

ENGLISH

RUSSIAN-AFRICAN CLUB OF MOSCOW STATE UNIVERSITY

Subject: Results of the international teleconference of 8 February 2024 on "Development of cultural and humanitarian cooperation between Russia and African countries".

CONCLUSIONS

Practical ideas of the Russian-African Club of Lomonosov Moscow State University to implement decisions of the Second Russia–Africa Summit and Economic and Humanitarian Forum

On February 8, the Russian-African Club of Lomonosov MSU held an International Conference: **“Development of Cultural and Humanitarian Cooperation between Russia and African Countries.”** The event took place at the Faculty of Global Studies of Moscow State University.

The conference was organized pursuant to the decisions of the Second Russia-Africa Summit and Economic and Humanitarian Forum, which was held on July 27–28, 2023 in St. Petersburg. Secretariat of the Russia-Africa Partnership Forum of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russian Federation supported the event.

The conference was attended by more than 100 people, representatives of 30 countries of the African continent and Russia. Participants of the conference were Russian and African diplomats, government and public figures, leaders of African diasporas, activists of non-governmental and youth organizations, Africanists, representatives of the film industry, mass communications, sports, culture, and education.

Ilya Ilyin, Dean of the Faculty of Global Studies of Moscow State University, Chairman of the Russian UNESCO Committee for Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Programme, First Vice-President of the Russian-African Club of Lomonosov Moscow State University opened the conference. He congratulated the delegates on the 300th anniversary of the Russian Academy of Sciences and conveyed greetings from the President of the Russian-African Club of Lomonosov MSU, Academician, and Rector of Moscow State University **Viktor Sadovnichy**. Mr. Ilyin noted the successful work of the Club and expressed confidence that practical proposals will be developed during the conference and then be sent to the Secretariat of the Russia-Africa Partnership Forum. The dean set the businesslike tone of the conference and was the first to put forward a practical proposal for the creation of an International University Ambassadors Movement (IUAM). In his opinion, the establishment of IUAM would be especially relevant in light of the upcoming World Youth Festival in Sochi in March this year.

Oleg Ozerov, Chairman of the Council of the Russian-African Club of Lomonosov MSU, Ambassador-at-Large of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Head of the Russia-Africa Partnership Forum Secretariat noted in his welcoming address: “In the recent years, African countries have demonstrated a steadily growing interest in learning Russian and subsequently obtaining specialized, technical and higher education in Russian civilian and military educational institutions.”

Executive Secretary of the Russian Federation Commission for UNESCO, **Tatyana Dovgalenko**, addressed the conference with greetings. She thanked the Russian-African Club of Lomonosov Moscow State University for its work on cooperation with African countries and spoke about key UNESCO projects carried out in African countries.

His Royal Highness, Member of the South African Parliament **Zolani Mkiva**, famous African poet, recognized artist, cultural activist, underlined the special importance of the conference topic. He recalled the historical friendly ties between Russia and African countries, and emphasized the need to build relations between peoples, relying on cultural programs.

Speaking on the topic of Russian-African cooperation in the field of science and education, Professor **Paul Chisale**, Acting Vice Chancellor at Copperbelt University in Zambia, noted that Russia is an advanced country with enormous technological, scientific, and educational potential. Africa can learn a lot from cooperation with Russia. These are joint scientific projects, exchanges between teachers and students, etc.

Communications and Advocacy Officer at the Presidential and National Scholarships Office of the President and Cabinet of Zimbabwe, **Rachel Nyarai Chitate** expressed her hope that Russia and Africa will work together to forge their future. The expert noted that the strengths of our countries are complementary. As an example, she cited the science area where the great scientific school of Russia could rely on young scientists from the African continent.

Experts in the field of military education in Russia – Department head of the Military History Research Institute, Ph.D. of historical sciences, associate professor **Andrey Shagov**, as well as Corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Missile and Artillery Sciences, Department head of the Military History Research Institute, Military Academy of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation **Alexey Kuznetsov** spoke about the importance of training scientific military personnel for African countries.

Among the topics of the conference was also the issue of practical activities in the field of preservation, restoration, and protection of cultural property of Russia and Africa. **Sergei Uzyanov**, expert of the Council for the Cultural Property Security of ICOM Russia, stated that thefts and illegal movement of cultural property occur during conflicts and disasters. The most valuable artifacts of the national heritage are being auctioned on the Internet. The speaker shared the unique technology for security marking of cultural property, developed at the 18th Central Research Institute of the Ministry of Defense of Russian Federation.

Daria Vanyukova, researcher at the State Museum of Oriental Art and **Galli Monastyreva**, adviser on humanitarian issues of the Association for Economic Cooperation with African Countries, spoke about the experience of implementing museum, cultural and educational projects in Africa using the example of Mali. The speakers called for expanding the humanitarian cooperation geography in Africa and rolling-out educational projects across all countries of the continent.

Pan-Africanist, sports columnist for the Civic Network online media, President of the Chadian Futsal Federation, Vice-President of the Central African Branch for Relations with the African Sports Organization **Mahamat Issakha Sogar**, as well as Secretary General of the Cameroon Students' Association **Kamdem Motcheyo Tedi** and **Mohammed Selim**, Managing Director at East Step Tourism company in Egypt proposed their humanitarian projects to expand cooperation in the field of sports, tourism, joint festivals and sports and recreational events.

President of NGO Center for Business and Cultural Cooperation with African Countries, **Vladimir Bagrov** spoke on the issue of cooperation in the field of cinema. He told the audience about the film industry of African countries and noted high prospects for cooperation in this area. Film director and producer **Dr. Nyengo Stevens** from Cameroon suggested using cinema as a cultural diplomacy tool, holding joint film festivals, signing corporate agreements between

film producers and companies to be able to create high-quality products for the global audience.

Head of the Department for Global Social Processes and Work with Youth of the Faculty of Global Studies of Lomonosov MSU, Doctor of Sociological Sciences, Professor **Natalya Smakotina** proposed conducting special educational programs on working with youth aimed at friendship and cooperation. Program director of the Russian-African Club, Associate Professor at Moscow State University **Ilya Shershnev** advocated this idea and proposed developing a curriculum and creating advanced training courses for the implementation of humanitarian projects and public diplomacy programs between Russia and African countries.

The founding president of the Black African Defense League, **Egouchi Behanzin** is convinced that Africa's education sector has been expropriated by the West, especially by the United States. They influence the minds of African youth through their educational projects. According to the speaker, the Russian education traditions are excellent, and young people from Africa dream of having access to this knowledge. The speaker thanked Russia for scholarships for African students, and expressed hope that Russia will help in training teaching staff for Africa.

Bokari Guindo, President of the Dogon Youth Movement "Jinna Dogon" in Mali, proposed developing cooperation between museums in Russia and African countries. The speaker also noted that there is huge potential for the development of tourism between our countries.

Dean of the Journalism Faculty of Lomonosov Moscow State University, Professor, Academician of the Russian Academy of Education **Elena Vartanova**, together with the Deputy Dean for International Cooperation of the Journalism Faculty **Anna Gladkova** and the leading researcher of the Journalism Faculty, Associate Professor of the Russian Academy of Education **Denis Dunas** made a presentation on the topic "The Image of Africa in the Russian Media: Conflict Management Aspect." During their study, scientists concluded that mentioning conflict issues does not prevent the Russian media from addressing Africa as a region that has enormous potential, and strengthening relations with this region contributes to Russia's national interests.

Managing Director of the Analytical Center for Afrocentrism from Togo, **Dr. Yves Ekoué Amaïzo**, noted the importance of developing video content as the most attractive to young people. He stressed that Russia's presidency in BRICS should be used to promote joint initiatives and build-up cooperation (see attached paper in French).

Director and founder of the pan-African magazine "Those Who Make Africa" **Aldo Newman** noted that for mutual penetration of the Russian and African media spheres, it is necessary to launch channels broadcasting in the languages of the peoples of our countries. We need to rely more on local media that have authority among the population, to promote the Russian vision of current events, and common values for our countries.

Louis Gowend, President of the Diaspora of the Republic of Cameroon in the Russian Federation, Chairman of the Commission for Work with African Diasporas and Public Relations at the Russian-African Club of Lomonosov Moscow State University spoke about the media project of the Russian-African Club of MSU, Rusafromedia information platform (<https://rusafromedia.ru/>), uniting Russian and African journalists. He invited participants to register on this resource and publish their materials there more actively, as well as exchange current information from the Russian-African partnership's life.

In conclusion, the Executive Secretary of the Russian-African Club, **Alexander Berdnikov** highlighted the main directions in which the work of the Club will continue. All proposals will be included in the final document of the conference and will be transferred to government agencies that are involved in Russian-African cooperation.