

AfricaLink



THE VOICE OF AFRICA IN THE DIASPORA

AfricaLink



AFRICA LINK ORGANISATION

cordially invites

Mrs Regula Ochsner

to the 2nd Edition of

AFRICA LINK SOLIDARITY AWARDS AND FUNDRAISING GALA

Keynote Adress:

Africa as a pristine for global economy recovery

DATE: SATURDAY 4TH APRIL 2009

PLACE: GÜMLIGEN, MATTENHOFSAAL

ADDRESS: BAHNHOFSTRASSE 4, 3073 GÜMLIGEN

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AFRICA LINK SOLIDARITY AWARDS 2008

CITATION FOR REGULA OCHSNER

FRIEND OF AFRICA

For a heart that felt for the plight of the people of Tulear as you witnessed the deforestation and devastation of their environment;

For a mind that was focused on the search for a solution to their energy problem;

For the determination that led to the initiation and founding of **ADES**, **Association pour le Développement de L'Énergie Solaire**;

For the commitment that has led to the establishment of the Association;

For the vision that has ensured the growth and expansion of ADES from a local initiative to a provincial and national movement;

For popularizing solar energy in Madagascar and contributing to the conservation and protection of her valuable flora and fauna;

For faithfully and selflessly touching the lives of so many with your initiatives and constancy of purpose,

Regula Ochsner,

Africa Link recognizes you this day with the award of Friend of Africa.

Congratulations!

Africa Link Solidarity Awards Ends On A High Note

By Folake Idowu

On the 4 April 2009, Africa Link was the proud host of the 2nd Edition of the Africa Link Solidarity Awards and Fundraising Gala in Bern, Switzerland. This auspicious event took place at Mattenhofsaal in Gümliigen.

Indeed, Africa Link Organisation has come a long way since April 2000 when its publication Africa Link magazine came out in the form of a 12-page bilingual (English & French) newsletter. The magazine has since grown to become a full colour magazine and is well appreciated in the country especially by the African communities. Since its inception, it has not been an easy road as there were a great number of challenges that had to be overcome in order to persevere and service its growing readership.

In his speech, Africa Link President Johnson Oduwaiye paid homage to all those who had supported and encouraged Africa Link since its inauguration. Among others, Mr. Oduwaiye thanked Mr. Rolf Lichtenstein, the printer of the magazine for making it possible to continue production even when resources were not available for the organisation to pay its bills on time. The sacrifices of members, financial help and support offered through advertising over the years have enabled the sustenance of the publication and improvement on both the technical presentation of the magazine as well as the editorial contribution.

The President was also not remiss in thanking the editor of the magazine, Mr. Atsen Ahua, whose relentless efforts and sacrifices have helped the magazine flourish.

Mr Oduwaiye also stated that the Solidarity awards initiative was originally created to encourage individuals and organisations which contribute in a concrete manner to the social and economic development of the continent. To this end, in this 2nd edition of the Solidarity awards, six awards were given. The recipients were Alhaji Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, the former President of Sierra Leone who received the Champion of Democracy and Good Governance award, H.E. Khadija Rachida Masri, the AU Ambassador and Permanent Observer to UNOG, who received

the Africa Envoy of Excellence Award, Mrs Regula Ochsner of Association of ADES, and the Togo/Thun Association received the Friends of Africa Awards, and lastly, Mr Rolf Lichtenstein and Mrs Evelyne Matthys-Kraft, received the Support to Africa Link Awards.

The awards were presented by the Chairman and the Co-chairperson of the occasion, Mr.

Apolinario Correia the Angolan Ambassador, and Mrs. Rafiaâ Limam Baouendi, the Tunisian Ambassador respectively to the recipients who thereafter gave acceptance speeches.

H. E. Khadija Rachida Masri, who received the "Africa Envoy of Excellence" Award, remarked in her acceptance speech that African countries are all currently going through a transition. It is the duty of the African Union to support positive initiatives and ensure that no matter the outcome, Africa comes out victorious. She went on to thank Africa Link and promised she would cherish the award for the rest of her life.

Earlier while welcoming guests to the event, H. E. Appolinario Correia, congratulated the efforts of Africa Link Organisation in bringing to the forefront, the endeavours of Africans living in the Diaspora, and urged the general public and African diplomats in particular to support its laudable efforts.

Also Dr Martin Uhomoibhi, the Nigerian Ambassador to the UNO Geneva, and Switzerland gave a cheerful and encouraging speech asking the organisation to continue its good work. Africans, he said, should continue to commend and amplify the good works that have been achieved by fellow Africans. Africa needs a critical mass to assure change. "Yes, Africa can!" He also spoke about the diplomatic calendar which he said greatly helps diplomats to know one another during their sojourn in Switzerland.

Currently, Africa Link's presence on the Internet is notable as it has increased the



H. E. Correia presenting his opening remark

access of the Diaspora communities worldwide to ongoing events in Switzerland and beyond. It is now considered as a reliable reference point for information for the African community.

Earlier in the evening, the President disclosed that the event would forthwith become a bi-annual event and that another category of the awards, namely the Champion of Development award, would feature in the 2010 edition. The award will go to political actors and social entrepreneurs at the sub-national level for their outstanding performance in the physical and human development of their communities. The forthcoming Solidarity Awards will coincide with the 10th anniversary of the Organisation.

Among the dignitaries present at the occasion were, Her Excellency Mrs. M. Abbas, the Ambassador of Pakistan to Switzerland, Dr. Rolf Bloch and his spouse, Mr. George Umbricht and his spouse, president of SwissChamSouthern Africa (SCSA) and Managing Partner at Umbricht Attorneys at Law, Mr. Thomas Seghezzi, Partner Rainbow unlimited GmbH. Almost all the African ambassadors to Switzerland in Berne were present to support and encourage the Africa Link team.

The guests were treated to a rich dinner which among others was comprised of Algerian and Tunisian dishes, and South African wine which were provided by the embassies in Berne. The embassies of Nigeria and Angola also contributed financially to the realisation of this event.

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A Nigerian musician, Oti Lucky, a.k.a. Oti Brown, entertained the guests with new and old tunes in African beats, a sweet nostalgia. The event directed by Sherlock Fortuin ended on a high note and was well appreciated by the guests, making it an event that will not be quickly forgotten by all those present.



AFRICA LINK AWARDS



- 1 Felix Matthys receives the award on behalf of his late mother
- 2 Dr. Charles Senessie receives the award on behalf of former President Dr. Tejan Kabbah of Sierra Leone
- 3 Mrs. Regula Ochsner poses with her award
- 4 VP Togo/Thun association Mr. Ulrich Graf receives the award on behalf of the association
- 5 Amb. Rachida Masri poses with the award
- 6 Mr. Rolf Lichtenstein poses with his award
- 7 A group photograph of the recipients with Mr. A. Ahua (left) and Mr. J. Oduwaiye (right)
- 8 l – r: Amb. Abbas of Pakistan, Mr. G. Umbricht, Dr. & Mrs. Rolf Bloch
- 9 Mr. T. Seghezzi and Mr. & Mrs. G. Umbricht
- 10 Ambassadors Binzi, Baouendi and Riache of Cameroon, Tunisia and Algeria respectively.
- 11 Amb. Diarrassouba of Côte d’ivoire with Mr. & Mrs. Wolfram Marwik of World Justice Forum
- 12 l – r. Amb. Masri, Mrs. Masmoudi and Amb. Baouendi
- 13 Dr. & Mrs. Moussibahou Mazou

