, etc. He said in line with this vision, the Government of Ghana has developed a Youth Policy for implementation between 2022 and 2027 aimed at harnessing the potentials of young people. Besides, 13 youth volunteer modules had been instituted by his Ministry's National Youth Authority under the National Youth Volunteer Programme to provide job opportunities for young people in skills development. He therefore encouraged the youth participants of the maiden AAYC and all other young people of Africa to explore avenues for growing their capacities and businesses, so as to contribute to the sustainable growth and development of Africa. It is on this note that he declared the first edition of AAYC officially open.

4. GOODWILL MESSAGES

a. PAN AFRICAN CLIMATE JUSTICE ALLIANCES (PACJA):

Highlights:

- We are grateful to be part of the All Africa Youth Congress (AAYC) preceding the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of Parties (COP) 27 schedule to take place at Egypt in few days time.
- Climate Change and climate variability impacts are posing severe threats to the environment, human existence, economic growth and sustainable development globally. Even though Africa contributes less to the impacts of these devastating phenomenon, the continent had been the worst affected due to its vulnerability.
- The youth of Africa must rise in support of PACJA to lead a vigorous campaign against the canker. "We need also to engage with Africa Union and regulatory institutions to ensure that its member states take climate action'. PACJA was coordinating the bearing of Climate Justice Torch towards the COP 27 Climate summit to be hosted by Africa in Egypt. Through the leadership of young people on the continent, the Climate Justice Torch campaign provided a platform for engaging relevant youth groups and policy makers. The maiden AAYC taking place in Ghana was the final destination for the Torch on its way to Egypt, venue for the COP 27.
- We call on our youth of the Continent to rally in support of PACJA's climate justice and climate action campaign to secure a better environment for a better Home and a better Future towards the "Africa we want."

b. TEARFUND:

Highlights:

- Mr. Miles Giljam, Tearfund's Senior Associate of Global Campaign Team who presented the message on behalf of his organization, described Africa in its present era as standing on a

pivotal point in its history. He underscored the need for leaders of Africa to make the right choices with decisive and courageous decisions if the continent should make significant strides in sustainable growth and development. “The choices that we make are going to influence our continents future and shape the wider world in the century to come. We have a growing youth population. We have massive expanding cities. We have an environmental crisis that is challenging and threatening us. But all of these things require courageous and decisive decisions and interventions in the next 10 years”, he remarked.

- He urged the youth Africa to use available social media platforms, public platforms and spaces of international conferences to tell the good story of Africa by unveiling the continent’s potentials.

c. **WORLD COMMUNION OF REFORMED CHURCHES (WCRC)** – Message presented by Rev. Dr. Samuel Ayete Nyampong, Vice President of WCRC:

Highlights:

- Rev. Dr. Samuel Ayete Nyampong noted that WCRC is unequivocally committed to engaging young people to participate in its programs and governance at all levels. According to him, the WCRC has given premium to the inclusion of youth and gender diversities in its Strategic Plan (2018 – 2024). He disclosed that WCRC will in 2023 next year organize a youth summit.
- He described “Africa: My Home, My Future” as a theme that is timely, and will inspire the youth of Africa to be more patriotic towards building a thriving continent, create a viable space for connectivity and networking and provide a platform for constructive dialogue and innovative actions as portrayed in conformity of the Congress objectives.
- The WCRC Vice President entreated young people in Africa to emulate the spirit of Pan Africanism demonstrated by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Kenneth Kaunda and Nelson Mandela by dedicating themselves towards the emancipation and development of the continent. He further urged them to rise to their responsibility as Christian stewards and be inspired by the values of faith, love, integrity and commitment as exemplified by some characters in the Bible including Esther, Daniel, Nehemiah, David, etc.
- He implored governments of Africa to prioritize investing in young people to equip them with creative, technological and innovative skills required for the advancement of the continent.

Goodwill messages were also presented by some other organizations including Council for World Mission (CWM), Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) and Norwegian Church Aid (NCA).



PLENARY SESSION

1. INTERVIEW/PANEL DISCUSSION

Host/Moderator: Mwila Bwaga

Guest/Interviewee: Rev. Dr. Fidon Mwabeki, General Secretary, AACC

Topic: Promoting Youth and African Patriotism

Highlights:

- The Rev. Dr. Fidon Mwabeki was interviewed based on keynote address he delivered during the Official Opening. The panel of interviewers was led by Mwila Bwaga.
- The larger audience in the auditorium were given the opportunity to ask questions

2. GROUP WORKSHOP SIDE EVENTS

The Congress participations were placed into eight separate cluster groups, with resource person(s) attached to each group to facilitate presentation and discussion of assigned topics. The topics were tailored in alignment with the sub theme for the Day, “Promoting Youth and African Patriotism” as follows:

- i. Celebration of African heritage through Arts and Culture
- ii. Embracing the Youth in Cyber Technology and Development
- iii. Promoting Youth and African Patriotism through Sports
- iv. Involving Young People in Ecumenical Diakonia and Sustainable Development
- v. Promoting a Democratic Culture through Elections Accountability – Youth participation in Electoral Processes
- vi. Framing Climate Justice Conversations with a Loss and Damage lens.
- vii. Climate Finance



DAY TWO OF THE CONGRESS

DATE: WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 2, 2022

SUB THEME: “CAMPAIGNING FOR AFRICAN DIGNITY”

MAJOR HIGHLIGHT OF ACTIVITIES

A. MORNING DEVOTION

- The Day’s activities began with songs of praises and prayer led by Francophone Central Africa working group.
- A 30-minute liturgical worship session characterized by prayer, hymns and Biblical reflection on the Day’s theme “Campaigning for African Dignity”.

B. VIDEO DOCUMENTARY

Highlights:

- A 30-minute customized video documentary titled “The Story of Elmina: The Slave Castle”, showcasing the horrible scenes of torture and agony suffered by Africans during the Slave Trade at the Elmina Castle in Ghana was screened for viewing by participants. Prior to the televised episode, a Manager of the Castle narrated a historical account of forced labour and the Slave Trade in Ghana and some African countries centuries ago.
- Viewers of the video were given the opportunity to asked questions. Responses to their questions were provided by the Manager of the Castle who served as the Resource Person and Facilitator of the video documentary session.

C. PLENARY SESSION

1. INTERVIEW/PANEL DISCUSSION

Topic: Generational Mission towards Restoring the Spirit of Pan Africanism

Moderator: Moses Cole

Panelists:

- Hassan Ahmed Hassan from Somalia
- Ms. Afrik Babazile from South Africa
- Gershhinen Paul Dajur - Nigeria
- Ms. Wafar Misrar – Morocco

Highlights:

- The Moderator presented a synopsis on topic, “Generational Mission towards Restoring the Spirit of Pan Africanism,” in alignment with the sub theme for the Day, “Campaigning for African Dignity.”
- The panelists were quizzed by the Moderator on the topic individually with particular reference to experiences in their respective countries and general reflection of the African continent as well as proposed modalities required for the restoration of the Spirit of Pan Africanism.
- The audience was given the platform to pose questions and comments with corresponding responses provided by the panelists.

2. PRESENTATION

Topic: Showcasing Youth Innovation, Social Entrepreneurship and Job Creation

Speaker: Ms. Lydia Rubi Binus, a Nigerian Social Entrepreneur

Highlights:

- The Speaker was introduced with a brief profile about her background including nationality, formal education, professional career and experiences. At the time of making her presentation, 23-year old Ms. Lydia Rubi Binus, a University graduate who holds Master of Arts Degree, serves as a prolific entrepreneur in the management of her own businesses as Chief Executive Officer.
- Her presentation on the topic, “Showcasing Youth Innovation, Social Entrepreneurship and Job Creation”, measured up with the Day’s sub theme, “Campaigning for African Dignity”. Key subject matters of the topic include:
 - Significance for the youth of Africa to acquire innovative skills
 - Developing socio-economic entrepreneurship
 - Job creation opportunities available or needed to be developed for young Africans
- Intermittent spontaneous applause and excitement that greeted the Speaker’s presentation was an indication of overwhelming interest and adoption of her messages by the audience.
- A 3-member panel was constituted to quiz the Speaker further on the subject matters of her topic, after which participants were offered the opportunity to pose their questions and comments.

3. GROUP WORKSHOPS/SIDE EVENTS

Participations were again grouped into eight separate cluster categories to discuss eight different topics. Attached to each group was a resource person to facilitate discussion of the assigned topic. All the topics were linked to the sub theme for the Day, “*Campaigning for African Dignity*” as follows:

- i. Confronting irregular migration and human trafficking
- ii. Complexities of population and demographic dividend.
- iii. Youth and sexual reproductive health in Africa
- iv. Deconstructing legacies of slavery (Changing the narratives)
- v. Abundant Africa initiative
- vi. Caring for a child is critical for a safe and secure society
- vii. Empowered to challenge – A focus on Education, Health, Protection and Development Dimensions of the Youth Population
- viii. Advocating for Climate Justice

DAY THREE OF THE CONGRESS

DATE: THURSDAY NOVEMBER 3, 2022

SUB THEME: “ADVOCATING FOR PEACE, JUSTICE AND SECURITY”

MAJOR HIGHLIGHT OF ACTIVITIES

A. MORNING DEVOTION:

- The Day’s activities began with songs of praises and prayer led by Ghana and some Anglophone West Africa working groups.
- The praises session was immediately followed by 30-minutes liturgical service with a sermon title based on the Day’s theme “Advocating for Peace, Justice and Security”.
- The Sermon anchored on the scripture text Luke 4:14 – 20 was delivered by Rev. Jantiku Liasin Jamare.
- The Preacher called on participants to serve as faithful ambassadors of Christ and advocates for peace and justice in the wake rising political crisis, human right abuse, crime wave, corruption, unemployment and impoverishment among others that are threatening the desired technological advancement, socio-economic growth and development as well as the security and political stability of the continent. He said a stable democratic governance and sustainable growth and development can only thrive in an atmosphere of peace, justice and secured economy.

B. REMARKS – Rev. Dr. Lesmore Ezekiel, Director of Programmes, AACC

- Rev. Dr. Lesmore Ezekiel, entreated delegates to the Congress to avoid acting as tourists by abstaining from the Congress sessions, but rather ensure they fully utilize the opportunity offered them to actively participate in all business proceedings.
- He explained reasons for the absence of the AAYC Grand Patron, H.E Chief Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo, saying he was serving on an international assignment as a special envoy to Somalia and Ethiopia.
- He introduced the 13-member Steering Committee of AAYC that facilitated organization of a successful Congress. They included among others:
 - Neo Mousima – Chairman – Botswana
 - Paulo Lukecio – Vice Chair – Uganda
 - Emmanuel Majar – Secretary – Togo
 - Ras Mongo – Member – Congo Brazzaville
 - Amos Agyei – Member – Ghana
 - Tibonge – Member – Zambia

C. VIDEO DOCUMENTARY

Highlights:

- A 30-minute video documentary titled “*Silencing the Guns*”, and relevant to the theme of the Day was screened for viewing by participants. Prior to the screening, the Moderator of this Session presented a background to the documentary.
- Soon after transmission of the video documentary, a panel of four speakers including Arek Francis from South Sudan, Logman Alhalang from Sudan, Souzanne Kayuwa from

Democratic Republic of Congo and Uddesa Bidire from Ethiopia presented their comments on the video documentary in relation to the experience in their respective countries as well as measures taken by governments of their countries to expedite action on the implementation of National County Action Plan on “Silencing the Guns”. The Moderator, who facilitated the discussion, invited questions and comments from the audience.

D. PLENARY SESSION

1. PRESENTATION:

TOPIC: A Just and Secure Africa

SPEAKER: Dr Hassan Khannenje, Director, HORN Institute of Strategic Studies

Highlights:

- Dr Hassan Khannenje expressed regret that, even though, many African countries attained political independence from foreign colonial powers more than 60 years ago, the Continent is still struggling to exorcise itself from the ‘demons’ of disease, abject poverty ignorance, while fighting against each other and putting restrictions on its borders.
- In his view, for Africans to understand their journey towards ‘Justice, they need to understand the context for colonization, saying, “they were designed not for unity of Africa but for extraction of its resources, informed not by any genuine desire to share the word of God but instrumental expropriation of African religiosity as a notoriously a religious people to advance the interest of monopoly capitalism.” He said seeking the attainment of a just and secure Africa requires addressing the past, confronting the present and planning for the future.
- Africa, he said is at its crossroads plagued by conflict, bad governance, political instability, famine and hunger; while many of its citizens are confronted with transnational threats of terrorism, violent extremism, negative impact of climate change and drought. “These challenges not only pose physical and human security threat to our collective well-being but they are fundamentally existential threats to our collective future”, he lamented.
- He described the current state of the continent as “The pursuit of justice is still elusive, our security is not guaranteed, and our leadership is yet to earn the faith and confidence of our people”. He therefore urged young men and women of Africa to emulate the passion of patriotism demonstrated by Kwame Nkrumah, Sekou Toure, Patrice Lumumba and Nelson Mandela, saying they led the struggle for liberation of Africa when they were young. Africa, he noted requires young leaders with values of integrity, trustworthiness, diligence, dedication and astute leadership qualities to liberate the continent from its present state of poor infrastructure and position it on the path of sustainable growth, technological advancement and digital innovation. “Achieving our collective dreams requires a commitment to our cardinal principles of patriotism and spirit of Pan Africanism ..” he added.
- In his concluding remarks, Dr Hassan Khannenje urged citizens of Africa to guard against polarization of the continent along the lines of race, ethnicity and religion, noting that the “Africa we want” as our Home and Future” can only thrive in a peaceful, just and secured environment. “We can disagree without being disagreeable, we can debate

without being demonizing each other and never should we allow politics, culture or religions break our bonds of affection.”

2. GROUP WORKSHOPS/SIDE EVENTS

Participations were divided into seven separate cluster groups to discuss seven different topics. Attached to each group was a resource person to facilitate discussion of the assigned topic. All the topics were linked to the sub theme for the Day, “Advocating for Peace, Justice and Security” as follows:

- i. Youth for Gender Justice
- ii. Peace and Security in Africa with focus on the Agenda 2063, “the Africa we want”
- iii. Combating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and the issue violent extremism
- iv. Peace and security in Africa with focus on silencing the guns.
- v. Public accountability and anti-corruption in Africa
- vi. Climate action in lead up to COP 27 and post COP
- vii. Health and Healing



DAY FOUR OF THE CONGRESS

DATE: FRIDAY NOVEMBER 4, 2022

SUB THEME: “FOSTERING ACTIVE CITEZENSHIP”

MAJOR HIGHLIGHT OF ACTIVITIES

A. MORNING DEVOTION – AACC/AAYC Worship Team

- The Day’s activities began with songs of praises and prayer led by East Africa working group.
- Soon after the praises, Rev. Sam Munyiri from Kenya led a 30-minutes liturgical worship service. He delivered his sermon based on the Day’s theme “Fostering Active Citizenship” and Scriptures Ephesians 2: 11 and Luke 15: 1 - 22.
- Rev. Sam Munyiri called on participants to serve as worthy Disciples of Christ by demonstrating Love for each other. He admonished them to guard against hatred, enmity and not to regard each other as threats; but rather foster deeper relationship of active citizenship with fellow Africans.

B. PLENARY SESSION

1. **REMARKS ON “FOSTERING ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP”** – Rev. Dr. Lesmore Ezekeil, Director of Programmes, AACC presented a general overview of what is expected of young Africans as active citizens in their stewardship as advocates and facilitators of sustainable growth and development of the continent towards the “Africa we want as our home and our future.”

Highlights:

- The AACC Director of Programmes described AGENDA 2063 as a 50-year strategic development blueprint instituted by the Africa Union (AU) for adoption and implementation by member countries.
- He called on AU State Parties as a matter of urgency and priority, to comply with the Africa Youth Charter by undertaking necessary steps in accordance with democratic constitutional processes to adopt legislative measures in implementing the provisions of the Charter.
- He also underscored the need for Africa governments to facilitate the institution and strengthening of platforms for youth participation in decision making at local, national, regional and continental levels of governance necessary to make Africa a better home presently and for the future.
- Rev. Dr. Lesmore Ezekiel also urged all citizens of Africa irrespective of race, tribal or religious affiliation to be inspired by the Spirit of Pan Africanism, noting that “each of us as citizens have a role to play in creating a better world for future generation.”
- He condemned the greedy and selfish character of some leaders who usurp power undemocratically and whose ambition had been to use political power to oppress their citizens and amass wealth for themselves at the neglect of majority citizens wallowing in poverty.

- He encourage the youth to be courageous in rising against what he describes as the ‘emperors of the day who are wielding power, some of whom have overstayed their mandatory tenure’ for their selfish interest.
- Rev. Dr. Lesmore enumerated how the youth of African can participate in governance issues as active citizens as follows:
 - Be current about national issues such as national budgets
 - Be ready to test your ideas
 - Be ready to be a volunteer for nation building
 - Be intentional in your political participation
 - Be a creator of space and constructive engagements to identify your targets
 - Be ready to challenge entrenched and retrogressive cultures, noting that, “the youth are leaders of today not tomorrow.”
 - Be a supportive pillar of all sort of initiative in your community
 - Be a good steward of empowerment.
 - Be ready to mobilize others for a good course
 - Be ready to take risks
 - Never give up your dream for national cohesion and transformation

“If you are determined as an active citizen, change is possible, transformation is possible”, he concluded.

2. PRESENTATION

TOPIC: Coup Detats and Unconstitutional Change of Democratically Elected Governments in Africa

SPEAKER: His Lordship Justice Isaac Dossey, Retired Justice of Appeal Court in Ghana

Highlights:

- Justice Isaac Dossey deplored the illegitimate and forceful means of toppling democratically elected governments through coup detats, noting, that “suppression of power is oppression of the citizenry.” He said an instance is when some politicians deviously pretend to be democratic, but later turn back to usurp political power.
- He called on the youth of Africa not join forces with coup makers or “greedy power seekers”, but to serve as active citizens to demonstrate their patriotism and rise vociferously against any form forceful or unlawful means of griping on political power. He also condemned situations whereby some African youth are politically active in the wrong direction by engaging in devious, criminal and corrupt practices.
- The retired Justice of the Appeal Court also encouraged young men and women of Africa to actively engage in partisan politics through democratic means that would enable them contribute to the growth and development of their respective countries, noting leading African freedom fighters such as Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyere and Nelson Mandela became politicians as active youthful citizens.

PANEL DISCUSSION:

A 3-member panel who contributed to the topic presented by Justice Isaac Dossey in the perspective of “Fostering Active Citizenship”, were unanimous on the need for the youth to be engaged as active

participants in decision making. They contended that they youth constitute a significant percentage of the populace and equally huge followers, and consequentially capable of influencing attitudes.

- A panelist from Kenya however underscored the need for young graduates to develop their academic, professional and capacity skills in the areas of science, technology, information technology, administration, etc before seeking to be engaged to serve in corporate and governance leadership positions.
- A panelist from Rwanda cited an instance where many youth in his country who were coerced into playing active role in the war lost the opportunity to develop their talents. He entreated young men and women of other African countries to take a cue from the lesson of Rwanda.
- A panelist from Ghana urged the youth to resist attempt by people seeking political leadership to destabilize the Constitution that legally binds all citizens of their various countries. He quoted a portion of the Ghanaian Constitution's preamble stating "that power belong to the people but exercised by the President." He advised the youth to appreciate the value of power they wield, and not to allow themselves to be abused by irresponsible politicians.

CLOSING CEREMONY

1. **Praises and Thanksgiving Performance:** The closing ceremony scheduled to officially draw curtain on the 5-day Congress began with an hour activity of praises and music performances by various ecumenical youth groups across the continent.
2. **Closing Remarks:** Addressing the participants, the AACC Director of Programmes, Rev. Dr. Lesmore Ezekiel requested the youth of Africa to cultivate and uphold the culture and spirit of Volunteerism. He described "Real Volunteerism" as an act driven by passion, compassion and conviction, adding, that Volunteerism is essential ingredient required to complement efforts by African governments to promote the desired growth of their respective countries.
3. **Congress Communiqué:** A-23 point Communiqué hinged on the four Congress thematic areas of African Patriotism; African Dignity; Advocating for Peace, Justice and Security as well as Fostering Active Citizenship was issued to the following relevant lead stakeholders:
 - All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC)
 - African Union (AU)
 - Respective Governments of African Countries
 - Faith-Based Organizations
 - Community-Based Organizations/CSOs
 - Financial Institutions

(Please refer to the Appendix column for the full text of the communiqué)

4. **Acknowledgement:** Rev. Dr. Lesmore Ezekiel acknowledged with appreciation, institutions and individuals who contributed in diverse ways in making the maiden Youth Congress a success. They include the following few among others:
- The Ghanaian Local Organizing Committee led by Rev. Dr. Setri Nyomi, constituted under the auspices of Christian Council of Ghana
 - The AAYC Steering Committee under the Chairmanship of Mr. Daniel Orogo
 - AACC Partners and Sponsors of AAYC including World Communion of Reformed Churches, World Council of Churches, Christian Council of Ghana, Council of World Mission, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, Norwegian Church Aid, Tearfund, Christian Aid and Pan African Climate Justice Alliance, etc
 - The AAYC Communication Team
5. **Presentation of Awards/Honours:** Awards were presented to individuals who distinguished themselves selflessly and diligently contributing to the success of the AAYC. The included the following among a significant number of awardees:
- Rev. Dr. Fidon Mwombeki, AACC General Secretary
 - Rev. Dr. Lesmore Ezekiel, Director of Programmes, AACC
 - Mr. Daniel Orogo, AACC Youth Desk Officer and his teammates of AAYC Steering Committee
 - Other AACC Staff including Joan and Carrington
 - Rev. Dr. Cyril Fayose, Christian Council of Ghana General Secretary
 - Rev. Dr. Setri Nyomi, Chairman of Local Organizing Committee
6. **Vote of Thanks:** The following personalities in sequence offered the vote of thanks on behalf of their respective teams and groupings:
- Mr. Daniel Orogo on behalf of AAYC Steering Committee as its Chairman and AACC Youth Coordinator.
 - Rev. Dr. Setri Nyomi on behalf of AAYC Local Organizing Committee as its Chairman.
 - Rev. Dr. Lesmore Ezekiel on behalf of AACC as its Director of Programmes



KEY BOTTLENECKS/CHALLENGES:

The following issues were identified as key shortcomings to the Congress engagements and served as obstructions to my assignment:

1. Difficulty in collating information required for preparation of the report
2. Difficulty in acquiring official accreditation with identification tag as well as other relevant materials required to facilitate smooth operation of my services as an assignee serving on special duty.
3. Difficulty in participating in all daily workshops, apparently as these engagements were organized at the same time at separate venues that were quite far from each other. These workshops were instituted to discuss different topics aligned with each day's sub themes

GRATIFYING ISSUES:

Regardless of the above stated bottlenecks, the Congress recorded overwhelming satisfactory results:

1. A very pleasant conference venue with appealing and serene environment, effective logistical facilities and items among others.
2. A spacious auditorium with an awesome floor plan, attractive stage craft, nice sitting arrangement, effective sound and lighting system, etc
3. Brilliant professional, informative and educative presentations and delivery of speeches, panel discussions, sermons, etc by astute and eloquent resource persons.
4. Inspiring artistic display of cultural and musical performances.
5. Encouraging attendance by youth delegates and representatives of various stakeholder partners.



APPENDIX

1. QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & RESPONSES:

Below is a list of few questions and comments posed by participants on some topical presentations as well as corresponding responses by Speakers:

No.	QUESTIONS/COMMENTS	RESPONSES
TOPIC: Promoting Youth and African Patriotism		
SPEAKER & RESPONDENT: Rev. Dr. Fidon Mwonbeki, General Secretary, AACC		
1.	How do we inspire patriotism among African youth to bring about the change the continent want?	Leaders serving in positions at all levels of academia, governance, community, etc must demonstrate values of nationalism, commitment and selflessness worthy of emulation by the youth.
2.	What should be the role of the youth in bringing about the change Africa needs for a better home and a better future?	The youth should be encouraged to develop their capacities academically, religiously and technologically; and to play leading roles in political governance.
3.	What is the expectation of AACC with regards to facilitating the desired transformation for a better Africa?	AACC has been working with its major African stakeholder institutions including its member churches, other CSOs such as PACJA, the AU, etc to promote the needed growth of the continent.
4.	In your own view are we as citizens doing enough to promote African patriotism? How would you rate the performance and efforts of African governments and CSOs in the promotion of youth?	No, a lot more need to be done to persuade and sensitize our citizenry, particularly the youth to adopt the culture of patriotism and appreciate the values of loyalty and dedication. Our African leaders have lost it in this regard.
5.	What has AACC been doing to influence African leaders to develop the youth of their respective countries and actively involve them in the affairs of governance?	As indicated earlier, the AACC Secretariat uses its platforms such as the on-going youth Congress to drum home its concerns about the significance of the youth in the growth and development of the continent. It also serves a partner of some technical working groups of AU and CSOs.
SUBJECT: Screening and panel discussion on Implementation of National Action Plans on “Silencing the Guns” relating to screening of a video documentary.		
SPEAKERS/RESPONDENTS: Four Panelists including the Moderator Nyaboth Paska, Arek Francis from South Sudan, Logman Alhalang from Sudan and Uddesa Bidire from Ethiopia		
1.	What strategies could be put in place for adoption in “silencing the guns”?	The strategies could include enforcement of sanctions, dialogue with combatants and rehabilitation of youth recruited as combatants.
2.	How can we “silence the guns” when a ‘powerful’ warring faction involved in the conflict refuses to give room for negotiation?	Process of negotiation gradual. It involves peaceful dialogue.
3.	Where are the guns coming from?	Most of the guns are imported from advanced countries by wealthy persons who seek political power through the use of combatants.
4.	How do we silence the guns when the leaders	We need the civil society, particularly the

	involved in the use weapons illegitimately hold on power with authoritarianism?	youth to vociferously denounce this draconian practice.
5.	The youth constitute the majority of persons wielding the guns. How do we persuade them to 'drop' the guns; and what could be their alternative source of livelihood after dropping the guns?	When demilitarized, the youth need to be trained to acquire professional skills to position them in career job market.

TOPIC: A Just and Secure Africa

SPEAKER/LEAD RESPONDENT: Dr. Hassan Khannenje, Director, HORN International Institute for Strategic Studies

1.	What is the root cause of conflicts in Africa?	The origin of conflicts historically can be traced to disputes involving tribes, migration and settlement, chieftaincy, land boarder issues, etc . These issues have evolved into present day terrorism, tribal was, coup detats
2.	Is it possible to completely silence the guns in order to secure a just and peaceful Africa that we want?	It is possible, if international regulatory bodies such as UN, AU and regional bodies and powerful nations such as EU, USA, etc as well as governments develop and enforce laws to silence the guns. As citizens of Africa we need to collectively appreciate the enormity of negative impacts and resist any form of oppression.
3.	What actions would you propose to the youth as part of their contributions towards a Just, Peaceful and Secured Africa?	We need to encourage and persuade the youth to serve as advocates in campaigning against the injustice, unlawful means of taking over power and rising insecurity meted out by war mongers and terrorists.
4.	What should Africa do to secure a permanent seat at the UN Security Council?	Our leaders must demonstrate principles of democratic governance and guard against acts of corruption and injustice. Besides, we need to unite and fight a common front.
5.	What strategy would you propose to AACC in advocating for Peace and Justice in Africa?	AACC commands huge members and associates. These partners should be encouraged to build synergies and compel political powerhouses to put in place pragmatic measures of promoting peace and justice in their jurisdictions.

TOPIC: Coup de tats and unconstitutionally toppling of democratically elected governments in Africa

SPEAKER/LEAD RESPONDENT: His Lordship Justice Isaac Dossey, Retired Justice of Appeal Court in Ghana

1.	In which context should forceful overthrow of governments be justified?	We need to condemn forceful overthrow of democratically elected governments. However, forceful overthrow of coup leaders by forces constituted by UN, AU or regional bodies could be justified in certain context.
2.	Why should democratically elected Heads of State, who, after completing their mandatory term, run to Supreme Court to amend the	Again, this is condemnable. It is undemocratic practice among some African countries.

	Constitution and extend their tenure in office?	
3.	To what extent do we justify coup detats supported by Western Powers to topple governments in Africa?	Toppling constitutional democratically elected governments through coup detats whether locally initiated or with support by powerful forces should not be justified.
4.	How effective are sanctions meted out to coup makers by internationally recognized bodies such as the UN, AU, etc?	Instances in Africa indicate that such sanctions are ineffective. Some of these coup leaders are crafty with dexterity to prepare the grounds democratically to cling on power.
5.	Should our law courts be trusted to adjudicate justice fairly on issues involving forceful overthrow of governments?	The judicial system in Africa is progressively losing trust among a significant number of the citizenry, particularly on matters relating to elections and the rule of law.



ALL AFRICA YOUTH CONGRESS

GHANA DECLARATION

Kasoa, Ghana

November 2022

Preamble

The AllAfrica Youth Congress (AAYC) convened at the Pentecost Convention Centre in Kasoa, Accra, Ghana from the 31st of October to the 5th of November 2022. The Congress brought together 868 young people (52% male & 48% female) from 40 African countries and 20 young people from the diaspora community, and people of African Descent aged between 15-35 years. The AAYC is a historical initiative of the AllAfrica Conference of Churches (AACC) to facilitate a continental youth campaign on African patriotism under the slogan “Africa: My Home. My Future.” The slogan is meant to increase awareness on the tremendous potentials and opportunities for young people in the continent, thus inspiring the young people to be patriotic and active citizens of their countries and Africa by utilizing their talents and gifts towards building an integrated, prosperous and peaceful continent.

The event brought together young people, faith-based communities, civil society organizations, the media, strategic partners and governmental representatives to constructively engage, deeply reflect and broadly converse on pertinent issues for Africa’s socio-economic and political transformation.

The main objective of the AAYC was to remind the youth of their roles and to also awaken them to consciousness of the viable space for connectivity, fraternity and solidarity towards addressing contemporary issues.

The Congress was guided by four thematic areas that offer freshness to the slogan of the campaign, “Africa: My Home. My Future.” The themes are;

1. **Africa Patriotism:** the Congress embraced African heritage through a celebration of arts and culture whilst embracing new technology to create opportunities for young people in Africa.
2. **African Dignity:** the Congress brought out the need for African-led solutions to African problems such as climate change, illegal migration, human trafficking, sexual and reproductive health issues, gender-based violence, and debt crisis. The youths were encouraged to commit and engage in fighting against the aforementioned injustices for a well-sustained development to restore and maintain African dignity.
3. **Advocating for Justice and Security:** In light of growing inequalities and instability in Africa, the Congress highlighted the importance of preserving sovereignty and the rule of law, youth advocacy for justice, security, and equity for economic opportunities.
4. **Fostering Active Citizenship:** the Congress reminded the youths of the need to embrace an informed dialogue on influencing policies relating to peace, democracy, elections, governance, human rights, and the rule of law. The congress also reminded the youths of the importance of their active participation and meaningful contribution to democratic processes.

We, the African young people gathered here in Accra, Ghana commit to:

1. Make conscious efforts to positively contribute to national growth and development.
2. Engage our country's policies and frameworks to provide critical feedback and reviews necessary to engage duty bearers for accountable governance.
3. Get involved in peacebuilding and conflict transformation initiatives.
4. Promote, protect and preserve the rich arts, cultures, and history of Africa.
5. Use available platforms to advocate for justice, security and good governance.
6. Campaign against all forms of sexual and gender-based violence.
7. Create a safe space and platforms for children.
8. Sensitize and heighten the need for urgent and sustainable climate action to save our mother-earth (the ecosystem) for our common good, where big pollutants are compelled to compensate for the destructions they have caused.

We call on the respective stakeholders, as follows:

1. The **AACC** to continue supporting the youth congress platforms for meaningful youth engagements and participation every two years.
2. The **Financial Institutions** to continue to expand access to credit facilities and reduce interest rates for enterprising youth entrepreneurs.
3. The **Development Organizations** to enhance support in forms of grants and scholarships to young people and youth organizations.
4. The **Faith Communities** to use their prophetic voices and play mediation roles in light of growing inequalities and instability in Africa.
5. The **Faith based communities** to utilise available technocrats and experts within the churches in addressing key issues.
6. The **Faith based communities** to strengthen psycho-social support services and spaces within the church for the young people.
7. The **National Governments** to commit resources to end economic challenges and open civic spaces for the expression of opinions.
8. The **National Governments** to prioritize domestic resource mobilization and ensure fair and just taxation systems.
9. The **National Governments** to tackle illicit financial flows.
10. The **African governments** to decolonize the education system.
11. The **African Governments** to fulfil their mandates on ratified treaties and agreements that are meant to enhance Africa's integration and prosperity.
12. The **African Union** to create an enabling environment among African Countries through trans-trade and movement of people.
13. The **African Union** to preserve peace, security, justice, the rule of law, and equitable opportunity for all African people.

We further call all the respective stakeholders to:

1. Continue and promote the period of the campaign on “**Silencing the Guns**” initiatives for lasting peace in Africa.
2. Expedite the robust response of young people's sexual and reproductive health to ensure unlimited access to information and services.

We, the All Africa Youth Congress participants remind to ensure in the implementation of the above **actions** and **calls**. We, recognize the inclusion of young people in every commitment towards building an integrated, prosperous and peaceful continent.