



RÉPUBLIQUE TOGOLAISE



Declaration of the West Africa Regional Conference
as a prelude to the 9th Pan-African Congress

Bamako, March 14th – 15th, 2024

We, the participants of the West Africa Regional Conference, gathered from March 14th to 15th, 2024 in Bamako, Republic of Mali, around the theme "Diaspora, Afro-descendants and Development"

Representing our national governments, local and regional bodies and civil society organizations, intellectuals, press personalities, investors.

Emphasizing the need to strengthen unity, cohesion, solidarity in order to promote an integrated development of the continent with the support of its diaspora and Afro-descendants.

Recognizing and celebrating the richness of the Afro-descendant heritage, marked by a history of resilience, struggle and significant contributions to world culture.

Taking note of the challenges faced by Afro-descendant diasporas and communities, such as systemic discrimination, social injustice, unfair access to economic opportunities, limited education and other obstacles that hinder the full potential of these populations.

Recognizing the emotional reconnection of the diaspora and Afro-descendants to Africa as well as the importance of the contribution of African diasporas and Afro-descendants to the socio-economic, cultural and scientific development of the continent.

Recognizing also the existence among African diasporas and Afro-descendants, of eminent intellectuals, businessmen and women, professionals, engineers, professors, writers, doctors, diplomats, artists and other skills.

Recognizing further that African diasporas and Afro-descendants represent Africa's first wealth as human resources and have financial resources that could be mobilized to provide specific solutions to certain development problems and thus compensate for the increased dependence on external aid.

Insisting on the need to create the conditions for the consolidation of governance in order to strengthen the investment of African diasporas and Afro-descendants.

Reaffirming the importance of close coordination between African diasporas, Afro-descendants and African communities and institutions for a socio-economic transformation of Africa.

Noting the importance of making a deep change in the narrative and negative image of Africans, African diasporas and Afro-descendants, conveyed by imperialist propaganda tools for hostile agendas.

Emphasizing the urgent need to strengthen the crucial role of African diasporas and Afro-descendants in the process of harmonious development of Africa and the rebirth of the continent.

Emphasizing also the need to strengthen unity, cohesion and solidarity within the global African community so that it contributes qualitatively to the rebirth and development of Africa.

Taking into account the importance for Africa and its peoples to claim the epistemologies and paradigms endogenous to Africa for a cultural, political, economic renaissance of Africa and its peoples.

Recognizing the call of previous pan-African meetings, including pan-African congresses, to take practical measures collectively and in solidarity for the sustainable development of the African continent, its diaspora and Afro-descendants.

Recognizing that the 9th Pan-African Congress is under the aegis of the Decade of African Diaspora and African Roots (2021-2031), decreed by the African Union;

Taking note of the conclusions of the World Summit of the African Diaspora held in 2012, including the adoption of the following five legacy projects: the African Institute for Funds Transfers, the African World Market, the African Diaspora Professionals Database, the African Diaspora Global Fund and the African Diaspora Volunteer Corps.

Aware of the urgent need for better structuring and coordination of programs and projects related to the African diaspora in order to promote their adequate implementation for the benefit of the people of the continent.

Calling on African governments and pan-African institutions to take concerted measures to enhance the expertise, skills and multifaceted resources of African diasporas and Afro-descendants, in order to further improve the well-being of the continent's populations.

Emphasizing the need to support the role of the African Union as a focal point and coordination center for diaspora initiatives on the continent.

The West Africa Regional Conference recommends:

1. The creation of an African-wide institutional framework for the representation of African diasporas and Afro-descendants, based on skills mapping.
2. The centrality of security, an essential condition for the sustainable development of African countries.
3. The strengthening of guarantees of trust and transparency, as well as the reforms necessary for virtuous governance, accompanied by incentives for the investment of African diasporas and Afro-descendants (tax relief, exemptions from customs duties, access to preferential financing...).
4. The reform of Africa's governance system to adapt it to its realities.
5. The establishment of a coordination and support framework for African diasporas and Afro-descendants with a view to better mobilizing their potential.
6. The rationalization of regulations and commercial procedures to make it easier for entrepreneurs in African diasporas and Afro-descendants to create and operate companies in their home continent.

7. The promotion of knowledge and technology transfer between members of African diasporas and Afro-descendants, and local institutions through technology exchange program research partnerships.
8. The creation of funds or financial mechanisms that facilitate access to finance for entrepreneurs from African diasporas and Afro-descendants and reduce the obstacles and risks associated with the creation or expansion of businesses.
9. The creation of digital platforms that connect members of African diasporas and Afro-descendants, local businesses and government agencies.
10. The design and implementation of capacity building programs for African diasporas and Afro-descendants.
11. The promotion of an open and permanent dialogue between African governments, African diasporas and Afro-descendants.
12. The launch of awareness campaigns to promote the commitment of African diasporas and Afro-descendants to contribute to the economic and social development of the continent.
13. Advocacy and political dialogue in order to influence decision-making processes in favor of policies supporting the commitment of African diasporas and Afro-descendants and their valuable contribution to the benefit of the populations of the continent.
14. The promotion of inclusive development that recognizes and values the diversity of diasporas and Afro-descendants.
15. The creation of a Pan-African Development Agency.
16. The valorization of an education decolonized, uninhibited and rooted in endogenous knowledge as well as the appropriation by African intellectuals of the history of Africa, to deconstruct imported narratives and not adapted to African realities.
17. The establishment of a networking for a solid partnership between Africans established on the continent and those from the diaspora and Afro-descendants as well as the orientation of investments in key sectors including agro-industry, tourism and infrastructure.
18. Supporting diaspora investors with advices adapted to each economic ecosystem, taking into account their interests;
19. Exploit art and culture, based on Africa's rich cultural heritage, as a base for reconnecting diasporas and Afro-descendants with Africa
20. The valorization of practices endogenous to Africa, marked by humanism, like the Ubuntu philosophy and the Maaya philosophy.
21. Respect for the intellectual property of the African creative industries.
22. The development of money transfer systems and the mobilization of popular savings.
23. The attendance of West African Member States at the highest level in the 9th Pan-African Congress, scheduled in Lomé, from October 29th to November 02nd, 2024.
24. The endorsement of the conclusions of the 9th Congress by the African Union.

Bamako, March 15th, 2024