



# AFRICA NEWSLETTER

COMMISSION

[www.africacommission.um.dk](http://www.africacommission.um.dk)

[africacommission@um.dk](mailto:africacommission@um.dk)

*The five thematic conferences staged by The Africa Commission in 2008 aim to develop new ideas about job creation in Africa*



**Two thematic conferences in Ghana and Mozambique added new, valuable content to the growing list of recommendations for The Africa Commission.**

## Action speaks louder than words

The consultation process of The Africa Commission is well on its way after two successful conferences in Ghana and Mozambique.

Both conferences brought together a broad range of actors such as youth organizations, worker's unions, NGOs, employers'



associations, universities as well as representatives from governments, international and regional organizations.

So far, nearly 500 individuals have been involved in the consultation process. They have dedicated their energy and time to take part in discussions about Africa's future. And they have shared concrete ideas, hopes, best practices and recommendations, which will now feed into the work of the Commission.

Women's access to employment was the theme in Maputo. In Accra the participants vividly discussed the employment

challenges facing Africa's growing youth populations.

According to several participants, the positive outcomes of the conferences signal a move from good intentions to concrete action for The Africa Commission.

"The conferences have helped us identify the most important points for intervention. We all need to have an open mindset and take action on the ideas brought to the table," said one Commissioner.

Read more about the conferences on page 2 and 3.

**Subscribe to our news service.** Did you know that you can receive news from the Africa Commission by e-mail as soon as they are published on the webpage [www.africacommission.um.dk](http://www.africacommission.um.dk)? Just go to the webpage of the Commission. Under the heading "Information" you find "Newsletter subscription". Type in your e-mail address and that's it!



Participants enjoying a break between two working sessions.

## Women in the driver's seat

All African women must be allowed to own land and be able to access the means to utilize it effectively. The numerous female entrepreneurs and start-ups headed by women must have better access to finance, including micro-credit, and to services that enable them to develop businesses. Investments in infrastructure – energy, water, access roads – that shorten women's long working hours at the household-level must be fast-tracked.

These were some of the ideas put forward at the conference held on August 15 in Maputo. More than 100 participants, including over 20 heads of states, governments and ministers, spent an entire day discussing ways to improve women's access to employment.

The participants discussed in detail the inequality that exists between women and men. African women on average work 10-15 hours more per week than men, but they own only around one percent of the continent's overall economic value of US\$650 billion.

The Africa Commission was represented by Ms. Luísa Diogo, Prime Minister of Mozambique, Ms. Ulla Tørnæs, Minister for Development Cooperation in Denmark, and Dr. Greg Mills, Director of the Brenthurst Foundation.

### Said at the conference

*"Africa needs to get its share of the world's pie. The empowerment of women is necessary if we are to achieve this goal. This conference has helped identify concrete tools for creating real value for both women and Africa."*

**Ms. Luísa Diogo,**

Prime Minister of Mozambique and member of The Africa Commission.

*"Advancing women's employment will not only improve the living conditions for the women and their families. It will also be a catalyst for Africa's growth and ensure that the Continent will not be left behind in the globalization process."*

**Ms. Ulla Tørnæs,**

Danish Minister for Development Cooperation and member of The Africa Commission.

*"We cannot uplift Africa without finding the means to give those that work hardest in these economies, the rural African woman, full access to economic opportunities. This conference has identified ways to do exactly that."*

**Dr. Greg Mills,**

Director of the Brenthurst Foundation in South Africa and member of The Africa Commission.

*"Equality must be visible at all levels in society, before we can say that women's rights are a reality. Some ideas might not be new, but they are still highly relevant. There is a long way to go before women and men in Africa are equal."*

**Ms. Terezinha da Silva,**

National Director, Women and Law in Southern Africa Research and Education Trust (WLSA), a regional NGO that conducts research about women's human rights in seven African countries.

*"Our economy is in the hands of women. The women I work with are farmers, and I try to help them become commercial farmers and improve their diet by introducing new crops. Pineapples are healthier than cassava. There are so many fruits to be picked when it comes to empowerment of women."*

**Ms. Angelina Mahundla,**

business woman and owner of Atlas Eagle, PTY, and coordinator for a community project that provides skills training and opportunities for women and orphans.

The conference in Accra on 5 September sought to provide input to the main theme of The Africa Commission: **The lack of job opportunities for Africa's youth.**

# Challenge: Millions of new jobs must be created



*With jobs, young people can use their energy and potentials to help foster growth and development in Africa.*

Africa has the highest population growth in the world and 46 percent of the population is between 5 and 25 years old. Between 10 and 15 million new jobs will have to be created on the Continent every year simply to keep up with the rapid population growth.

At present only 8.5 million jobs are created every year. This means that without education, jobs and prospects of a meaningful future, these young people might fuel instability, migration, radicalization and violent conflict. With jobs, young people can use their energy and potentials to help foster growth and development in Africa.

The participants in Accra made a call for job-generating growth. They emphasized the need to push for an enabling climate for businesses in the formal and informal economies through the active involvement of the private sector. And they

suggested investments that could help small companies overcome bureaucratic and financial constraints.

The conference was hosted by three members of the Africa Commission: Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, President of the ECOWAS Commission, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Managing Director for the World Bank, and Ms. Ulla Tørnæs, Danish Minister for Development Co-operation.

Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala called for a change in the mentality of both job seekers and investors.

“We need to change the psychology from ‘how do I get a job’ to ‘how can I create ten jobs’. And when that happens, these young entrepreneurs should have access to finance. Africa needs risk capital. Donors should support venture capital funds for young entrepreneurs.”

## Recommendations - examples from Accra

- We need to involve the private sector. Governments must listen to the business community and its needs, while at the same time insisting on their social responsibility.
- A special attention must be given to young entrepreneurs. With adequate support, more youngsters will go from self-employed to employers.
- Employers must be able to find the skills that they need. Employers could be involved in the development of relevant school curricula, planning skills training and expansion of apprenticeship programs.
- Youth in fragile states face particular challenges. Former combatants and traumatized young must be helped to find a path to an alternative lifestyle through special employment schemes or re-schooling.

The final report from the conference in Accra, as well as the reports from Ouagadougou and Maputo, is available on [www.africacommission.um.dk](http://www.africacommission.um.dk).



*Three commissioners taking part in the debate in Accra. From left: Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Ms. Ulla Tørnæs, and Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas.*

**Concrete action:  
creation of African Youth Panel**  
The Africa Commission, DanChurch-Aid and the Danish NGO-forum have invited young people from all over Africa to participate in the African Youth Panel, taking place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 16-19 November 2008.  
**Read more on**  
[www.africanyouth.dk](http://www.africanyouth.dk).



In the coming newsletters – starting with this – we will put the spotlight on the commissioners. We invite you to send them a question on [askthecommissioners@um.dk](mailto:askthecommissioners@um.dk).

Born in 1962, **Dr. Greg Mills** holds a BA Honors degree from the University of Cape Town, and a Masters and PhD from the University of Lancaster. From 1994–2005 he worked at the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) as Director of Studies and, from July 1996, as National Director. He has published more than thirty books. His current responsibilities on the Brenthurst Foundation include the establishment of a cutting-edge international research programme and the running of four head of state-level advisory teams in Africa. During 2008, Dr. Mills has been on secondment to the government of Rwanda as ‘Strategic Adviser’ to the president. He is currently completing a new book focusing on policy options for growth in Africa.

# Introducing the commissioners

## Why is the work of The Africa Commission important?

The establishment of the Africa Commission comes at a relatively optimistic time in Africa. The last few years have seen average economic growth rates of above 5 percent annually. So rather than trying to reinvent the development wheel and seek ways to create growth per se, instead the Commission is positively focusing much of its time and energy in finding the means to expedite enterprise-led growth in Africa. That is much more worthwhile than trying to find ways only to improve donor spending. It is also manifestly as much (if not more) an African than an international commission, which means that there is an emphasis on not only what the international community can do for Africa, but what Africa can do for itself.

## In what way do you hope to contribute?

I have seldom participated in something so manifestly positive in its intended outcomes in my 20 years in this line of work. I hope to be able to inject some of my practical experience across Africa and some African private sector thinking into the conclusions of the Commission.

## What are the major obstacles to economic growth and development in Africa?

There are both soft and hard obstacles to growth: people, institutions, policy and skills on the one hand, and roads, ports, railways and

finance on the other. Both have to be addressed if Africa is to enjoy a more prosperous future. Hence the Commission is to focus its attention on the role of the youth and women in particular and ways to spur increased employment in Africa. With 46 percent of Africans between five and 25 years of age, there is an urgent need not only for higher, sustained rates of growth, but also to create jobs. Each year about nine million young people enter the African labour market, adding to the 25 million already unemployed youth, with the result that youth unemployment in Africa runs today at three times the rate for adults. This figure grew by 30 percent between 1995 and 2005. The unemployment figure is higher in urban than rural areas, with all the consequent infrastructural, social and political strains that go with this. If not harnessed properly, the energy of Africa’s urban youth could be a devastating destabilising force.

## What does The Africa Commission hope to achieve in the long run?

Far from adopting a sweeping continental approach, the Danish Prime Minister has asked for nuance in the recommendations to strengthen business: from sector-specific initiatives, to ways to link research and the private sector, how best to assist the informal economy, and to connect good governance initiatives with the creation of economic growth.

## The Secretariat of The Africa Commission

*The Africa Commission is supported by a Secretariat in Copenhagen. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or suggestions:*

**Head of the Secretariat, Mr. Casper Klynge**  
caskly@um.dk, Phone + 45 3392 0359

**Chief Technical Advisor, Mr. Morten Elkjær**  
morelk@um.dk, Phone + 45 3392 0215

**General issues, Ms. Elsebeth Søndergaard**  
elsson@um.dk, Phone + 45 3392 0692

**Head of Communications, Mr. Esben Q. Harboe**  
esbeha@um.dk, Phone + 45 2528 3762

**Logistics and Administration, Mr. Adam Ravnkilde**  
adarav@um.dk, Phone + 45 3392 0385

**Reporting and coordination of side events, Ms. Lena Hothes**  
lenhot@um.dk, Phone + 45 3392 0794

**Project administration, Alexander Ege**  
aleege@um.dk, Phone +45 3392 0382

**Project assistant, Ms. Gertrud Nielsen**  
gernie@um.dk, Phone +453392 0382

**Project assistant, Ms. Astrid Folkmann Bonde**  
astbon@um.dk, Phone +45 3392 0382

**Ask the commissioners.** If you would like to ask a question to Dr. Greg Mills or one of the other 17 members of The Africa Commission please send your question to [askthecommissioners@um.dk](mailto:askthecommissioners@um.dk). More information about the commissioners is available on our website.

[www.africacommission.um.dk](http://www.africacommission.um.dk)  
[africacommission@um.dk](mailto:africacommission@um.dk)