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Office of Communications  
53-70, Jingumae 5-chome  
Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150-8925  
Japan

Tel.: +81-3-5467-1212  
Fax: +81-3-3499-2828  
E-mail: [media@unu.edu](mailto:media@unu.edu)  
Website: <http://www.unu.edu/>

## UNU/UNESCO Globalization Conference Will Focus on Africa

Event: UNU/UNESCO 2009 International Conference on “Africa and Globalization: Learning from the Past, Enabling a Better Future”  
Dates: 28 and 29 September 2009 (Mon. & Tue.)  
Venue: United Nations University Headquarters, Tokyo  
Organizers: United Nations University (UNU) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)  
Website: <http://www.unu.edu/globalization/>

“Globalization has been a one-way street, bringing few benefits to Africa...”, noted former US President Jimmy Carter in the U Thant Distinguished Lecture that he delivered in 2003 at United Nations University in Tokyo. Is that still the case six years later and, if so, what can the international community do to rectify the inequity and help Africa lay the groundwork for attaining the UN Millennium Development Goals?

The UNU/UNESCO 2009 International Conference on “Africa and Globalization” considers lessons from the past and whether these can help overcome the challenges that Africa faces in today’s globalized world, particularly in the context of the global financial crisis.

During the two days of the conference, some 30 leading personalities — governmental decision-makers, including several former heads of state, world-renowned experts and civil society representatives — will recount their personal experiences and exchange views about the new dynamics and their foreseeable impact. They also will share their personal visions for Africa’s role and position in the future global system, and focus on concrete steps that can pave the way for all people on the African continent to have a more decent life.

- Day 1 of the conference will consist of three sessions on the theme “Charting the Future of Africa”.
  - In the first session, “A Leadership Forum”, former Heads of State and other eminent personalities will discuss the future course of Africa, based on lessons of the past, previous development experiences and accomplishments, and the impact of the recent financial crisis. Keynote speakers will include several former presidents:
    - Olusegun Obasanjo, former President of Nigeria;
    - John Kofi Agyekum Kufuor, former President of Ghana;
    - Alpha Oumar Konaré, former Chair of the Commission for the African Union and former President of Mali;
    - Sam Nujoma, former President of Namibia;
    - Antonio Ramalho Eanes, former President of Portugal.
  - In the second session, “Putting Vision into Practice”, renowned scholars and civil society representatives will elaborate on the vision espoused by the leadership forum and draw on their own experience and expertise to provide concrete proposals on the ways and means of putting vision into practice.
  - In the day’s third session, “Dialoguing with the Leaders”, speakers from the previous two sessions will engage in a vigorous exchange of ideas and perspectives about the future of Africa.

- Day 2 of the conference will comprise two focus sessions and a concluding session.
  - The first focus session, “Africa and Governance: Improving Socio-political Cohesion”, will seek to identify new paths for strengthening Africa’s governance. Presentations will highlight how the contemporary character of globalization can affect socio-political cohesion and thereby a host of issues, including the effectiveness of development efforts and post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation.
  - The second focus section, “Africa and Sustainable Development”, will cover issues that are core to the continent’s sustainable development, including education for sustainable development; the development of science, technology and innovation capacities; and the development of new green technologies and jobs.
  - The concluding session, “A Vision for Africa”, will summarize the conference highlights and outcomes including concrete steps enabling a better future and feature concluding remarks.
- Simultaneous Japanese–English–French interpretation will be provided.
- A tentative programme, including the names of all the conference speakers, and other information about the conference are available on the conference website (<http://www.unu.edu/globalization/>).
- For those unable to attend, the conference will be webcast live (and archived) at <http://c3.unu.edu/unuvideo/?244>.

Media representatives are cordially invited to attend the UNU/UNESCO 2009 International Conference. For more information, or to confirm your attendance, please contact Naoko Yano or Aska Maki, UNU Office of Communications (tel: 03-5467-1212; e-mail: [media@unu.edu](mailto:media@unu.edu)).