

Towards Improving Businesses of African Migrants In The Netherlands

The conference started at 2.20 pm with a welcome address read by the Chairman of the foundation, Chief T.A. Osuji. He thanked the audience and speakers for attending the conference. The Chairman went on to explain briefly the historical background and objectives of the foundation (mission, vision and goals).

After the opening address, the Chairman introduced the chairperson of the conference Dr. Fisseha-Tsion Mengistu. Dr. Menghistu hailed Reach Africa Foundation for organizing this conference. He said it was very encouraging to see Africans that are getting together to discuss their own problems and find solutions on how to improve their well being. He said it is by getting united that Africans in the Netherlands can be able to progress very well and integrate into the Dutch society.



Chairman of Reach Africa Foundation, Chief T.A. Osuji

This was the first ever conference for Reach Africa Foundation to organize eight months since it was founded on 5 August, 2002. As well as being the first conference, the event was also part of the long-term plan to create a forum African migrants can discuss specific issues facing the growth and success of



fr l-Mr. David Yeboah-Director, Redeemer Services Group, The Hague, m-Mrs. Helen Osaro-Ekhaton, Director, Black & Beautiful Cosmetics, The Hague, Chief T.A. Osuji, Chairman Reach Africa Foundation.

African migrants businesses in The Netherlands. The objective of the forum was to unite the African businesses in order to strengthen integration and participation in the Dutch economy and policies.



Fr l-Mr. M. Vildreim, Immigration Problems, Residence Legalization of Documents, van de Pol & van Beek, The Hague.



African migrants businesses are now an established and growing feature of contemporary Netherlands, particularly within inner-city areas. In addition to fulfilling an important economic and social role for the minority communities themselves, African migrants businesses are also making a significant contribution to the regeneration of

deprived areas in urban centers. These businesses are becoming a viable source of self-employment and empowerment for African migrants.

However, African migrants businesses have a long way to go before they can stabilize themselves very well in The Netherlands. Most of them experience difficulties in growth particularly in relation to obtaining finance from banks and business support from government institutions. Available records show that African business have lower success rate of accessing finance from banks both as established businesses and start ups.



The other problem is that the majority of Africa businesses lack management and marketing skills especially ICT and E-Commerce. ICT take –up and skills among African businesses are at much lower levels than among white-owned businesses. The lack of this knowledge create a barrier of exploiting the full business opportunities offered by the internet.

These and many other problems are at the center of the organization’s focus on improving the businesses of African migrants business in The Netherlands. However, what is crucial is unity among African migrants because it is through working together that a strong and united front could be forged to address these problems in collaboration with government institutions and the private sector. Thus, it was in view of this objective that Reach Africa Foundation organized the conference to underscore the need for African migrant businesses to discuss their problems and agree to how these problems could be solved to bring about significant