



AFRICA FEDERATION OF TEACHING REGULATORY AUTHORITIES
Fédération Africaine des Agences de Régulation de l'Enseignement
Federação Africana de Autoridades Reguladoras do Ensino
www.africateaching-authorities.org

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COMMUNIQUE

10TH AFRICA TEACHING AND LEARNING CONFERENCE AND 12TH ROUNDTABLE, NAMIBIA, MAY 9-12, 2023 (NAMIBIA 2023)

THEME

“TRANSFORMING EDUCATION IN AFRICA: TEACHERS, TEACHING AND THE TEACHING PROFESSION”

1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1 AFTRA is the intergovernmental organisation for the regulation of teaching in Africa comprising Ministries of Education, National Teaching Councils, Teachers Unions, Teacher Education Institutions, and international organisations associated with the regulation of teaching. AFTRA is also the Africa regional branch of the world body, International Forum of Teacher Regulatory Authorities, IFTRA (www.iftra.org). It is further the Co-Chair of the African Union Teacher Development Cluster, Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 2016-2025), and member of the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030. It has a special working relationship with African Union Commission, Africa Regional Economic Blocs, UNESCO-IICBA, UNESCO Regional offices in Africa, Education International Africa Region, Commonwealth of Learning, Canada, and others.
- 1.2 The Conference is an annual global event open to stakeholders in Africa and across the world, from government representatives to teaching professionals, academics, researchers, publishers, innovators, industry experts, digital giants, and post graduate students. The Roundtable is the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Federation and admits delegates of only member Ministries and organisations.
- 1.3 The 10th Conference and 12th Roundtable were hosted by the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, Namibia and Namibia National Teachers' Union (NANTU). The Minister of Education, Arts and Culture, Hon. Ester Anna Nghipondoka, MP chaired the National Organising Committee (NOC) which comprised the relevant arms of the Ministry; NANTU; Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security; and other critical national stakeholders.
- 1.4 Over three hundred delegates and participants attended the Conference physically while at least 1,500 participated virtually through Zoom. The events were also shared through various

social media handles and broadcast live over the national television and radio stations of Namibia. The participants and delegates were from the following eighteen countries and categories:

- i. Namibia
- ii. Zambia
- iii. Botswana
- iv. Ghana
- v. Nigeria
- vi. Ethiopia
- vii. Kenya
- viii. South Africa
- ix. Guinea
- x. France
- xi. Angola
- xii. Uganda
- xiii. Zimbabwe
- xiv. Eswatini
- xv. Cameroon
- xvi. Madagascar
- xvii. Benin
- xviii. Canada (Virtual presentation by Commonwealth of Learning)
- xix. The Global audience through ZOOM, and social media handles.

1.5 Another unanticipated global event took place at the same time. Ministers of Education attended the event and that accounted for the limited number of Ministers at the AFTRA Conference and Roundtable. Nevertheless, the following Minister and Deputy Ministers attended and took charge of the AFTRA events:

- i. Honourable Faustina Namutenya Caley (MP), Deputy Minister of Education, Arts and Culture, Namibia
- ii. Honourable Evelyn Ndlovu (MP), Minister of Primary and Secondary Education, Zimbabwe
- iii. Honourable John Ntim Fordjour (MP), Deputy Minister of Education, Ghana
- iv. Honourable Malam Adamu Adamu Minister of Education, Nigeria, Represented by Prof Josiah Olusegun Ajiboye, President of AFTRA
- v. Dr Makgabo Reginah Mhaule (MP), Honourable Deputy Minister of Basic Education, South Africa
- vi. Muneku Noriana, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Zambia, Representing the Minister of Education
- vii. Gildo Matias José, Secretary of State for Secondary Education, Angola, Representing the Minister of Education

1.6 Heads and experts of international teacher-related organisations who spoke at the Opening Ceremony, Ministerial, Intercontinental and other Sessions of the Conference include:

- i. Dr Quentin Wodon, Director, UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia;
- ii. Dr Peter Wallet and Dr Valerie Djioze-Gallet, UNESCO/International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030, Paris, France;
- iii. Mr. Hambali Masheleni, Acting Director, Department of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, African Union Commission, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia;
- iv. Dr Dennis Sinyolo, Director, Education International Africa Region, Accra, Ghana;
- v. Dr Betty Ogange, Education Specialist (Teacher Education), Commonwealth of Learning, Canada; and
- vi. Deane Fishburn, Director, Queensland College of Teachers, Australia on behalf of the

International Forum of Teacher Regulatory Authorities (IFTRA).

1.7 AFTRA leadership was fully on ground to drive the events, led by the President, Professor Josiah Ajiboye, Registrar/Chief Executive, Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria. Others were Dr Ebby Mubanaga, Deputy President and Registrar, Teaching Council of Zambia; Dr Christian Addai-Poku, Secretary General and Registrar, National Teaching Council of Ghana; Mr. Mabutho Cele, Deputy Secretary General and Chair, South African Council for Educators; Ms. Loide Shaanika, Treasurer and Secretary General, Namibia National Teachers' Union; Professor Steve Nwokeocha, Executive Director (Academics); and Mr. Risuna Nkuna, Executive Director (Administration). AFTRA Executive Board members from the various geographical zones of Africa were also on ground.

2. OPENING CEREMONY

2.1 The opening ceremony was a command performance led by the Namibia Police Band and graced by a large number of the Namibian Government officials in addition to the star-studded delegates and participants who were high ranking government officials, directors, professors, heads of national agencies, industry experts, researchers, teaching professionals, teacher unions, heads of UNESCO, UNICEF and UN in Namibia, Ambassador of Zambia, and many others.

2.2 Mr. Daniel Humbu, President of the Namibian Teachers Union (NANTU) in his welcome address stated that the hosting the AFTRA Conference came at the right time for Namibia which, as a young democracy, is in a process of establishing a professional body for teachers. He stated that the conference would give Namibia the opportunity to learn the best practices of other countries in Africa and the international community at large. He pointed out that NANTU, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture in Namibia, has embarked on a nationwide consultation with stakeholders to establish a professional body for teachers. He, however reported some wrong impressions and worries that the licensing of teachers may affect their job security and called for advocacy campaigns to counter the wrong perceptions. He expressed the confidence that the establishment of a professional body can only yield benefits for the profession, the learners and the nation at large. He reiterated that it is within the short- and long-term objectives of NANTU to massively mobilise educators in Namibia to support the establishment of the professional body.

2.3 AFTRA President, Prof. Josiah Ajiboye expressed the belief that the 2023 AFTRA conference theme would provide a platform for educators, researchers, teachers and practitioners in the field of education to interrogate the challenges, issues and prospects of the teaching profession with focus on ways to transform education in the continent. He recalled that the national laws that established the national agencies which regulate teaching, empowered them to register and license teachers, set standards for pre-service and on-going teacher professional development, develop, and implement code of ethics and professional standards for teachers and school leaders, and work generally to promote the professional status of teachers. Therefore, he stated that AFTRA is working to translate those mandates into a continental framework to facilitate exchange of best practices, teacher mobility, and quality teaching force throughout Africa for the actualisation of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) on education, CESA 16-25 and AU agenda 2063: "The Africa We Want."

2.4 Deane Fishburn, representative of the International Forum of Teacher Regulatory Authorities (IFTRA) addressed the Conference, pointing out the generic mandates of the member organisations. She called for surmounting of the considerable challenges that arose for the teaching profession as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. She spoke of the need to attract and retain teachers so every child can have access to quality education. For her, the regulators

must be responsive to the needs of the teachers and also continue to ensure that registered teachers have adequate preparation, suitable of character and meet qualifications thresholds to promote quality teaching. She also invited conferees to the next IFTRA Conference in 2024 which will be held in Queensland, Australia.

2.5 AFTRA Fellowship was conferred on eminent educators nominated by their countries and deemed to have contributed significantly towards the upliftment of the teaching profession in their countries and Africa. They are the following:

- i. Dr Christian Addai Poku, Ghana
- ii. Prof Mary Metcalfe, South Africa
- iii. Joel Kamoko, Zambia
- iv. Titus Amba Audu, Nigeria
- v. Dr Getrude Namubiru, Uganda
- vi. Dr Staneala M Beckley, Sierre Leone
- vii. Maurice Titus Akelo Misori, Kenya
- viii. Dr Fine Thabologo Botswana
- ix. Cheneso Maphorisa, Botswana

2.6 The climax of the opening ceremony was the investiture of the President of Namibia, His Excellency, Hage Gotfried Geingob, with AFTRA's Gold Medal, being the highest honour reserved for African Presidents and Heads of State with distinguished contributions to the professionalisation of teaching in their countries and Africa. He was represented by the Deputy Minister of Education, Arts, and Culture, Namibia.

2.7 Speaking on behalf of the Minister and President of Namibia, the Deputy Minister of Education, Arts, and Culture, Hon. Faustina N. Caley, MP stressed the commitment of the Government, since independence, to provide accessible, equitable and inclusive quality education for a tolerant, skilled, productive and competitive nation, and for the prosperity of the nation. With regards to national legislative and policy frameworks in education, she stated that Namibia is signatory to the various United Nations conventions and global commitments related to education such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 2016-2025). She, therefore, informed the conference that the government would do everything within its power to see that the global and continental frameworks, including the establishment of a national teaching council, were implemented. She mentioned some of the disadvantages caused by lack of regulation of the teaching profession: **“Teaching is not regulated in Namibia as there is no legal framework regulating the profession. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is not mandatory, resulting in some teachers not using available opportunities to further enhance their skills. The result is that teachers are neither up to standard, nor conforming to norms of performance.”** She argued that the teachers’ ability to benchmark with teachers within the region or beyond will not be possible as long as they are not perceived as professionals. Against this backdrop, she informed the conference that Government, teacher unions and other critical stakeholders must speed up the process to legalise teaching as a profession and to establish a national teaching council as soon as possible.

3. MINISTERIAL SESSION

3.1 The session was chaired by the Deputy Minister, Hon Faustina N. Caley, MP. Hon. John Ntim Fordjour, MP, Deputy Minister of Education, Ghana was the Rapporteur while Mr. Hambali Masheleni, Acting Director of the Department of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, African Union Commission served as Co-Rapporteur.

3.2 The various heads and experts of the international organisations presented policy briefs on their

areas of operation. The following is a list of the briefs:

- Dr Peter Wallet, International Task Force on Teachers: Supporting teachers through policy development: Lessons from sub-Saharan Africa - The need to develop teacher policies comprehensively in accordance with the UNESCO Teacher Policy Guide.
- Dr Casely Stephens Olabode, African Union Commission: African Union Theme of the Year 2024: “Building resilient Education systems for increased access to inclusive, lifelong, quality, and relevant learning in Africa.”
- Dr Quentin Wodon, Director, UNESCO IICBA: Strengthening Data Generation and Analysis for Resilient, Inclusive, and Better Performing Education Systems; Global Partnership for Education Knowledge Innovation Exchange (GPE KIX); and IICBA Executive Education and Policy Academy.
- Dr Dennis Sinyolo, Director, Education International Africa Region: Strengthening the Regulation and Professionalisation of Teaching in Africa.
- Professor Steve Nwokeocha, Executive Director (Academics), AFTRA: The Milestones in the Development of AFTRA, Challenges and Recommendations.

3.3 All the Ministers addressed the Conference to highlight the countries’ activities related to issues raised in the policy brief: Namibia, Ghana, Zambia, Angola, Nigeria, and South Africa strongly spoke in support of the need to comprehensively development and implement teacher policies in line with the UNESCO Teacher Guide. Many of them narrated their efforts to develop and implement the policies. There was a general consensus that the development and implementation of teaching standards were indispensable and these must be aligned with the Education International/UNECSCO and African Union framework of teaching standards. They, further, elaborated the benefits of a regulated profession and the need to speed up the enactment of law to legalise teaching and establish a professional regulatory authority for the profession. Data generation and utilisation were also upheld by the Ministers as being critical for evidence-based governance in education, and charged members to accord priority to the area. For these and other ideas generated by the Ministers and consensus they reached, they released a Ministerial Communique that was signed by all the participating Ministers. The Communique is attached to the Communique as Annex.

4 SHOWCASING OF THE AFRICAN UNION BEST TEACHERS

4.1 The AU Best Teacher Prize was institutionalised by the African Union and executed with the collaboration of AFTRA and other education partners. AFTRA took the added responsibility of showing the winners annually in AFTRA Conference, working with them to serve as models for other teachers in the continent, and partnering with them on several professional projects in line with the intents of the award. Normally, a special (premium) special session is dedicated to the Best Teacher Prize winners and this year featured the 2022 winners. They Best Teacher winners were represented by:

- Mrs. Agnes Segaka Rasesemola, South Africa,
- Pride Nomvula Magiga, Zimbabwe, and
- Mkhonta Mfanimpela Eric, Eswatini

4.2 These representatives presented the profiles of themselves and their peers and also the aims of the award, their projects, challenges and strategies going forward. Their presentations resonated with the conferees and were strong motivational speeches. The African Union official, Dr Caseley Stephens Olabode, further joined the Best Teachers to highlight the process of selection and aims of the Prize. He revealed that the call for 2023 was out and advised Ministries of Education to make nominations. He also announced that each winner receives ten thousand US Dollars.

5 INTERCONTINENTAL SESSION

5.1 This session, as usual, featured global ideas. It began with recorded video interviews of selected Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of the national teaching councils. The CEOs shared experiences on the prospects and challenges of leading their national teaching councils and the professionalisation of teaching in their countries. The CEO are:

- Professor Josiah Ajiboye, Registrar/Chief Executive, Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria
- Dr Ebby Mubanga, Registrar, Teaching Council of Zambia
- Ella Mokgalene, Chief Executive Officer, South African Council for Educators, and
- Dr Christian Addai-Poku, Registrar, National Teaching Council, Ghana

5.2 Dr Betty Ogange, Education Specialist (Teacher Education), Commonwealth of Learning, Canada addressed the conference on “Connectivism, Self-Directed Learning, and MOOCs in Teacher Professional Development.” She elaborated how these could help the Commonwealth governments and institutions to use technologies to improve and expand learning for sustainable development.

5.3 Other speakers at the Intercontinental session were:

- Funlola Adegoke, Founder/Chief Executive Officer of the Fariga Initiative Against Bullying in Schools (FIABIS), Lagos, Nigeria and Professor Emmanuel O. Adu of the Global Education Network (GEN), University of Fort Hare, South Africa.

6 GROUP SESSIONS

6.1 There were over thirty papers accepted from researchers across Africa. The Conference had group sessions that enabled the authors to present their papers. The highlights of their presentations were then presented at the plenary session. The papers of the Conference will be reviewed afterward and high quality papers will be published in the *AFTRA Journal of Teaching and Learning in Africa*.

7 UNESCO IICBA EXECUTIVE AND POLICY ACADEMY

7.1 The UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA) Academy was half day training programme organised as part of the AFTRA Conference. It organised by IICBA in partnership with the International Task Force on Teachers and AFTRA. It held on the third of the Conference and was another plenary session. It registered all participants and took them through three courses which each lasted one hour, making a total of three hours at a stretch. The theme of the training was “**Improving student learning through better teacher policies in Africa.**” The courses were delivered as follows:

- Dr Quentin Wodon, Director of UNESCO IICBA: Improving Learning Through Better Teaching.
- Dr Valerie Djoize-Gallet, International Task Force on Teachers: Reforming Teacher Policies.
- Professor Steve Nwokeocha, AFTRA: Benchmarking Teacher Policies - Lessons from the UNESCO/Shanghai-FIT Project in West Africa.

7.2 The participants were expected to work on chosen projects relevant to their local teacher contexts. UNESCO IICBA intends to provide technical support to see them through, and those who successfully complete a project will receive a certificate from the Academy endorsed by IICBA, International Task Force and AFTRA.

8 CULTURAL TOUR AND EVE

8.1 Cultural tour and gala night were organised by the Government of Namibia which enabled the participants and delegates to have a feel of the rich culture and hospitality of the country. During the gala night, Minister of Education, Arts and Culture represented by the Deputy Minister presented awards to special education teachers who made positive marks by promoting inclusive education. Also, President of AFTRA, Professor Josiah Olusegun Ajiboye presented a Certificate of Renewal of AFTRA Membership to the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, Namibia.

9 12TH AFTRA ROUNDTABLE

9.1 The Roundtable, which is the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of AFTRA, held on the fourth day. The communique for this is usually restricted as it is the internal business of AFTRA. Only member organisations of AFTRA have delegates represented at the Roundtable.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

The events of the first three days were huge and, and a lot was shared, consensus was reached on important issues and recommendations were made. Below are highlights of some of the key recommendations:

SN	ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS	ACTION BY
1	In line with the outcome of the UN Transforming Education Summit (TES), and theme of the AFTRA Conference, all stakeholders should prioritize <u>teachers</u> , <u>teaching</u> and the <u>teaching profession</u> as key levers for transforming the education system.	AU Member States, AU, AFTRA, TTF, UNESCO-IICBA, EI, COL, etc.
2	Enact an Act to legalise teaching and establish a national teaching council to regulate the profession	AU Member States
3	AU Member States upcoming in the establishment of a national teaching council should leverage the cutting-edge technical expertise available in AFTRA and older national teaching councils to fast-track the establishment of their own councils.	AU Member States
4	Develop a national framework of teaching standards well aligned with the Education International/ UNESCO (2019) and African Union (2019) frameworks of teaching standards. In addition, domesticate the African Union (2019) Continental Teacher Qualification Frameworks and Continental Guidelines on the Teaching Profession.	AU Member states
5	Ministries of Education, national teaching councils and related national agencies should urgently regularize and strengthen their membership of AFTRA to promote the harmonization of the teaching profession in Africa, interoperability, exchange of best practices, and mutual recognition teacher qualifications, registration and licensing.	AU Member States
6	Develop comprehensive national teacher policy in line with the UNESCO (2015) Teacher Policy Development Guide. The policy should cover: (1) Teacher recruitment and retention, (2) Teacher education (initial and continuing), (3) Deployment, (4) Career structures/paths, (5) Teacher employment and working conditions, (6) Teacher reward and remuneration; (7) Teacher standards, (8) Teacher accountability, and (9) School governance. In view of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on teachers and teaching,	AU Member States, AU, AFTRA, TTF, UNESCO-IICBA, EI, COL, etc.

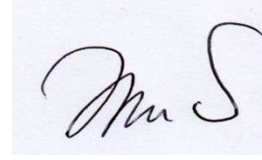
	psychosocial support should be optimized.	
7	All parts of Africa should work towards harmonizing their teaching profession under AFTRA irrespective of the linguistic divides (English, French, Portuguese, Arabic) and colonial educational traditions. AFTRA shall remain a body where all regions of Africa have equal stake; AFTRA will continue to work with all major languages of the continent.	AFTRA, AU Member States
8	Ministers of Education shall remain the key drivers of AFTRA and all African Ministers of Education should prioritise their participation in the AFTRA Annual Ministerial Session which provides opportunities for the Ministers to steer the teaching profession in the desired direction.	Ministers of Education in Africa
9	The African Union Best Teacher Prize is a highly commendable initiative and all African countries are encouraged to obtain the relevant information from the African Union and ensure they nominate their qualified teachers and school leaders. AFTRA should sustain its commendable annual showcasing of the Best Teachers and other joint projects and mentoring of the teachers. All AU Member States should replicate the Best Teacher Awards at the national level.	AU Member States, AU, AFTRA, TTF, UNESCO-IICBA, EI, COL, etc.
10	The declaration of 2024 as Year of Education by the African Union is timely and all AU Member States and Education partners should make maximum use of the Year to bring their most impactful teacher-related initiatives to the front burner.	AU Member States, AU, AFTRA, TTF, UNESCO-IICBA, EI, COL, etc.
11	Data generation should be accorded greater attention than presently obtains, and aim at building a robust Teacher Information Management System (TIMS) and overall Education Management Information System (EMIS). This is to guarantee evidence-based policies, allocation resources, and resilient, inclusive and better performing education systems.	AU Member States, AU, AFTRA, TTF, UNESCO-IICBA, EI, COL, etc.
12	Self-directed learning and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) in teacher professional development should be promoted in order to use technologies to improve and expand learning for sustainable development.	AU Member States, AU, AFTRA, TTF, UNESCO-IICBA, EI, COL, etc.
13	The UNESCO IICBA Education and Policy Academy promises to build critical capacity in education policy development and management. Teachers and education managers and policy makers across Africa are urged to take advantage of the training, technical support and certification.	AU Member States, TTF, UNESCO IICBA, AFTRA, IE.
14	There should be concerted efforts to end bullying in schools. Corporal punishment should be outlawed in line with existing laws on child protection.	AU Member States, AU, AFTRA, TTF, UNESCO-IICBA, EI, COL, etc.

11. CLOSING SESSION

11.1 The vote of thanks from the AFTRA President described the hosting by Namibia as having scored many firsts. Among these were the granting of visa waiver for all AFTRA delegates and participants; setting up an airport desk to receive delegates and participants to make their travel experiences pleasurable; undertaking fully the transportation of delegates and participants from and back to the airport and within the city; largest team of well-groomed ushers; live broadcast of the events in television and radio stations; and global participation through Zoom and social media handles - Namibia was virtually perfect in all aspects of the organisation.



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AFTRA President



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