

CONTRIBUTION OF THE AAPAM YOUNG PROFESSIONALS' NETWORK (AAPAMYPN) AT THE 29TH RTC IN MBABANE, SWAZILAND

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Appreciation:

- We the Young Professionals (YPs) wish to appreciate, the Commonwealth Secretariat, AAPAM, Govt. Departments, MDA's that have funded and granted us permission to attend the 29th AAPAM RT Conference in Mbabane, Swaziland. We are grateful to the AAPAM Executive for the due recognition awarded to the YPs emanating from the recommendations made in Arush Tanzania during the 28th AAPAM RT Conference.
- We appreciate the delegates for the information, communication and knowledge sharing especially on the critical subject of political and managerial leadership for change and development in Africa. As leaders of tomorrow, we have been professionally nurtured and our knowledge based and our appreciation of leadership has been enhanced.
- We wish to express our hearty thanks to the people of the Royal Kingdom of Swaziland for the warm welcome and hospitality especially the exposure to their rich culture through the Umhlanga dance (Reed Dance) and the various activities enjoyed every evening. SIYABONGA.

Our Expectations from the 29th Round Table Conference Included.

- Exploring the key elements of effective leadership.
- Finding out if and how they are being practiced in other regions and emerging economies in Africa.
- Establishing ways that leadership at both the political and bureaucratic levels could be enhanced to accelerate positive change in Africa.

Exploring the Key Elements of Leadership

- The YP appreciate the fact that the conference presentations and deliberations have been very comprehensive in terms of imparting a thorough understanding of the concept of effective leadership and its key elements. For example the presentations on strengthening leadership capacity during Plenary 7 satisfied these expectations.

Finding out if and how they are being practiced in other regions and emerging economies in Africa.

- Whereas the YPs hold the view that this expectation was not fully met, the presentations on Public Service delivery: Challenges to leadership and the overview of the role of leadership in the development of the Asian NICs and lessons for Africa excellently addressed it.
- It is our general view that at future conferences, presenters should share practical experiences relating to the themes being discussed to enable delegates to learn better and benchmark from best practices.

Establishing ways that leadership at both the political and bureaucratic levels could be enhanced to accelerate positive change in Africa.

- The YPs are of the view that this expectation was not achieved. The conference focused more on analyzing the problem and less emphasis was laid on addressing those problems through pragmatic workable solutions. For instance, papers could have been prepared jointly by academicians and practitioners so that due consideration is given to the practical difficulties that are often encountered while attempting to implement theoretical guiding leadership principles.

Institutionalizing AAPAM YP Network

- Following the two previous conferences, one main issue emerged from the YP discussions – membership retention and development through sustained continuity of interaction among the YPs.
- They YP have resolved to institutionalize the YP Network for recognition as a sub-structure of AAPAM in order to streamline our operations and to ensure membership retention and sustained interaction.
- We appreciate and humbly request for the continuity support of the AAPAM Executive, CFTC, IPAC, the various national governments and other institutions as we pursue this endeavour.

General Remarks

- Strengthening AAPAM National Chapters – The Executive of AAPAM could look into the possibility of strengthening the national chapters so as to provide a forum for membership recruitment and integration of more YPs into AAPAM.
- Outlining deliverables – in order to be more result-oriented, AAPAM could specify the deliverables in an Action Plan which can be reviewed through Progress Reports, at the next conference.
- Optimum uses of ICTs – A number of delegates had hiccups with their travel arrangements. In addition the packaging of the presentations was done in mostly hard copy format. Mindful of the digital opportunities available, future conference organizers and participants could consider being in constant electronic

communication with all stakeholders to avoid inconveniences. Additionally packaging of the conference presentations could be in both soft and hard copies for portability and storage purposes among other factors.

Conclusion

- In conclusion, in order to enhance political and managerial leadership for change and development in Africa we as the YPs need the support of AAPAM and AAPAM needs our support.
- Let's celebrate difference before we make difference an issue!