

AFRICA AGENDA

8th Annual SUMMIT

Engaging Africa

2 February 2024

Korbel School of International Studies, University of Denver



INTRODUCTION

The 8th Africa Agenda Africa summit in Colorado was our first to bring to light the power and promise of **diaspora engagement** as a significant force in growing collaboration and building a more truthful narrative of the continent. The Summit asked us to consider how can we work with the African diaspora to effectively engage to strengthen democratic roots in Africa and at home.

Africa Agenda convenes these yearly gatherings to support our collective global citizenship and to share in the contributions, triumphs, joys, and challenges of African peoples both from 54 nations and in our community in Denver.

The Summit continues to be a unique opportunity to participate in an African dialogue in the Rockies and celebrate the food, music, and culture of the continent.

EIGHT YEARS OF COMMUNITY

The heart of the Summit was a series of informal discussions with leaders across a number of fields working with the African community in Colorado and over 20 African countries.

The Summit brought together over 100 participants at Maglione Hall at the Korbel School of International Studies at the University of Denver on 2 February 2024. After a dinner prepared by Afro-Caribbean Colorado caterers Fritay Haitian cuisine, attendees enjoyed music by the local Zimbabwean band Chihera and MAK G Music.

Colorado State Representative Naquetta Ricks opened the evening with inspiring remarks about how the diaspora often come seeking refuge and want to strengthen both their adopted and home communities. These new community members are a force for improvement and change. Rep. Ricks shared "...I stand before you here today, not just as Representative Naquetta Ricks, but also as a fellow African who understands and has experienced the deep challenges of being an African in a foreign land, in America, facing deep challenges."



REMARKS FROM THE PODIUM

The Summit comes to life each year thanks to our sponsors and the strong partnerships that characterize the African community here in Denver.

“It gives me great joy to welcome you to this year’s Africa Summit,” expressed Dr. Abigail Kabandula, Director of the Africa Center at the University of Denver Korbel School of International Studies.

Dr. Kabandula highlighted the strong, beneficial working relationship that Africa Agenda has developed with the Africa Center over recent years and expressed a desire for its continuation. “This is the third Summit we have organized with Africa Agenda, and we take pride in our partnership with them... because it allows us to discuss a myriad of topics about Africa, on Africa.”

Africa Agenda founder George Bamu used his time to thank “all of our sponsors, the people and organizations that took the time to support us, to make sure we had this summit.”



TABLE TALK + BRAINSTORM

Each of the tables at the summit has a topic and prompts to inspire the exchange of ideas. Participants tackled the following questions:

- 01 How can communities pool finances to contribute to sustainable economic development on the continent?
- 02 How can diaspora remittances be used to foster development across the continent?
- 03 How do we see foreign, international, and diaspora aid help or hurt among connections on the continent?
- 04 Is this African Union's "African Solutions to African Problems" project feasible?
- 05 How can the African Union's diaspora initiatives be strengthened to maximize their impact on peace, development, and governance in these regions ?
- 06 How can we build community engagement through events with the diaspora in Colorado?
- 07 How can we share our perspectives while also avoiding perpetuating stereotypes (i.e., Africans on and from the continent compared to the Diaspora)?
- 08 How can corporations show support in non-monetary ways, ensuring engagement is not extractive?
- 09 How can we improve direct connections among Coloradans, the diaspora, and communities in Africa?
- 10 How can students in Denver improve university understanding, action on the continent and for the diaspora?
- 11 How can culture be shared through community engagement/events with the diaspora?

NEXT STEPS + ACTION ITEMS

How we translate these conversations into action?

These individual discussions sparked participants' ideas, action and collaboration to advance diaspora engagement initiatives that contribute to the sustainable development both at home and in Africa.

For example, participants explored ways in which local businesses can help to support diasporic community and gain from the growing diversity of the Front Range region, calling for keeping a robust database of diasporic organizations and business and holding more pan-African events for the Colorado community. They proposed ways to better use foreign aid, and stimulate robust, ongoing cooperation among Colorado organizations and their counterparts in African countries. Every table made significant connections or strengthened and built new connections to assist in linking Coloradans to some of the great work being carried out by Africans and African -oriented organizations in the state. Participants gave the event positive marks with an average satisfaction rating of 9.5 out of 10. Participants felt that it successfully engaged them through discussion tables, food, and networking opportunities.



SPONSORS

Thank you to our amazing sponsors for supporting the 2024 Summit!



**AFRICA
CENTER**



WOMENFUL VOICE
STEPPING INTO THE LIGHT WITH WOMEN AND GIRLS

CENTER FOR CULTURAL DYNAMICS (CCD)



KGSA
Kibera Girls Soccer Academy
FOUNDATION



CONTACT



[HTTPS://AFRICAAGENDA.ORG/](https://africaagenda.org/)



OFFICE@AFRICAAGENDA.ORG



@ AFRICAAGENDA