



# THE AFRICAN PULSE

Voice of the African Ecumenical Movement

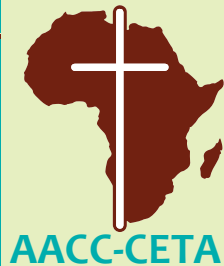


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# EDITORIAL

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The African Pulse is published quarterly by the All Africa Conference of Churches as an information, educational and advocacy platform for the ecumenical movement in Africa. The Editor welcomes articles for publication without any obligation whatsoever. Scripts must bear author's full names, occupation email address and daytime telephone contact. Articles may be edited for clarity or space.

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AACC is a continental ecumenical body that accounts for over 140 million Christians across the continent. AACC is the largest association of Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox and Indigenous churches in Africa and is a member of the worldwide ecumenical network. AACC is a fellowship of 204 members comprising of Churches, National Councils of Churches (NCCs), theological and lay training institutions and other Christian organizations in 42 African countries.



# Africa Is Our Home; We Can Make It Work!



By Rev. Dr Fidon Mwombeki

**T**he *African Pulse* was for a long time a voice of the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC). It communicated the life of the fellowship of churches in Africa. It informed about the different positions of the AACC in Africa and beyond. Unfortunately, it has been out of production for a number of years. Now we are very delighted to bring it back. It is a vehicle to convey what is going on in the continent, and to share with you our work, as well as encourage debate on pertinent issues.

Africa is our home. Africa is our future. And it has many faces and facets. The General Assembly of AACC in 2018 decided to focus on the motto: “Respecting the dignity and image of God in every human being.” That is our calling. In whatever we do, we want to do it with full respect of all human beings, regardless of their social, political, religious, or even racial identity and standing.

Unfortunately, the foreign media, and even that within Africa itself, are more than happy to portray the calamities, the sadness, and evils which indeed rob people of fullness of life promised by our Lord. It is true that inasmuch as Africa decided on “The Africa We Want”, which is “integrated, peaceful and prosperous Africa” it has still a long way to go.

It has failed to reach the target of “silencing the guns” by the end of 2020. Worse, new conflicts are starting in different areas. We are confronted by the evils of child abductions in Western Africa and endless terrorist activities. We have been disappointed by the start of conflict in Ethiopia, which was hailed as an example of African Renaissance in many respects. The jubilation of independence of South Sudan quickly turned into ethnic inspired conflicts, virtually stopping any prospects of development.

What we saw as progress into democratic governance is steadily developing into closed governance. Many elections are no longer open to independent observers. We are sad to see Africa

descending again into serious, dangerous public indebtedness and endless corruption. All these make the youth lose hope and simply want to leave, even if it ends into drowning in the Mediterranean or ending up in slavery in Beirut or Doha. We may be coming to situations like we are seeing in Central America, where caravans of people travel on foot for months trying to reach and enter the USA at any cost.

But there is hope. Majority of Africans are committed to live and succeed in Africa. Africa is booming economically in so many respects. More and more countries are joining the “middle-income-country” club. Education is available for most people, and in many countries, for free.

Economic prosperity is evident, not only in urban but also in rural areas. Yes, Africa without corruption is possible, only if we had more and more determined leaders like my President, the late John Pombe Magufuli of Tanzania, the late Thomas Sankara, or President Paul Kagame of Rwanda.

As churches, we are called to love our continent, and to promote its virtues. We believe the promise of Jesus for life in abundance is for Africa as well, and now. Even in times so distressed like now due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we are called to be messengers of peace and prosperity. We need to address “misleading theologies” which, though sounding very spiritual, are leading people to death, like the opposition to Covid-19 vaccines in the name of the healing power of Jesus.

I wish to welcome you kindly to this first issue of 2021

**Rev. Dr Fidon Mwombeki is the General Secretary of the All Africa Conference of Churches. He can be reached at [secretariat@aacc-ceta.org](mailto:secretariat@aacc-ceta.org)**

# Newly Appointed Church Leaders



**Rev. Xolani Maseko**  
Synod Secretary  
The United Congregational Church of Southern Africa



**Most Rev. Miracle Ajah**  
Principal Clerk  
The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria



**Bishop Kenneth Sibanda**  
Presiding Bishop  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe.



**Rt. Rev. Dr. Emilly Onyango**  
Anglican Church of Kenya Assistant Bishop  
Diocese of Bondo



**Mrs. Keziah Kargbo**  
General Secretary  
Council of Churches in Sierra Leone



**Rev. Emmanuel Mawulikplimi Ajavon**  
General Secretary  
Methodist Church of Togo



**Rev. Dr. Evans Onyemara**  
8th General Secretary  
Christian Council of Nigeria



**Mr. Cephas Mensah**  
General Treasurer  
Methodist Church of Togo



**Rev. Godson Teyi Lawson-Kpavuvu**  
Conference President  
Methodist Church of Togo

# Inspiring Africa Youth To Take Charge Of Their Destiny



By Collins Shava

If the continent of Africa is to prosper, then youth must be at the forefront of its political, social and economic development. The centrality of youth voices in the transformation of Africa cannot be overemphasized.

Youth must be inspired to stake their claim in Africa by being patriotic.

To inspire youth to embrace Africa as the continent where all their dreams can be realised, the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) has launched a campaign focusing on youth and African patriotism. The campaign, dubbed Africa: My Home. My Future, aims to inspire young people to be patriotic to their countries, and Africa at large, by utilizing their talents towards a thriving continent.

The African continent is a host to a large population of young people. Estimates say that by the year 2050 the current youth population will be double. Undoubtedly, young people need to take up the challenge to transform Africa.

On February 24, 2021, AACC hosted youth participants from across the continent to a webinar on this very theme. The speakers included the General Secretary of AACC, Rev Dr Fidon Mwombeki, keynote speaker, Ousman Touray, from Gambia, and three discussants, Adebayo Kehinde from Nigeria, Pacis Alarine Irambona from Burundi, and Nyambura Mundia from Kenya.

In his opening remarks, Rev. Dr Mwombeki encouraged young people to take up the challenge and fulfill their generational mandate. He expressed his pain in seeing young people pay money to go to Europe, Asia and other continents to find a better life. He lamented that young people go overseas to

do the most menial jobs and work in hostile racist environment in Europe and America.

Mr Touray expressed concern about how young people have become part of the system of divide and rule in Africa. The young people of today have shown allegiances to political parties founded on tribal lines. Africa, he said, needs to take ownership of its

development, and not let foreign powers distort the continent's plans. There is need for African youth to take charge of transforming the continent on the basis of love and respect for the continent. Young people need to reject systems that perpetuate oppressive socio-economic conditions, he added.

The discussants Adebayo Kehinde, Pacis Alarine Irambona and Nyambura Mundia talked about corruption, unresponsive education system and exclusion of youth from the governance systems. They encouraged young people to rise up to the occasion, occupy positions of power, and take up the responsibility to steer Africa to greatness.

**Collins Shava is the AACC Executive Secretary for Youth. He can be reached at [cshava@aacc-ceta.org](mailto:cshava@aacc-ceta.org)**

*Time for  
youth to  
stake their  
claim in  
Africa.*

# Ecumenical Diplomacy In South Sudan



By Rev. Charles Berahino

## High Level Church Delegation Visits South Sudan To Strengthen Peace



Eminent African church leaders when they met President Salva Kiir, during a peace mission to South Sudan. President Kiir promised the church leaders that the war would be de-escalated. From left: Nyaboth Paska South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC), Rev. Fr. James Oyet, SSCC General Secretary, Rev. Charles Berahino, All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), Rev. Dr. Susanne Matala (Zambia), Archbishop Martin Blaise Nyaboho (Burundi), Bishop Arnold Christopher Temple (AACC President), (Sierra Leone), President Salva Kiir, Dr Agnes Aboum, moderator of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches (Kenya), Rev. Dr. Lesmore Gibson Ezekiel (AACC), Bishop Enock Tombe (South Sudan), Rev Fr. Peter Suleman, Secretary General, Catholic Bishops Conference of Sudan and South Sudan, and Rev. Fr. Maurice Ladu Vicar General, Catholic Archdiocese of Juba.

Following the easing of covid-19 restrictions in South Sudan in the last quarter of 2020, a team of Eminent Persons made a solidarity visit to the people of South Sudan from November 17 to November 20, 2020.

The church team, from the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), was composed of the Eminent Persons' Ecumenical Program for Peace in Africa (EPEPPA), which had been reactivated at the end of 2019.

The delegation, which was led by the AACC President, Rt. Rev. Arnold Temple, included eminent church and ecumenical leaders and staff including Rev. Dr Lesmore Gibson Ezekiel, the AACC Director of Programs, Rev. Charles Berahino, the AACC Executive Secretary for Peace and Diakonia, and coordinated by the General Secretary of the South Sudan Council of

Churches, Fr. James Oyet.

The Eminent Persons included:

- Archbishop Martin Blaise Nyaboho, Primate of the Anglican Church of Burundi;
- Dr. Agnes Abuom, Moderator of the World Council of Churches (WCC) from Kenya;
- Rev. Dr. Susanne Membe Matala, former General Secretary of the Council of Churches in Zambia;
- Bishop Emeritus Enock Tombe from South Sudan
- Rev Fr. Peter Suleman, Secretary General, Catholic Bishops Conference of Sudan and South Sudan; and the
- Rev. Fr. Maurice Ladu, Vicar General, Catholic Archdiocese of Juba.

## Listening Tour

The team was on a listening tour, and made various courtesy calls and consultative meetings with a broad spectrum of stakeholders in South Sudan, to understand the current status and how it was affecting lives of the people.

The delegation interacted with key stakeholders including the President of the Republic, Salva Kiir, one of the vice presidents, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the UN OCHA Head of Office, the chairperson of the Joint Monitoring Commission. The delegation had a wide interactive discussions with church leaders and South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC) leadership and staff, local administration, and civil society organizations.

The Eminent Persons encouraged all the stakeholders including the President to continue working for peace sustainability. They said everyone is accountable before God, the people of South Sudan and humanity. As a way of solidarity and support, the delegation always prayed with the different stakeholders to ask the loving God to strengthen them for the noble task.

The solidarity visit ended with a commitment from the top leadership of the country not to return the country to war and, to continue working towards a full implementation of the revitalized agreement.

Solidarity with the church and the people of South Sudan was appreciated and different stakeholders encouraged moving forward in their different efforts, seeking unity and love.

*Rev. Charles Berahino is the AACC Executive Secretary for Peace and Diakonia. He can be reached at [cberahino@aacc-ceta.org](mailto:cberahino@aacc-ceta.org)*

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# AACC Overcomes Covid Restrictions To Monitor Elections

## Poll teams hold enlightening talks with leaders

In its efforts to support and accompany churches in peace processes, the All Africa Conference of Churches, in collaboration with churches organizes observation of elections.

During the first half of 2020, due to Covid-19 restrictions, the AACC worked out different ways to engage election observers under the new normal of Covid-19 restrictions. It supported financially the council of churches in Burundi to engage local observers during the May 2020 general elections.

Later in the year, following the easing on covid-19 restrictions in many countries, the AACC sent four of its staff, Rev. Dr. Lesmore Gibson Ezekiel, Rev. Prof. Bosela Eale, Ms. Afiwa Allahare, and Mrs. Adjele Ahoefa Agbodjan Amouso, to Ghana

to serve as international observers, alongside forty local observers recruited by the Council of Churches of Ghana during the Presidential and Parliamentary elections on December 7, 2020.

The team had enlightening discussions with the Deputy Director of the Electoral Commission, who explained to them the preparations they made and the innovations introduced for these eighth Presidential and Parliamentary elections, including the use of Biometric Verification Devices (BVDs) and the collation of results at several levels (polling station, constituency, regional and national).

The team also had a meeting with the leaders of the various sections of the “Election Situation Room” set by WANEP and the National Peace Council, namely

*In spite of Covid-19 restrictions, the AACC deployed international poll observers.*



The team of AACC staff as international observers in Ghana, December 2020

the “Data Gathering Room”, “the Analysis Room”, the “Communication Room” and the “Decision Room”.

The “Decision Room” was made of Eminent persons who had the authority to liaise with party leaderships and security agencies to address emerging issues to prevent escalation of violence. The team attended Church services in two congregations, at EPC Trinity Parish, Madina, and Trinity United Church at the Trinity Theological Seminary.

The team visited various polling stations and witnessed the opening of the polls and closing where ballots were counted and recorded. The team spent some time with the Council of Churches of Ghana team in the situation room to see the situation on the ground and follow the media reports on the results.

The commitment of religious leaders to deepen a

culture of peace was evident from the media reports and posters with messages of peace. The efforts contributed immensely to reducing tension during and after the elections.

### Disappointing Trend

A disturbing trend has, however, been noted where the AACC has been refused accreditation. This was the case in Togo during the presidential election in February 2020, as well as the presidential election in the Republic of Congo on March 21, 2021.



# Hard work a must to realise the “Africa We Want”



By Gorden Simango

The All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) is concerned about missing of targets set out in the Agenda 2063. Last year, Africa did not succeed in its “Silencing the Guns by 2020.” objective.

New conflicts emerged instead, among them armed conflict in the Tigray region of Ethiopia, Mozambique’s Cabo Delgado, instability in countries of the Sahel region – Mali, Chad, Niger, Burkina Faso, and protracted instability in other parts of Africa, such as Cameroun, South Sudan, Somalia and others.

Whilst the AACC welcomes the extension of the AU Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa for a period of ten (10) years (2021- 2030), by the Assembly of the Union’s 14<sup>th</sup> Extra Ordinary Session on Silencing the Guns of 6 December 2020, it still calls for commitment and political will for implementation.

AACC has been undertaking initiatives among church leaders and youth to popularise AU’s Agenda 2063.

On 19 February 2021, youth representatives from the All Africa Conference of Churches, accompanied by the Rev. Teshome, AACC Executive Committee member and Gorden Simango, Director at the AACC Liaison Office to the African Union, presented a statement from the AACC youth to H.E. Ambassador Baye Moctar Diop, Chair of the month of February 2021 of the AU Peace and Security Council, who is also Ambassador of Senegal to Ethiopia, and Senegalese Permanent Representative to the African Union and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).

## *The litmus test on commitment to Agenda 2063 by African governments comes in 2023, the first ten-year implementation plan (2014 – 2023).*

The statement called on the African Union Heads of States to, among other things, to stand up to their commitment to silence the guns by 2020; to ensure political tolerance, good governance and rule of

law; to hold Member States accountable in upholding civil liberties, especially the right to information and freedom of expression and political affiliation during election periods; and to propose and apply sanctions against corrupt state leaders towards deterring the illicit financial flows that continue to fuel armed conflict and perennially destabilize the economies.

The statement further called on them to implement the AU Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child towards abolishing, mining and extraction related to child labour and slavery, recruitment of child soldiers, and disruption of children’s education by rebel

groups.

The AACC appreciates the operationalization of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) in 2020 by the African Union. In light of this, the AACC calls on remaining governments to ratify the “protocol to the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community relating to the Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment”

The litmus test on commitment to Agenda 2063 by African governments comes in 2023, when the first ten-year implementation plan (2014 – 2023) ends. All the seven aspirations of Agenda 2063 have “Key transformational Outcomes by 2023” which are lagging behind, and the AACC is calling for speeding up of implementation.

**Gorden Simango is Director at the AACC Liaison Office in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. He can be reached at [gordensimango@aacc-ceta.org](mailto:gordensimango@aacc-ceta.org)**

# AACC Trains African Church Leaders on Agenda 2063

The All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) held a training session in Nairobi, Kenya, on November 18 and 19, 2020, to sensitise leaders on Agenda 2063. The training brought together religious leaders and scholars from across the continent. It was observed that though faith communities had been involved in consultation processes for Agenda 2063 during its design phase, it remained unknown to the majority of those religious leaders who were participants at this training.

This confession underscored the need for further sensitization, mobilization, education and advocacy for accelerated domestication of the Agenda 2063. The training was, therefore, a seminal moment in the faith communities' present and future engagement in the initiative. Moving forward, the participants expressed optimism for expanded communication and collaboration with the African Union and other regional and continental actors to advance the cause of social justice.

The critical role of faith leaders in the delivery of Agenda 2063 was underscored by Ambassador Denise Kodhe, the Presiding Officer at the African Union Economic, Social and Cultural Council (AU ECOSOCC) who noted that "Faith communities have strong hold on society and if this is recognized, and the energy harnessed, Africa can get on the road to transformation of the living standards of its population"



Church leaders and scholars from across Africa when they met for a training on Agenda 2063 in Nairobi, Kenya

## The Seven Aspirations of Agenda 2063

Agenda 2063 is Africa's blueprint for transforming Africa into a global powerhouse of the future. It is supported by the following seven aspirations:

**1** A prosperous Africa, based on inclusive growth and sustainable development.

**2** An integrated continent; politically united and based on the ideals of Pan Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance.

**3** An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law.

**4** A peaceful and secure Africa.

**5** An Africa with strong cultural identity, common heritage, shared values and ethics.

**6** An Africa, whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children.

**7** Africa as a strong, united and influential global player and partner.

# AACC To Revitalise Engagement With Churches In West Africa



By Rev. Angele WILSON-DOGBE

## 8-Point Action Plan Launched

The All Africa Conference of Churches has set out to revitalize the regional office in Lome, Togo, to make it a decisive catalyst driving programmatic interventions by the ecumenical movement in West Africa.

This was the challenge thrown to us by the AACC General Secretary, Rev. Fidon Mwombeki, when we took office in December 2020.

### Outreach to Churches

To begin with, we decided on an outreach programme for churches in Togo, and started by meeting with leaders of AACC member churches. During the meetings, we presented the new strategy of the AACC for the period 2019 - 2023, and the African Union Agenda 2063, adopted and contextualized by the AACC.

We emphasized the importance of the churches in the Agenda 2063 strategy, because this will safeguard human dignity and raise the voices of the marginalized.

Further, the strategy aims to leave a legacy of love and respect, a strong Africa, protected against any scourge, where mutual respect and peace reign, and where people's God given right are protected.

AACC has only four member churches in Togo - the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Togo, the Methodist Church of Togo, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Togo and the Church of the Lord.

One of the key goals of AACC's engagement is that its work impacts more Christians, which is the reason why we engaged the Christian Council of Togo, although they are not members of AACC.

The churches appreciated the outreach efforts,

because they learned and received a better understanding of the AACC and its activities.

During the consultations with churches, an action plan was developed.

### 8-Point Action Plan

- ✓ In order to roll back mis-information about AACC and give it good visibility, it will support the Churches in activities with impact on Christians at the community grassroots levels.
- ✓ That more awareness be created on the widows and widowers program;
- ✓ That AACC develops a program for children as the Church of tomorrow;
- ✓ That the problem of illegal migration be dealt with at the level of religious communities
- ✓ That AACC increases its support for Christian youth in order to prevent them from falling victim to scam organizations;
- ✓ That AACC supports the Churches in dealing with the problem of the widow inheritance, because those who resist the practice fall into prostitution;
- ✓ That an information day on the AACC be organized in each of the member churches of the Christian Council; and
- ✓ That the AACC assists the religious community in Togo to make their voices heard on COVID-19 and the issue of vaccine.

### Meeting with Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Togo



From right to left; Mr. Emmanuel NEGLO- Presbyter, 3rd member of the Executive; Rev. Angele WILSON-DOGBE, Regional Coordinator, AACC regional Office in Lomé; Rev. Dr. Daniel M. AKOTIA- Moderator; Rev. Honoré K. EWOVOR – Synod Secretary ; Komi - Interim Pastor-Administrative secretary

### Meeting with Evangelical Lutheran Church of Togo



From left to right, Mr. Emmanuel Maga YAYOUNE- Youth Leader and Administrative Assistant; Rev. Felan Yao AHONIN – Vice President; Rev. Angele WILSON-DOGBE, Regional Coordinator, AACC regional Office in Lomé. Rev. Barthelémy YAYOUNE – President

### Meeting with Christian Council - Togo



Seating from left to right : Rev. DJAKOUTI Mitre – President of the Assemblies of God (AD) and of the Christian Council of Togo; Rev. Elie NBJEAORMONDE –General Secretary of the Christian Council of Togo. Standing from left to right; Rev. AGBAVITOH Komi E. - President of the Pentecost International Church of Togo (EPIT); Rev. Angele WILSON-DOGBE, Regional Coordinator, AACC regional Office in Lomé ; Rev. Felan Yao AHONIN – Vice President of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Togo; Rev. AGOSSOU A. Remi –President of the Baptist Convention of Togo ; LOKOU Komi E.- President of the 7th day Adventist Church of Togo;

### COVID-19

The leaders reached several conclusions on the Covid-19 pandemic:

that the safety of everyone will only be guaranteed once everyone has access to the vaccine; and

religious leaders and civil society organisations need to engage political leaders over issues of vaccine safety to ensure only the certified ones are administered.

**Rev. Angele Wilson-Dogbe is the Regional Co-ordinator of the AACC regional office in Lome, Togo. She can be reached at [angele@aacc-ceta.org](mailto:angele@aacc-ceta.org)**

# Ensuring Effective Programme Delivery Despite Covid

## Crucial Lessons Learnt from A Year of Disruptions

*The Covid-19 pandemic has caused major disruptions in the way the world does business. Organisations have been forced to scramble, looking for ways to ensure service delivery remains on course, and outcomes are achieved. The All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), with a PanAfrican footprint, has seen major disruptions of its programmes as Covid-19 shut down travel, in-person consultations, and gatherings.*

*How to ensure programme delivery stays on course and desired outcomes on schedule have fallen on the shoulders of AACC's Director of Programmes, Rev. Dr. Lesmore Gibson Ezekiel (pictured). He speaks on the challenges of delivering a multifaceted and crosscountry programme in the midst of a pandemic. Excerpts*



Rev. Dr. Lesmore Gibson Ezekiel  
AACC's Director of Programmes

### Q: How did Covid-19 affect programme delivery by AACC?

A: I look at it from two perspectives- positive and negative.

#### Positive

Covid positively stimulated us to be creative in programme design and delivery. In the past, we were not taking full advantage of technology. The pandemic has made us look differently at the capacities we can deploy through technology.

“Covid triggered our creative genius in programme design and delivery.”

engagement, but today others have emerged like Zoom, Google, and Microsoft Teams, and we try and make maximum use of them. We are now able to organise virtual meetings without exposing our constituents to the virus. This seems to have increased participation because we see more members joining such virtual meetings and almost doubled the numbers of in-person meetings.

Skype was previously the main platform of

Negative

It has impeded our fraternisation. In face to face meetings, we hug and make new friends during programme delivery. It has affected our chances of accompaniment. We normally organise programmes in different countries, but Covid-19 has rendered this impossible.

Secondly, we have lost many our members across the continent through Covid-19. And lastly, when using technology, you experience hitches of members who are unable to connect.

*“We believe that science is a gift from God, who empowered experts to come up with ways of fighting Covid-19.”*

**Q: How has AACC reorganized itself to effectively manage its programmes to avoid shutdown?**

A: We have done this by looking inward and forward. We have tried to be innovative and creative. Covid-19 has not completely restricted us from programme delivery. Those programmes that were supposed to be continental have been held at regional level, requiring only two or three staff to travel from the Secretariat in Nairobi, while most participants are home-based.

This has reduced the challenge of people travelling across the continent, exposing them to Covid-19. We have decided to go to them, rather than bring them to where we are. Recently, some of our colleagues travelled to Congo Brazzaville for workshops and election monitoring. This has kept us afloat in programme delivery.

We are also considering a hybrid where some people gather physically, while others participate virtually.

**Q: Let’s talk about lessons learnt**

A: In a way, participation has been more effective because some of the high level personalities we have seen participating in the virtual meetings are very busy people, and would probably send delegates if travel was needed. They now participate from the comfort of their bases. In this way, we have been able to achieve more in terms of reaching key targets.

Secondly, we have been able to stay in contact with our member churches.

Of course, this in no way is a substitute for face to face interaction. Meeting is critical, and that is the essence of ecumenism, where we need to fellowship together and fraternise.

Third is strict adherence to science. We believe that science is a gift from God, who empowered experts to come up with ways of fighting the spread of Covid-19.

We never thought we would be able to run this with the huge participation from the right targets that we have witnessed. However, time is always extremely limited because after presentations, there’s almost always no time for discussions and feedback.



**Rev. Dr. Lesmore Gibson Ezekiel is AACC’s Director of Programmes. He can be reached at [lesmore-ger@aacc-ceta.org](mailto:lesmore-ger@aacc-ceta.org)**



# Ensuring The Voice Of Churches Is Heard At Africa's Top Think Tank

## *AACC General Secretary Participates At The High Level Tana Forum in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*

The All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) General Secretary, Rev. Dr Fidon Mwombeki, represented the African Ecumenical movement at the 2020 Tana Forum in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where he participated on the panel discussion for the side event.

The Tana Forum is an independent initiative that seeks to provide an informal platform for African Heads of State and Government to engage in open and frank discussions with a wide spectrum of non-state stakeholders on the most pressing peace and security issues confronting the continent. The 2020 Tana Forum met under the theme “The AfCFTA: Revitalizing Pan Africanism for Sustainable Peace and Development in Africa”.

The All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), through the Liaison Office at the African Union & the Institute for Peace and Security, which host the Tana

Forum secretariat, organised the first official side event of Forum which fell on the first day – the 19<sup>th</sup> of October.

Panelists to this side event were: H.E. Dr Workneh Gebeyehu, Executive Secretary, IGAD; Professor Eddy Maloka, CEO, African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM); Dr Raji Tajudeen, Head, Division of Public Health Institutes and Research, Africa CDC; Reverend Dr. Fidon Mwombeki, General Secretary, AACC; Dr. Gilles Yabi, Founder, WATHI Citizen Think Tank, Senegal. The session was moderated by H.E. Abdirahman Yusuf Ali Aynte, Former Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, Somalia.

The Tana Forum serves as a platform where African peace and security issues are discussed in order to allow high-level decision-makers within and outside the continent develop new and innovative solutions to the myriad peace and security situations confronting the continent.





**The General Secretary of the AACC, Rev. Dr. Mwombeki on the Panel Discussion for Side Event 1 on “Rebuilding After COVID-19: Lessons for Effective Governance and Sustainable Peace and Development in Africa”.**

**Rev. Mwombeki made a passionate appeal to African leaders to walk the talk.....**

Rev. Dr. Fidon called on the African governments to implement AU treaties which they have ratified, and speed up Agenda 2063 commitments on visa free travel within Africa by 2018, Silencing the guns by 2020, and the AU Free movement of persons protocol among others.

He highlighted the importance of debt cancellation to enable African countries to have sufficient resources needed to survive the economic and social winter post-COVID-19. He also called on African governments to address endemic corruption in Africa.

Rev. Mwombeki praised the ingenuity that Africa has shown in producing Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs), and showing the potential there is for even producing appropriate ventilators.

He strongly condemned the use of excessive force and violations of fundamental human rights by certain governments under the pretext of COVID – 19 containment measures.

To follow the full panel discussion, please click or visit the following link [https://](https://youtu.be/lggwvAOOwlg?t=1834)

[youtu.be/lggwvAOOwlg?t=1834](https://youtu.be/lggwvAOOwlg?t=1834)



Gorden Simango (Director for African Union Office & Advocacy), and Rev. Dr. Fidon Mwombeki, with Ms. Lettie Tembo Longwe, Interim Director/Head of Secretariat Tana Forum Africa Peace and Security Programme (APSP) at the Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS) at Addis Ababa University. In June 2020, the AACC and IPSS signed an MoU to jointly develop strategies and approaches to peace and security issues, and human dignity seeking to offer policy and practical recommendations to duty bearers. It is in this vein that the AACC engagement at the Tana Forum was facilitated this year.



AACC General Secretary, Rev. Dr. Fidon Mwombeki, and Mr Gorden Simango, Director for African Union Office & Advocacy, had a fruitful meeting with Ambassador Salah S. Hamad, Head of the African Governance Platform (AGP), secretariat.

# Long Serving AACC Trustee, Rev. Dr Jesse Kamau, Retires

*Leaves A Rich Legacy Of A Financially Sustainable Body*



*Rev. Dr Jesse Kamau talks to guests at his farewell ceremony*

After serving as a trustee of the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) for at least 20 years, the Rev. Dr Jesse Kamau, has retired. And to honour his many years of service to the organization, the AACC hosted a farewell ceremony on March 10, 2021, at its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, for the retiring prelate.

Rev. Dr Kamau is an ex-moderator of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA), and was appointed by the General Committee to replace Rev. Prof. Zablon Nthamburi of the Methodist Church of Kenya, who had retired.

*“But we shall not fear, for it is God who has willed His truth to triumph through us.”*

The AACC General Secretary, Rev. Dr. Fidon Mwombeki, praised the critical role that trustees play in AACC. He noted that they were the owners of the organisation’s properties, a task that came with onerous responsibilities.

He noted that AACC trustees were not paid, and served at considerable personal risk. If an organisation went bankrupt, the law would follow the trustees, putting their individual lives and property at risk.

“I want as General Secretary to make visible the role of trustees in AACC to ensure they get the honour they deserve,” he stated.



*Singing a hymn during the ceremony. Next to him is Dr Bright Mawudor - AACC Deputy General Secretary and Director , Finance and Administration - who delivered a glowing tribute.*

Speaking at the event, the AACC Deputy General Secretary in charge of finance and administration, Dr. Bright Mawudor, said that this was the first time ever for AACC to honour retiring members of the board of trustees.

Dr Mawudor, who spoke glowingly of Rev. Dr Kamau, worked with him for many years.

“Those who knew Jesse, as he is affectionately called in his public and personal life, will attest to the fact that he is a highly accomplished person who does not allow fame, achievements and stardom to eclipse his humility and nobility as a person. He is such a simple and straight forward person,” stated Dr Mawudor.

He said that through the work of Rev. Dr Kamau and his colleague trustees, the AACC could now be counted among the few financially sustainable regional ecumenical organisations.

In a powerful speech at the farewell ceremony, Rev. Dr Kamau exhorted Africans never to give up, however daunting the challenges, but to trust in God.

“I encourage all of you young people, please respond-no excuses- just do what God tells you to,” he said. He stated that when challenges came and they were heavy, “keep on telling the Lord to qualify you.”

He noted that Africa has its own devils, and they would try to block one’s way and bring confusion.

“All the good you’ll be doing out there will be opposed, but we shall not fear, for it is God who has willed His truth to triumph through us,” stated Rev. Dr Kamau

He said that as he retired, he will be remembering AACC and the politics of Africa as they rumbled on.

“But I assure you, Africa will succeed as God will work through you.”



*Rev. Dr. Jesse Kamau receives a commemorative plaque from Rev. Dr. Fidon Mwombeki*



## Mr. Arthur Shoo, Former Director of Programmes, AACC

Mr Arthur Shoo, who died in Tanzania in February 2021, had a very long and endearing relationship with the AACC. He served as AACC's Director of Programmes between 2006 and 2015.

During his tenure, Mr Shoo greatly touched the lives of all those who came into contact with him. His impact as AACC Director of Programmes is remembered to this day across the continent. Arthur as a gentle giant, and an utmost professional in his work.

He joined the organization at a time when the AACC was going through operational difficulties, and had found it necessary to collapse programmes under one individual, and reduce staff. He took up what was then a huge task with enthusiasm, and he was able to manage all the organisation's programmes, and deliver to the satisfaction of AACC's stakeholders and partners.

For Arthur, the key issue was service, and he never looked at reward. He was selfless to a fault. When Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation in Zambia were facing challenges, AACC dispatched Mr Shoo. Arthur did an organizational evaluation, and assisted them to come up with a strategic plan. Mindolo's progress today is a direct result of that effort.

Arthur played a pivotal role as the focal point of AACC's programme on the Economic Partnership for Africa (EPAs) in 2008-2010, when he led the churches to push African governments into ensuring they undertook a critical examination of these agreements with their European partners.

In the same vein, AACC sent him severally to assist the Sierra Leone Council of Churches (SLCC) when they were facing challenges due to the aftermath of the war. Indeed, at the time of death, Arthur was scheduled to return to Sierra Leone to facilitate a review of their strategic plan.

Arthur's name will be forever etched in the annals of the ecumenical movement in Africa. His personable and affable character, and the impact his work created, will never be forgotten.

## Rev. Canon Clement Janda, Former General Secretary of AACC

Rev. Canon Clement Janda, passed on in Uganda on March 13, 2021. Rev. Canon Janda was a member of the clergy who gave 12 years of his in service to AACC.

His last outing in AACC was when he served as General Secretary between January 1998-June 2002. At the time, he was already concerned about the low levels of participation by Christians in the continent's affairs.

Rev. Canon Janda was also worried about the state of spiritualism of the clergy. He warned about the quality of Christians the continent was producing, and questioned the depth of their faith. Filled with courage when it came to fulfilling his divine mission, he led an AACC delegation to meet rebel leader, Foday Sankoh, during the civil war in Sierra Leone.

His first tour of duty in AACC was as Associate General Secretary for three years between 1977 and 1980, when he was in charge of personnel and administration.

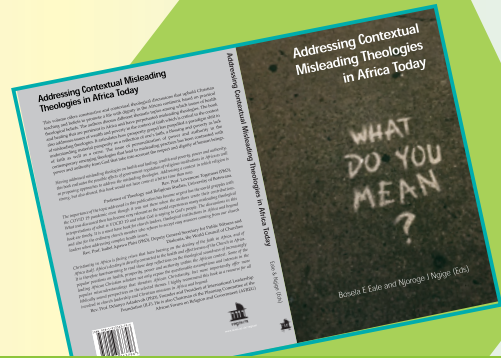
He is fondly remembered by those who worked with him as an outgoing and friendly man, who always had an open door policy. He was always ready to listen to the problems of his staff. He was a hardworking man who ensured the successful implementation of AACC programmes during his tenure.

Rev. Canon Janda was born in the Sudan in 1942. He was ordained as a pastor of the Episcopal Church of the Sudan (Anglican) in 1970. During the period running up to his ordination, he served as a refugee officer and deacon priest with the Church of Uganda from 1969-1970.

In between his two tenures at AACC, Rev. Canon Janda undertook other senior roles in the ecumenical movement. Between 1992 and 1997, he was the director of the Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation in Zambia. Between 1980-1991, he served as the General Secretary of the Sudan Council of Churches (SCC). Between 1988-1991, Rev. Canon Janda became the Executive Secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Geneva, where he was responsible for conflict situations and publication of the magazine "Commissioners Only."



# A Guide To Stop Christians from Being Misled



## Misleading Theologies Being Used To Exploit The Vulnerable

Many preachers have come up in recent times with theologies which have confused Christians, and led them into wrong interpretations of the Bible. As a consequence, it has been difficult for many Christians to discern where the True Word lies.

That is why AACC decided that it was imperative to look at this issue, and offer concrete guidance to Christians to avoid them being led astray. And that is why, the book, “**Misleading Theologies: Addressing Contextual Misleading Theologies in Africa Today,**” is being published.

The book was found necessary. It is very necessary because misleading theologies undermine the sovereignty of Christ, fundamental biblical doctrines and sound theological ethos. It evidently exploits and violates the God-given dignity of vulnerable Christians.

The book brings together voices from church leaders, ordained ministers and lay theologians to engage in identifying, analysing and deconstructing misleading theologies emerging in the Africa. It defines misleading theologies, its features and gaps. Also the book conveys how African church leadership and theologians can best address the issue at hand.

The content is made of papers presented during the 1<sup>st</sup> Theological Symposium of Misleading theologies held at Desmond Tutu Conference Center in Nairobi from October 23 to 27, 2020. This volume offers constructive and contextual theological discussions that uphold Christian teaching and beliefs to promote a life with dignity in the African continent, based on practical theological beliefs.

The authors discuss different thematic topics among which issues of health and healing that are pertinent in Africa and have perpetuated misleading theologies. The book also addresses issues of wealth and poverty

### The Editors



Rev. Prof. Bosela Eale



Dr. Njoroge Ngigi

in the context of faith which is critical in misleading theologies. It articulates how prosperity gospel has propelled a paradigm shift in understanding material prosperity as a reflection of one’s faith and poverty as lack of faith as well as a curse.

The issue of personalization of power and authority in the contemporary emerging theologies that lead to misleading practices has been contrasted with power and authority from God that take into account the respect and dignity of human beings as well as governments regulations on religious institutions.

It has been edited by Rev. Prof. Bosela Eale, AACC Director for Theology, Interfaith Relations and Ecclesial Leadership Development, and Dr. Njoroge Ngigi, Head of Department of Theology, Religious Studies and Counselling at Kenya Methodist University.

The book is available for sale from the publishers, Regnum of London, United Kingdom. To access, go to <https://www.regnumbooks.net/products/addressing-contextual-misleading-theologies-in-africa-today>

**Rev. Prof. Bosela Eale is the AACC Director of Theology and Ecclesial Leadership. He can be reached at [boselaale@aacc-ceta.org](mailto:boselaale@aacc-ceta.org)**

# Putting Men at the Frontline of the Battle For Gender Justice

## AACC Campaign To Recruit Male Champions for Change



Uganda launched its programme on the Role of Men In advancing Gender Justice on December 12, 2020, at Pope Paul Memorial Hotel, Rubaga.

The All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) is piloting an innovative programme for greater involvement of men in combating gender based violence.

This campaign comes as a result of the realisation that the fight for gender justice has largely left men out.

“Advocacy for gender justice particularly in Africa has been done mainly by women and as a women’s issue, says Rev. Dr. Lydia Mwaniki, Director of Gender and Women at AACC, adding that AACC nevertheless recognises that men are critical allies for gender equality, and are often strong drivers for change especially in patriarchal societies.”

The ball was set rolling on July 28, 2020, when the AACC hosted a virtual Consultation on the “Role of Men in Enhancing Gender Justice in

Africa”, which brought together 33 male champions for gender justice representing different regions within the AACC Constituency. This Consultation was necessitated by the rising cases of domestic violence

and child abuse linked to Covid-19 pandemic, the most shocking being the surging of adolescents/teenage pregnancies in different countries on the continent.

COVID-19 pandemic has complicated Gender Based Violence (GBV). There has been alarming increase of violence as result of the lockdown imposed across the country.

The [UNFPA](#) estimates that 13 million girls could be forced into child marriage, and two million more could undergo Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in the next decade, beyond what would have been expected due to COVID-19 global disruption of efforts to end both practices. Additionally, the [World](#)



Rev. Dr Lydia Mwaniki



A cross section of members pausing for a group photo. Two ladies center in red Hon. Patricia Kaliati and Rev. Mirriam Chipeta Banda Vice Synod Moderator for Blantyre Synod. 4th from right in clerical Rev. Moyenda Kanjerwa standing next to Cedric in a red tie.

**Vision** has also projected that as many as one million girls across sub-Saharan Africa may not return to school due to pregnancy during COVID-19 school closures.

As a follow-up, AACC seeks to accelerate men's activism for gender justice through setting up an *AACC Platform of Male Champions for Gender Justice* in pilot countries.

The programme began in earnest in December 2020, when the Platform was established in three Anglophone countries: Nigeria, Uganda and Malawi. Encouraged by the reception in the first three pilot countries, AACC moved to expand the platform. It

has identified three Francophone countries where the exercise will be carried out, namely *Cameroon (which is both Francophone and Anglophone), DRC and Togo, as well as Kenya.*

The platform in each country starts with the identification of a prominent church leader willing to champion the establishment of the Platform. The prominent leader identifies ten focal persons (men) to spearhead the setting-up of the platform

Under the leadership of the prominent church leader, the ten focal persons hold an inception meeting to identify contextual gender issues affecting women's rights and gender equality, and develops an action plan to address the issues.

It is hoped that the programme will bring about increased participation of men in advocacy for gender justice in Africa, and lower the levels of GBV in the continent starting with the pilot countries.



Nigeria launched its platform for Male Champions for Gender Justice on December 10, 2020, in the Jubilee Hall in Abuja. Officiating at the event was His Eminence Rev. Dr. Samson Ayokunle (in red cap), who is the promoter for Nigeria of this initiative. Consulting with him is Rev. Dr. Lesmore Gibson Ezekiel, AACC's Director of Programmes.

## Quarterly Calendar April-June 2021

DATE	ACTIVITY	TARGET
<b>APRIL</b>		
7 <sup>th</sup> -13 <sup>th</sup>	Participation in presidential election monitoring	Church leaders in Benin and at least three AACC staff
12 <sup>th</sup> -15 <sup>th</sup>	Psycho-social support workshop on migrant support for Anglophone West Africa	Persons responsible for Diakonia services in member churches
14 <sup>th</sup> -17 <sup>th</sup>	Exchanges on activities related to migration and human trafficking	Diakonia officers and youth leaders from member churches
29 <sup>th</sup>	Virtual meeting with beneficiaries of AACC Widows' grants	Widows
<b>MAY</b>		
14 <sup>th</sup> May	Establishment of a Platform of Male Champions for Gender Justice in DRC	Men
May to July 2021	2nd Pan African Youth Essay Competition	Youth
18-21	Roundtable on climate change on adaptation and mitigation	Church leaders and advocacy officers
May-August	Influencing the AU Regional Economic Communities (RECs)	
25 May 2021	Africa. My Home. My Future. Webinar	Youth
<b>JUNE</b>		
5 <sup>th</sup>	World Environment Day	AACC Members
15 <sup>th</sup> -17 <sup>th</sup>	Exchange program on entrepreneurship for women entrepreneurs	Women
16 <sup>th</sup>	Day of the African Child	Youth
16-17 <sup>th</sup>	In country peace workshop on the role of churches in peacebuilding	Church leaders from Liberia and Sierra Leone
23 <sup>rd</sup>	Justice for Widows Campaign /International Widows Day	Widows, church leaders, women, society, governments
June	Advocacy towards the African Union, & the diplomatic community in Addis Ababa.	
28-2 <sup>nd</sup> July	Agenda 2063 training	





# DESMOND TUTU CONFERENCE CENTRE

**Desmond Tutu Conference Centre (DTCC)**, an affiliate of All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) is located along Waiyaki Way, Westlands within the AACC compound. It is only 30 minutes' drive from Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA); during low traffic.



**Conference Facilities:** From board room style executive meetings, conferences, product launches, corporate events or exhibitions, we cater for all events.

All our 9 conference rooms are well equipped and have helpful and experienced event managers who will help in planning and hosting your meeting or event from 4 pax to a maximum of 1000 pax

**Rooms:** We offer a choice of 104 tastefully furnished and cosy Standard and superior rooms suitable for business and leisure travelers, safari and conference groups, newlyweds, couples and families.



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