African Festival of the Arts

Kujang Laki

The African Festival of the Arts, one of Chicago’s largest four-day events, will be held over the Labor Day weekend, Sept. 4 – 7, 2009 from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. at Washington Park around 51st and Cottage Grove in Chicago. This year marks the 20th Annual Chrysler Financial African Festival of the Arts Africa hosted by Africa International House (AIH).

The theme of this year’s event is “History, Traditions and Legends,” which, according to Festival Producer and Africa International House President Patrick Woodtor, is indicative of the cultural influence of Africa from ancient times through present day and beyond.

“This year’s Festival represents 20 years of our mission to educate our audiences about Africa, the cradle of all civilization, while celebrating her significance and impact on mankind,” said Woodtor.

The African Festival of the Arts celebrates Africa and Africans throughout the Diaspora and especially in Chicago. Washington Park, located a stone’s throw from President Obama’s Hyde Park neighborhood, will be transformed into an African village filled with artists and artisans, music, dance, drumming, the exotic aroma of African cuisine and more than 250,000 festivalgoers seeking to experience the continent and culture of Africa.

Woodtor attributes the festival’s success to its longstanding ability to bring people together and motivate them to learn about African culture and heritage. “It’s a good ambiance, it’s like you are somewhere in Africa and for those four days it does not feel like you are in America and by the time you step outside you are encountered by the same realities,” Woodtor commented. Woodtor believes that the African Festival of the Arts is a program that really highlights African culture for people from all over the world. He also notes that the program draws crowds from all over due to its varied entertainment. “There are many programs where you go and see so many things in one place,” said Woodtor. “It’s a good program and one of the oldest; it’s kind of like an image and it has become a tradition. People come for the entertainment, people come for the food, and people come just for fun at the end of summer.”

As in the past, the Festival offers something for everyone. At the end of summer.”

Mike Murnane is a man with a clear mission. As Director of Ethnic and Regional Outreach for Chicago 2016, his daily calendar often looks like Safari trails in a foreign country for he is tirelessly with the city of Chicago to bring the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic games to Chicago.

In December 2008, Chicago announced the results of an independent economic impact study for hosting the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The study found that the Games are expected to stimulate $22.5 billion of incremental economic activity in the state of Illinois - $13.7 billion in Chicago alone - during the 11-year span of 2011 through 2021. The study also found that 315,000 new jobs (for example, one job that lasts two years equals two job years) will be created during this period. Of the 315,000 job-years, 172,000 are expected to occur in Chicago. So just what does it do for the city of Chicago 2017, 2020, 2030 and what does it mean for the city of Chicago 2050? Unfortunately this is a question we are going to have to wait until 2016 to find out.

Africom: Making Peace or Fueling War

Daniel Volman & William Minter

At the end of President Barack Obama’s inauguration ceremony, civil rights leader Reverend Joseph Lowery invoked the hope of a day ‘when nation shall not lift up sword against nation, when tanks will be beaten into tractors’. No one expects such a utopian vision to materialize any time soon. But both Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton have spoken eloquently of the need to emphasize diplomacy over a narrow military agenda. In her confirmation hearing, Clinton stressed the need for ‘smart power’, perhaps inadvertently echoing Obama’s opposition to the invasion of Iraq as a ‘dumb war’. Even top US military officials, such as chairperson of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen, have warned against overly militarizing US foreign policy.

In practice, such a shift in emphasis is certain to be inconsistent. At a global level, the most immediate challenge to the credibility of change in foreign policy is Afghanistan, where promised troop increases are given little chance of bringing stability and the country risks becoming Obama’s ‘Vietnam’. Africa policy is for the most part under the radar. At a regional level, the most immediate challenge to the credibility of change in foreign policy is the Darfur conflict. The United States has given priority to enhancing multinational capacity to respond to Africa’s own urgent security needs. If the first option is taken, it will undermine rather than advance both US and African security. Taking the second option won’t

2016 Olympic Games in Chicago

Kujang Laki & Alie Kabba

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Western Europe right now.”

Chicago 2016, a privately funded organization, is now working tirelessly with the city of Chicago to bring the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic games to Chicago.

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Le Bénin Pourrait Devenir Autosuffisant en Riz

ROME, 15 juillet (Xinhua) – Le Bénin pourrait devenir un jour autosuffisant en riz et même exporter les excédents de sa production rizicole grâce à une stratégie d’intensification de la production et de la commercialisation des semences de riz de qualité, affirmant les experts de l’Organisation des Nations Unies pour l’alimentation et l’agriculture (FAO).

Un projet FAO d’un montant de demi-milliard de dollars doit en effet aider ce pays d’Afrique de l’Ouest, à partir de septembre 2009, à atteindre ses objectifs de développement : produire 300.000 ton- nes de riz - soit plus du double de la production actuelle - à l’horizon 2011. Et pour cela, il faudra produire annuellement plus de 2.200 hectares de semences de riz de qualité, précise la FAO dans un communiqué.

L’intensification de la production rizicole en Bénin s’inscrit dans le contexte international de hausse des prix des denrées alimentaires. Et ce, d’autant plus que l’Ouest, la production de riz est loin de satisfaire la demande qui ne cesse d’augmenter.

Une chose est certaine : si elle ne forme pas l’esprit et les conditions dialectiques et critiques objectives de sa situation actuelle, de même si elle n’élabora pas les nécessités qu’il faut entreprendre pour en sortir, l’Afrique continuera à voguer de défaîtes en illusions sans parvenir à comprendre que le moteur de toute évolution sociale se trouve dans l’économie, la créativité scientifique et technique et leur mise au service de la société.

Le riz est un aliment de grande consommation dans le monde, il est nécessaire de développer la production et de la commercialiser. Le Bénin a le potentiel de devenir autosuffisant en riz, mais il est nécessaire de mettre en place des politiques et des mesures appropriées pour s’assurer de cette autosuffisance.

Le NERICA est issu d’un croisement entre plusieurs variétés de riz africain et une variété de riz asiatique. Il s’agit d’une variété de riz qui a été développée par l’Institut national de recherche agronomique (INRA) de France. Elle est adaptée aux conditions climatiques et de sols africains et permet d’obtenir une production de riz de haute qualité et de bonne résistance aux maladies et aux insectes.
President Barack Obama and Global Africa

Barack Obama’s Africa policy may become more active in a positive sense in the months and years ahead. But on the evidence so far it does seem credible that the African continent itself would have been better off if Hillary Clinton had become President of the United States.

On the other hand, if we examine the Black world as a whole instead of just the African continent, Obama’s election to the presidency of the United States has set a remarkable precedent in upward political mobility. The United States is only the first white majority country to have elected a man of colour to its highest office in the land. This American precedent may lead on to the election of a Black Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, a Black President of France, and even a Black Chancellor of Germany before the end of this 21st century.

A Somali Prime Minister of Italy in another 50 years is no longer inconceivable. After all, the United States has had a Luo President sooner than has Kenya, which has a population of several million.

It is also not often realised that Obama is not only the most powerful Black man in world politics today, but the most powerful man of colour in the history of civilization. He is more powerful than the Pharaoh who forced Moses out of Egypt, more powerful than the Ethiopian Emperor who defeated the Italians in 1896, more powerful than Shaka Zulu who ‘stands out as the greatest of them all. His legend has captured the imagination of European and African writers, inspiring novels, biographies, and historical studies in several languages. When we say Obama is more powerful than Shaka Zulu, Ramesses II of Egypt, and Menelik II of Ethiopia, we do not mean that Obama is greater than any of them. We do not know yet how great Barack Obama is likely to be. What we do know is that he is the Commander in Chief of US forces, which are greater than all the African armies in history added together. Currently it is estimated that the United States has 1000 military bases overseas. In sheer power, there is therefore no doubt that Barack Obama is in a class by himself among Black leaders in the history of civilisation. But what about Obama’s impact upon African-Americans? Black voters in the United States voted for Obama in percentages of over 90 per cent -- after some hesitation in the early stages of his primary campaign for the presidency. But in the course of his first 100 days there was some Black disenchantment because Obama was perceived as being in denial about the importance of such African-American concerns as affirmative action and reparations for past injustices. At African-American public meetings to grade Obama’s performance during those 100 days, some graded him as low as C- others gave him an Incomplete.

But in fairness to President Obama some of his most important policies are bound to benefit millions of African-Americans, although the policies were not specifically focused on African-Americans. His aspiration to make health service as affordable and universal as possible is bound to benefit hundreds of thousands of uninsured African-Americans.

His plan to make college education more affordable is also bound to benefit generations of young Blacks, if Obama succeeded. Indeed, many of these policies are likely to yield greater benefits to African-Americans than even affirmative action which has tended to benefit white women more than Black Americans.

With regard to health policies affecting the African continent, Obama has a tough act to follow when compared with George W. Bush. Perhaps at a moment of weakness, President Bush persuaded Congress to allocate billions of dollars to combat HIV-Aids in Africa and the Caribbean countries. Bush’s strategy against Hiv-Aids abroad was arguably his most enlightened policy, though his accompanying condition of sexual abstinence was naive and often honored more in the breach than the observance.

We have now transitioned from Obama’s credentials of performance to his credentials of pledges. The pursuit of affordable health care and affordable education are pledges in the process of implementation. The beneficiaries of these pledges are bound to include millions of African-Americans.

Congressman Rush Calls for Change in US-Africa Relations

WASHINGTON --U. S. Rep. Bobby L. Rush (IL-01) said the United States must re-examine its relationship to Africa and end paternalistic patterns.

On May 18, Congressman Rush introduced H.CON R. 128 to recognize the strategic and economic importance of Africa to the United States and change to U.S. policy toward creating greater security and prosperity on continent. It recommends the U.S. vigorously pursue the formation of an integrated policy framework to advance economic development and trade relations with African nations and to foster strategic political and economic ties.

“For decades we have approached Africa as if it is a dark continent that can only foster strife, political unrest and disease...Africa does not need help, it wants trade, investment and opportunity,” Rush said. “Africa has the key to its own development and we need to move away from the paternalistic approach that isn’t working, hasn’t worked and won’t work.”

Congressman Bobby L. Rush

H. CON. RES. 128

Expressing the sense of Congress that Africa is of significant strategic, political, economic, and humanitarian importance to the United States.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

May 18, 2009

Mr. RUSH (for himself, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. RANGE, Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan, Ms. CLARKE, Mr. CLAY, Mr. FAITAH, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. CAO, and Mr. ROYCE) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress that Africa is of significant strategic, political, economic, and humanitarian importance to the United States.

Whereas contemporary United States ties with Sub-Saharan Africa today far transcend the humanitarian interests that have frequently underpinned United States engagement with the continent;

Whereas Africa now plays an increasingly significant role in meeting the world’s energy needs, supplying new and old technologies with vital mineral resources, and countering the transnational threats of terrorism, piracy, global health crises, and trafficking in illegal narcotics and persons;

Whereas there is a growing understanding in foreign policy circles that economic development, natural resource management, human security, and global stability are inextricably linked;

Whereas Freedom House concluded this year that 19 African countries are electoral democracies and asserted that these include some of the most promising examples of new democracies in the world—places where continued on page 8
African Festival of the Arts Chicago
Traditions, History & Legends

Admission
General Daily Admission $10.00 in advance $15.00 at gate
Seniors & Children (under 12-over 65) $5.00
Daily Family Pass (2 Adults and 4 children under 12) $30.00
Adult (4-Day) Weekend Pass $30.00 in advance $45.00 at gate
Tax deductible admission contribution
Admission includes access to all Washington Park AFA events

Performance Spaces & Stages
Non-Stop Entertainment
Dee Palmer Woodson Main Stage
Family/World/Hip Hop Stage
Drum Village
Book Pavilion

Featuring
AFA Gala Entertainment
BlueNefertiti’s “Paris @Night”
AFA Festival Entertainment includes
Ahmad Jamal
Booker T.
Latin Street Dancing
Kenya Safari Acrobat

Exclusive VIP Main Stage Seating available.
For more information
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Official 2009 Image “Celebration (Lagos Jump)”
Oil on Canvas, Dayo Laoye

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Sept. 4 – Sep. 7
Washington Park-Chicago
Tickets Available Online
www.africanfestivalchicago.com
773.955. ARTS (2787)

Bookmark is not a ticket
No Rain Date
A ticket purchase is for the festival & all performances are free
The African Festival of the Arts

African Festival of the Arts (continued from page 1)

heart of the Festival is the African Marketplace featuring more than 300 artists and vendors with a variety of African and Afrocentric wares, including fine art, artfacts, crafts, fashions, jewelry, masks, collectibles, baskets, beads, fabrics, textiles, museum quality African art, furniture, household goods and gift items. Additionally, the fine arts, film and quilting pavilions will have a diverse array of offerings. The Children’s Pavilion will be filled with activity to entertain and educate young festival-goers. The Wellness Village will focus on health and fitness. The Spiritual Pavilion will explore ancient belief systems and the roots of religion. Festival favorites such as the Drumming Village and the Bank of the Nile Food Court will keep festival-goers in Washington Park all weekend long.

The entertainment line-up will include performances by world-renowned jazz pianist Ahmad Jamal, South African songstress Lorraine Klaasen, vocalist Julia Huff, musician Booker T. Jones, Soukous Stars, the first US tour of the Cuban group Los 3 de la Habana, Spirit dance troupe, and more.

Woodtor noted that before September 11, 2001 the festival had focused solely on obtaining African artists. But with stricter traveling rules, the program has expanded to incorporate Rhythm and Blues and Jazz because they tend to be domestic, making the travelling process easier.

Many programs have had to downgrade due to the economic situation of the moment, and the African Festival of the Arts is no exception to the trend. The Festival planners would have loved to celebrate the festival’s 20th anniversary with great pomp and pageantry, but dwindling sponsorship has forced them to limit their ambition.

“If we had the sponsorship and money, we would have had previous works published or created a documentary to include some of the talents we have exhibited along with a series of other programs,” said Woodtor.

According to Woodtor, the festival has increased tourism to Africa. He notes that most people used to go to the Caribbean or Europe because they didn’t know much about Africa. However, due to social encounters occurring at the festival each year, many people are taking a keen interest in Africa.

Aside from an increase in tourism, Woodtor says that he has heard first-hand accounts of how the festival has achieved success be easy. There are no quick fixes. But compact security centers, as policymakers take a broader view of Africa’s security needs and a multilateral approach to addressing them. This need for immediate action to promote peace in Africa is clear. While much of the continent is at peace, there are large areas of great violence and insecurity, most prominently centered on Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Somalia. These crises require not only a continuance of emphasis on diplomacy but also resources for peacekeeping and peacekeeping. And yet the Bush administration has beenqueathed the new president a newsome of challenges. In this context, the United States Africa Command, known as AFRICOM. Meanwhile, Washington has starved the United Nations and other multilateral institutions of resources, even while entrusting them with enormous peacekeeping responsibilities.

The government has presented AFRICOM as a cost-effective institution restructuring and a beacon of hope for the future of Africa. However, the question remains: How can we achieve genuine peace and security in Africa? To answer this question, we must address the roots of instability in the region. This requires a comprehensive approach that addresses economic, political, and social factors. We must work towards a stable and prosperous Africa, where people can live in peace and dignity. The African Festival of the Arts plays a crucial role in promoting this vision by celebrating the rich cultural heritage of Africa and fostering cross-cultural understanding.

Africom: Making Peace or Fueling War, continued from page 1

Shaping a new US security policy toward Africa requires more than just a modest tilt toward more active diplomacy.

African in Theory and Practice

Judging by their frequent press releases, AFRICOM and related programs such as the navy’s Africa Partnership Station are primarily focused on a constant
Africa: Pan-Africanism in Our Time

Zaya Yebo

The people of Africa are united by culture, history and identity. However, colonialism and neo-colonialism seeks to divide and atomize the continent in several ways. However, the struggle for a united Africa, which began years before the Pan-African Movement, was aimed solely at uniting a people bound by history. African Unity has come a long way, but every movement needs an ideology. Pan-Africanism has played that role for Africa.

Today some people may regard Pan-Africanism as a throwback to the immediate post-colonial period. Events such as the crisis in the DRC, Northern Uganda, some parts of Kenya, youth struggling for emancipation in the Niger Delta, and the quest of Mau Mau veterans for compensation bind us as a people. We feel each other's pain. As we struggle to build a Union of African States, it is imperative that we revisit this concept from a political and radical perspective. After all, Pan-Africanism is partly a response to the way Africa and Africans have been treated within the global world since the Berlin Conference of 1884, which divided Africa into tiny enclaves for the benefit of European monarchs and their hangers on.

Pan-Africanism is not a concept that easily lends itself to definition. It is a journey. For me, what is important is to understand and underscore the point that this journey has brought us to the point where the talk of a unity of African states is no longer sneered at by cynics or seen as a dream, but as something that can happen in our life time. Pan-Africanism for me is an idea, a collective understanding of what binds us as Africans - not Kenyan, Ghanaian, Congolese, Ugandan, or Egyptian - but as Africans with a common bond, and how we intend to conduct our affairs in today's globalized world.

The colonization of Africa was formalized at the Berlin Conference of 1884, which led to the most brutal genocide against any race ever known in the history of human beings. The export of millions of Africans to the so-called 'new world' was also supported by the colonization project, which was brutal in its execution and inhuman in its sustainability. The colonial enterprise was a form of one party dictatorship in which Africans were treated according to the whims of the colonial overlords, missionaries, their companies and indeed anyone who thought they were superior to Africans. It was the most extreme form of colonisation. So far, no one has faced the International Criminal Court (ICC) for these crimes against humanity. But as a result of these events - slavery, the colonial enterprise, racism, the brutal economic exploitation of African resources, and so on, African people all over the world realized that they faced a common destiny.

Marcus Garvey's 'back to Africa' movement was largely destroyed as an enterprise, but the ideas behind it were never touched. The basic premise is that all Africans and people of African descent in any part of the world belong to a common African nation, and should work together to address our common problems. The idea of a common front against exploitation, degradation, abuse, racism, colonial exploitation and various forms of slavery, led to the birth of the Pan-African movement as we know it today.

All Africans and people of African descent are Africans and belong to the African nation.

PAN-AFRICANISM: THE EARLY YEARS

Basically, Pan-Africanism is about geo-politics as it relates to the African continent. All Africans and people of African descent are Africans and belong to the African nation. The early years of the Pan-African Movement were mostly dedicated to ending the colonial enterprise, and its disastrous effects. Of particular importance in the calendar of Pan-Africanism were the various conferences and meetings: The Pan-African conferences of 1900 (London), 1919 (Paris), 1921 (London, Brussels, Paris), 1923 (London), 1927 (New York), and the last official one in 1949. The All African People's Conference called by Osagyefo Dr Kwame Nkrumah in Accra (1965) is also another important landmark in the history of Pan-Africanism. The last global Pan-African Movement meeting was held in Kampala in 1994. Some of the leading lights in the movement's history included influential Africans and people of African descent of the time participants in these meetings: Sylvester Williams, W.E.B. DuBois, Marcus Garvey, Kwame Nkrumah, Jomo Kenyatta, etc. The 1958 First Conference of Independent African states, held in Accra, Ghana marked the formal beginning of the Pan-African movement within the continent. The 1963 Organisation of African Unity Charter broke the embassies of these efforts.

Following the dark cloud of slavery and colonialism in Africa, visionary African leaders realized that it was imperative for all Africans - wherever they might be - to unite to end the African holocaust which began with the 'European Renaissance' in Italy in 1400. Its practical manifestation, however, dates back to 1900 when Sylvester Williams, a lawyer of African descent, named this coming together of Africans 'Pan-Africanism'. But as a movement, Pan-Africanism began in 1776. It was, however, the fifth Pan-African Congress held in Manchester, England, in 1943 that advanced Pan-Africanism and applied it to the de-colonization of the African continent politically. Some of the leading lights in the movement's history included Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana), W. E. B. DuBois, Jomo Kenyatta (Kenya), Robert Sobukwe (South Africa) and Patrice Lumumba (Congo). Pan-Africanism therefore defines the intellectual, political and economic cooperation that should lead, ultimately, to the political unity of Africa.

Unlike other contending ideologies, Pan-Africanism was developed by outstanding African scholars, political scientists, historians and philosophers living in Africa and the Diaspora. It was conceived in the womb of Africa. It is a product made in Africa by Africans. The objectives of Pan-Africanism have changed over time, but not the essence. For instance, while the Pan-Africanist Movement was in its early years concerned with anti-racism, anti-colonialism as spearheaded by Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana), Ahmad Sekou Toure (Guinea), and the founding fathers of the Pan African movement, it is now mainly focused on the actual political unification of Africa.

George Padmore, considered Pan-Africanism an 'ideological alternative' for the liberation of Africa from the shackles of imperialism. The new Africa would create the authentic and independent political, social, and cultural environment, nurturing and reproducing what was uniquely African and thus create a framework for uniting all Africans in the world and for waging a struggle against racial and domination. George Padmore also addressed African leaders when he wrote that 'African nationalist leaders must resolve their own internal communal conflicts and... differences, so that, having established a democratically elected government, the imperial power will find less danger in passing power to the popularly elected leaders than in withholding it.' In his words, 'Pan-Africanism looks above the narrow confines of class, race, tribe and religion, its vision stretched beyond the limited frontiers of the nation-state. Its perspective embraces the federation of regional self-governing countries and their ultimate amalgamation into a United States of Africa.'

Apart from George Padmore, another fervent believer in Pan-Africanism was W.E.B. DuBois.
Africanism was Kwame Nkrumah. In the 1960s, Ghana’s founding father and true Pan-Africanist, Kwame Nkrumah argued that ‘the independence of Ghana was meaningless unless it was linked up with the total liberation of the African continent.’ For Nkrumah, Ghana’s sovereignty was secondary to the pursuit of the Pan-African dream. So deep was his commitment that all independent states in Africa should work together to create a Union of African States that he was willing to sacrifice Ghana’s pursuit of national sovereignty. On the eve of Ghana’s independence on 6 March 1957, Nkrumah declared that so deep was Ghana’s ‘faith in African unity that we have declared our preparedness to surrender the sovereignty of Ghana, in whole or in part, in the interest of a Union of African States and Territories as soon as ever such a union becomes practicable.’ Ghana started this process by creating an anti-imperialist front called the Ghana-Guinea-Mali Union of radical African leaders. In his book I Speak of Freedom, published in 1961, Kwame Nkrumah further reminded all Africans that imperialism had so thoroughly distorted and disarticulated African social formations that only continental unity could save the region from further deterioration. In Africa Must Unite (1963), Nkrumah enunciated a clear agenda for the establishment of a common market to complement the Union of African States. Nkrumah argued: ‘The unity of Africa and the strength it would gather from continental integration of its economic and industrial development, supported by a united policy of non-alignment, could have been a most powerful effect for world peace.’ This position was supported by various West African nationalist leaders like Nnamdi Azikiwe (Nigeria), Modibo Keita (Mali) and Sekou Toure (Guinea). However, this version of Pan-Africanism was not without enemies. The early years of Pan-Africanism were also a response to the emerging anti-colonial move- 
ments, and issues pertaining to post-colonial development, and Africa’s relationship with former colonial powers. African leaders (the radicals) demanded that the riches of Africa be used for the benefit and development of Africa. Such goals were noble, but also an anathema to the former colonial powers, for which Africa’s only purpose was to fill the coffers of the imperial powers. Most of the radical leaders of the movement were therefore hounded and overthrown on the instigation of these powers. In today’s Africa, the hounding of Robert Mugabe (Zimbabwe) exemplifies this trend in all its entirety.


**PAN-AFRICANISM IN OUR TIME**

Today, globalization is a truth which we have to live with. But globalization is not a new form of re-colonization in which western powers justify their continued dominance using economic and humanitarian arguments as further means of consolidating their stranglehold of the continent. Under the guise of ‘humanitarian intervention’, the new global powers can invade and occupy any country within their orbit, and when this fails, they resort to the use of interna- tional institutions and courts.

The European Union has united Europe in both a political and economic sense. Where this is not enough, it uses global military alliances like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to enforce its rule by other means. On the other hand, Africa, which requires this Union to protect its interests globally is still pussyfooting, while the masses of Africans continue to wallow in the ‘quagmire of underdevelopment, poverty, endless border wars, economic domination and the dictatorship of the Interna- tional Monetary Fund and the World Bank.’ This problem is further exacerbated by the type of leadership whose interests are sometimes anti national.

We must challenge authoritarian rule, mismanagement, poor leadership and the lack of accountability of our leaders and public institutions.

We must challenge authoritarian rule, mismanagement, poor leadership and the lack of accountability of our leaders and public institutions. It is also the only way to help address the perennial problems of underdevelopment, poverty, depri-vation, and the poor deplorable state of our infrastructure when a lot of resources go to private sources. But we must also have the courage of our founding fathers, the pioneers of Pan-Africanism and African liberation, to challenge the prevailing ortho- doxy that holds the view that corrup- tion and authoritarianism is a typical African problem. This stems from the colonial mindset allowing international institutions to target African leaders, haul them off to some foreign jail under the guise of answering for impunity. It is inconceivable that the US or Britain will act similarly. That also means that African ac- tivists should reappropriate and carefully reflect on the sort of ac- tions which pander not to the mismanagement and corruption but to the demagoguery and calculated while fueling anti African actions nationally and globally.

Africa’s shameless dependence on the West, the unproductive disposition of our elite to foreign inspired theories and ideas, the wanton abuse of human rights, the appropriation of state power and its resources, and hostility to popular and progressive forces have not helped Africa to prop- el Africa’s glory. Even today, Africa remains a continent to consolidate their stranglehold of the continent. Under the guise of ‘humanitarian intervention’, the new global powers can invade and occupy any country within their orbit, and when this fails, they resort to the use of interna- tional institutions and courts.

The personalities of dictators like Mobutu Sese Seko provide in- teresting patterns and models for research into the African person- ality and idiosyncrasies. The abuse of African children and hospitality by so-called tourists and preachers is a sad indictment of the sort of leadership we have installed. These tendencies have been reinforced by the inability of the African elite to think inde- pendently, and map out a clear and creative agenda for recon- struction and development, mobi- lize their peoples, develop infra- structures, and generate confi- dence in Africa’s resources, economies and abilities, rather than ape and mouth theories which have no relevance to Af- rica’s development. But for Pan-Africanism to remain relevant to African lives, the crea- tion of the Union of African States should go beyond state-to-state relations and permeate to the people of Africa, who by no means would like to live in peace and harmony with each other.

African Union meetings should cease being a meeting of presi- dents and their accolades (including a few select civil soci- ety groups). When African moth- ers, market women, traditional queens, birth attendants, etc get to attend an African union meet- ing to put before our leaders, the sort of deplorable lives they lead, it would be a major step forward if they should move on to farmers, po- licemen and women, soldiers, children, and so on. Why should African children be transported to New York and not Addis Ababa, Tripoli, Nairobi or Kampala?

African economists and intellectu- als need their own framework for development, free from the en- surences of donor require- ments. For example, the policies outlined in the African charter for popular participation in development must be seen as guidelines for structural transformation, de- mocratization, empowerment, accountability and a determined 

continued on page 11
Whereas African economies are among the fastest growing globally and registered nearly 6 percent overall economic growth in 2007, the highest in 20 years;

Whereas there are now 40 sub-Saharan African countries eligible for trade benefits under the United States African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), the highest number ever;

Whereas United States exports to Sub-Saharan Africa totaled $14.4 billion in 2007, an amount more than double what it was in 2001, while United States total imports from sub-Saharan Africa more than tripled during this period, to $67.4 billion;

Whereas United States firms are a leading provider of foreign direct investment to Sub-Saharan Africa, investing $13.8 billion by year-end 2006;

Whereas the United States Government and private sector jointly pursue Africa’s economic development, United States trade with the region, and United States-Africa business partnerships;

Whereas African states have collectively adopted the African Union’s New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), a self- imposed framework for socioeconomic development that aims to improve governance and promote friendlier ties among states; whereas oil from North and Sub-Saharan Africa accounted for over 19.5 percent of United States oil imports in 2008, a greater amount than oil from Persian Gulf countries;

Whereas the proportion of United States oil imports from Africa is expected to grow to 25 percent over the next decade; whereas Africa’s natural resources, if carefully managed, will contribute to global prosperity and expand economic growth in Africa;

Whereas the creation of a United States military Africa Command in 2007 reflects Africa’s long-term strategic value and strives for a more coherent, coordinated, and effective United States Africa policy;

Whereas the territorial waters of the Horn of Africa are a zone of international strategic importance because of a large concentration of global energy supplies and commercial shipping pass through them, necessitating increased United States cooperation with African countries to improve border and coastal security;

Whereas United States military cooperation with Africa is growing, with United States and African forces routinely conducting joint exercises;

Whereas African governments are steadily taking a larger role in the protection of citizens and property on the continent, due in part to United States security assistance and training;

Whereas over 300 million Muslims live in Africa, where they enjoy a long history of tolerance and interfaith cooperation, making Africa an ideal place for the United States to foster and expand its relationship with the Islamic world;

Whereas Africa’s growing importance is reflected in the intensifying efforts of China, Russia, India, Israel, and other countries to gain access to African resources and advance their ties to the region; and

Whereas a more comprehensive, multi-faceted regional policy is essential for the United States to operate effectively in this increasingly competitive environment:

Now, therefore, be it Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that:

(1) Africa is of significant strategic, political, economic, and humanitarian importance to the United States; and

(2) the United States should vigorously pursue the formation and implementation of an integrated policy framework to advance economic development and trade relations with African nations and to foster strategic, political, economic, humanitarian, and cultural ties of mutual benefit to the United States and Africa.

Call your Congressman TODAY to sign-on to this resolution!!!!!
Forum Highlights New Face of Migration

Kujang Laki

New America Media, Community Media Workshop and the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights recently organized a two-hour roundtable discussion on the findings of a historic poll of women immigrants in the US. The findings, released by New America Media (NAM), revealed that women immigrants are the new face of migration in America. The poll highlights immigrant women’s demographics, reasons for migrating, as well as the invisible will to overcome obstacles while working tirelessly to build a new life for themselves and, more importantly, their families in America.

“The poll establishes that in the latter part of the 20th century women immigrated to America in ever-growing numbers, and are now on the move, as much as migrants of the previous generational circumstances and challenges,” said Close. “Women are migrating not as lone individuals but as members, even heads, of families defined by kinship family bonds intact even they travel great distances and adapt to new cultures. This journey has activated women.”

Curated by Dawn Bender & Associates, the poll was initially released at the National Press Club in Washington D.C. It gained national attention and sparked a five-city tour in Atlanta, Miami, New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago.

A group of Chicago’s outstanding immigrant women led an engaging discussion panel that included Younhee Harm of Korean American Community Services, Itedal Shalabi of Arab American Family Services, Margarita Clark, president of Community Development – Economic Recovery Institute, Inc., Maria Soccoro Pesquera from Mujeres Latinas en Accion, and Esther Wong from Chinese American Service League.

The forum began with a brief speech from keynote speaker Sandy Close, executive director of NAM. “We want to use the forum as a way to expand storytelling, for you can no longer report the study to the media through a press conference,” Close affirmed. Close concluded that with a challenging economy, the media is so distracted, so worried about their future that it’s hard to fully get their attention. “We are expanding the frame of how Americans view the issue, the so-called immigration reform,” emphasized Close. “We tend to take these people for granted, we render them invisible. The poll indicated that women immigrants face formidable barriers. Many women immigrants - Latinos (79%), Vietnamese (73%), Korean (70%), and Chinese (63%) - acknowledge speaking little or no English, while confronting anti-immigrant crime, lack of healthcare and low-paying employment well below the status of the professional work most did in their home countries. Women immigrants are also raising children in intact marriages, determined to keep families together and securing the future of our children,” opined Tom Clark, president of Community Media Workshop.

“What could be more American than values of keeping the family together and securing the future of our children,” opined Tom Clark, president of Community Media Workshop. “More than 20 million women will be living in the U.S. in the next few years to come.” Clark believes with these changes, the role of women immigrants will change as well. For instance, the poll found that as many women settled in America, they also radically altered their life's priorities. Almost one third report having assumed head-of-households status. Moreover, the poll found that overwhelming majority - Latin Americans (85%), Chinese (71%), Vietnamese (68%), African American (81%), Chinese (71%), and Arabs (53%) - said they had become more assertive at home and in public after moving to America. Women immigrants reveal that they came to America not in search of streets paved with gold - making money was surprisingly low on their list of priorities - but because they saw the US as a place to build better futures for their children, and to make permanent homes for their families.

Close said it best, “African more than one third of US families are single-parent households, 90 percent of women immigrants are raising children in intact marriages.”

The forum then continued with each panel member sharing accounts of their immigrant experience that led them to embark on their journey in improving the living standards for immigrant women in Illinois. Younhee Harm shared a client’s story in which her Korean degree did not appeal to the American mainstream even though she had a Ph.D. As a result, the client became a bank clerk. Harm addresses how often many immigrant women resort to low-paying job expectations settling for white collar work below their skills and education level. Harm believes that to tackle this issue, English classes are not enough. In fact, Clark states that the US government must supply specific job language training and internships to improve confidence levels and integrate immigrant women in the American job market.

While Margaret King believes that immigrant women are assimilating into American culture at an accelerated rate, she states that upon arrival, many experience a culture shock back in their home country. Women immigrants live communal life in their native countries to an individualist society, noting that there is no welfare system in developing nations. King, a native of Nigeria, also believes that community is the key to continuing to mobilize these groups of emerging immigrant women who desperately want to improve conditions facing immigrant women. As such, King has become famous for her citizen-oriented approach in development planning; her current projects and research include in-filling development and micro-enterprise development.

I tended Shalabi states that immigrant women are becoming a significant part of the U.S. non-farm families. In response to how to further aid this growing group of immigrant women, Shalabi says that cultural education programs are needed to address issues of isolation and acceptance. “The media has a huge role in addressing misconceptions and denouncing ignorance and misunderstanding among various cultures.”

“We must consider three terms in attempts to bridging the gap between immigrant women and American women,” said Esther Wong. “These three terms are adjustment, adaptation and integration. With these three terms in mind, Esther, an accomplished social worker, has invested considerable time in serving as a social worker in the Chinese American community. These three terms also led her and nine friends to form the Chinese American Service League in 1978 to serve the needs of Chinese immigrants in the U.S.

“The study clearly indicates that women immigrants in the United States have not only become important contributors to the economic and social condition of their families in the United States but that they also have become catalysts in their assimilation to American culture and in the decision to become about American citizenship,” Olga Vives, Executive Vice President for the National Organization for Women. “It is important information to have as we think about our country in the coming discussions around comprehensive immigration reform, which must address the issues affecting immigrant women and their children.”

The poll of 1,102 respondents has a margin of error of three percent and was funded in part by the grants to New America Media from Atlantic Philanthropies, Carnegie Corp., Ford Foundation and the Evelyn & Walter Hass Jr. Fund. NAM also received a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to assist with the distribution of the poll results.

African: Making Peace or Fueling War...
The Worst Places to be a Refugee

Katie Mattern

WASHINGTON (IPS) - Gaza, South Africa and Thailand are among the world's worst places to be a refugee, according to the latest annual World Refugee Survey released here Wednesday by the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI).

The survey, which was issued in advance of World Refugee Day June 20, found that the number of refugees who had dropped modestly worldwide in the past year - from 14 million to 13.6 million, according to USCRI. Of those, well over half, or nearly 8.5 million, have been trapped in refugee camps or otherwise denied their rights under the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol.

Of these, Palestinians, more than 2.6 million of whom have been "warehoused" for up to 60 years throughout the Middle East, constitute the largest national group that has been displaced for the longest period of time, according to the report. It also named Gaza as one of the worst places in the world, particularly in the aftermath of the three-week Israeli military campaign that began late last December.

Israeli authorities have so far permitted only humanitarian goods to be imported into Gaza since Operation Cast Lead, in which more than 1,400 Palestinians were killed. They have yet to permit reconstruction and related supplies to be shipped into the territory, which is governed by Hamas, an Islamist party the U.S. and other western countries have labeled a "terrorist" organization.

The latest report was released one day after the publication by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) of its annual report. It found that some 15.2 million people qualified as refugees during 2008 - down from 16 million one year ago - and that more than 800,000 were currently seeking asylum in foreign countries.

It also found that some 26 million more people were internally displaced; that is, they had fled their homes but were still living within their homelands' borders. The greatest number of newly displaced people over the past year, according to the UNHCR report, were found in Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Somalia, where violence has uprooted hundreds of thousands of people, including more than two million civilians who fled their homes in Pakistan's Swat Valley alone, to escape offensives by the Taliban and counter-insurgency operations by the country's army and paramilitary forces.

According to the USCRI report, the world's largest refugee group over the last year was the 3.231 million Palestinians living in refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza, as well as elsewhere in the Greater Middle East.

The next largest group was Afghans, nearly three million of whom are currently living outside their homeland's borders. The vast majority in Pakistan and Iran, according to the report. Increased violence between the Taliban and its allies on the one hand and the U.S. and other international forces, as well as the expanding Afghan Army, on the other, has provoked some Afghans to seek safe haven across the border. Pakistan's recent counter-insurgency campaign along the Afghan border has also provoked thousands of Pakistanis to flee to Afghanistan. Nonetheless, nearly three quarter million Afghans returned to their homeland from Pakistan in the course of the year.

Iraqis, who for the previous three years has been the largest new source of refugees, now claim third place among all refugee groups, according to the report. Nearly two million Iraqis are living abroad, mostly in Syria, Jordan and Lebanon. As violence in Iraq has diminished over the past two years, the exodus from Iraq has also fallen sharply, and some Iraqis have begun to trickle back home, according to the report.

Some 800,000 refugees from Burma, or Myanmar, are living outside their homeland, mostly in Thailand and Bangladesh. Somalia, where continued fighting among various factions forced a total of some 800,000 people to flee to Kenya (60,000) or Yemen (20,000), and hundreds of thousands to become internally displaced, ranks fifth as the largest source of refugees.

These countries were followed by Sudan (428,000 people), Colombia (400,000), and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (385,000), according to the UNHCR report.

Besides Gaza, the report identified South Africa and Thailand as among the worst places for refugees to be living. It noted the xenophobic violence that swept through South Africa last May, as mobs of the country's lowest citizens rampaged through slums and shanty-towns attacking suspected foreign nationals, in some cases, even setting them on fire. As many as 10,000 refugees fled South Africa for Zambia. Thailand was cited as a poor performer as a result of its treatment of Rohingya refugees - in one case, the Thai Navy towed unseaworthy boats with nearly 1,000 Rohingyas and scant food and water onboard into the open sea to prevent them from coming ashore - and its plans to forcibly repatriate Hmong refugees to Laos.

Other countries that rank among the worst for refugees include Kenya, for its treatment of Somali refugees; Malaysia, due to officials selling deportees to gangs along the Malaysia-Thailand border; Egypt, because of its treatment of African migrants; and Turkey, for forcibly repatriating refugees, overcrowding detention centers and beating detainees. In one incident, four refugees drowned when Turkish officials forced them to swim across a river to Iraq.

Brazil, Ecuador and Costa Rica, on the other hand, were among the countries that treated refugees best, according to the report, which noted that Brasilia had permitted Palestinians forced to flee Iraq to settle within its borders. Ecuador also launched a registration program aimed at protecting and ensuring the rights to work and travel of tens of thousands of Colombian refugees who have sought safe haven there.

Some of the world's poorest countries are also home to large populations of refugees. Chad, a constant on the UN's list of least developed countries, has a refugee population of 268,000 while Sudan hosts 175,800 refugees from Eritrea and Ethiopia.

Overall, nations with a per capita GDP of less than $2,000 hosted almost two-thirds of all refugees. According to the UNCHR report, "among the 25 countries with the highest number of refugees per 1 USD GDP per capita, all are developing countries, including 15 Least Developed Countries."

The report gave Europe a grade of "D" and the U.S. a grade of "F" for "refoulement," or returning refugees to places where their lives or freedoms could be threatened. It also gave Europe and the U.S. grades of "D" for "detention/access to courts."

African Immigrants in the Bay Area Step Out of Shadows

Matt O'Brien
Contra Costa Times

OAKLAND — An estimated 38,000 African immigrants live in the Bay Area, but creating any kind of service that caters to all of them, or merges their collective clout, has always seemed an impossible challenge to those who have tried.

They hail from dozens of countries. At home and social functions, they speak Amharic, Arabic, French, Swahili or Kru.

"There is no well-structured, organized body of African immigrants that can make the type of networks you can see in the Latino community or the Asian community," said Adoubou Traore, acting director of the newly formed African Advocacy Network. A few Bay Area residents are trying to change that this year, creating organizations — and in one case, a television news show — that attempt to serve a diverse, growing group from the world's second-biggest continent.

Traore's organization launched in San Francisco in June. Controlled and run by immigrants who speak 11 languages, it is designed to help African immigrants take control of the Bay Area adjust and integrate socially and economically through counseling, referrals, legal help, business networking and by creating closer links between small ethnic organizations.

"We figure once we got past the linguistic barrier, there's no excuses for not working with each other," operations director Larry Saxxon said.

Annual census estimates show that the region's population of African immigrants grew by 31 percent in the first half of the
Africa: Pan-Africanism in Our Time (continued from page 7)

March towards the 21st Century.

For Pan-Africanists, the central question remains how Africa should confront its own economic crisis in the context of a highly exploitative, unequal, protectionist and sometimes hostile, global order?

I have argued over and over again that Africa needs first fundamental transformation of the national orders. This transformation has to be people-led, democratic, self reliant, credible, and viable. Once this is achieved, it will be possible to transform the continent through a continent-wide political agenda arising naturally from the national reconstruction projects, and people to people initiatives. Secondly, Africa needs solidarity - we must support each other. According to a recent report by the Ghana News Agency (June 23, 2009), leaders of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) agreed to pay arrears to the Guinea Bissau armed forces as part of measures towards peace in the country.

In addition, they would contribute to the funding of the presidential elections to improve the security situation. The decisions were taken at the end of their 36th Ordinary Summit held in Abuja. The leaders would provide $3.5 million to pay for the arrears and $350,000 towards the elections, according to a release from the ECOWAS Commission. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) also agreed to appeal to Zimbabwe with a heavy sum to get the country back on track after the formation of the collation government. These sort of Pan-African arrangements and cooperation is what Africa needs. Pan-Africanism is relevant in our time, but it requires recognition of the new forms of threats posed to African sovereignty, to African interests, and the future of generations of Africans to come. Any other approach will amount to the usual political posturing, reactive to other people's provocations, defensive radicalism, and more of the same neo-colonial approach.

* Zaya Yeebo is program manager for the UNDP's Civil Society Democratic Governance (CSDG) Facility but writes in his own capacity.

Minneapolis Somali Condemn Suicide Bombings in Somalia

Abdulkadir Mohamed

More than one hundred Somali Minnesotans held a rally to denounce Al-Shabaab, the hard-line Islamist insurgents in Somalia and a series of suicide bombings in their homeland.

The radical Islamic group Al-Shabaab has carried out several suicide bombings attacks on African peacekeeper's bases and against government officials and clan leaders whom they suspect to be allied to a weakening Somali government led by their former ally, President Sheikh Shariif Ahmed.

Holding signs that read “No to Suicide Bombings” and “Somalia needs peace” the protesters lined inside Peavey Park and alongside East Franklin Ave and Chicago Avenue in the Minneapolis shouting slogans in English and Somali that drew a chorus of horns from passing motorists.

The protest was organized by an ad hoc group of young Somali activists who live here in the Twin Cities.

Abdisanir Gelle, one of the organizers said the rally was to express the community's condemnation and opposition to suicide bombings.

"This turnout shows that Somalis in Minnesota are against those few extremists who misuse and hijack our religion to terrorize people." Sadiq Mohammad of Concerned Somali-Americans in Minnesota added that Somali Americans are just as passionate about their opposition to extremism as any other Americans. "Somalis in Minnesota don't condone extremism and it's about time we let our fellow Minnesotans know that," he said.

The rally was also attended by Imams, the Muslim religious leaders.

In the recent past the imams from the Abubakar-As Siddique Islamic Center have come under intense scrutiny by the me- dia and both local and federal law enforcement agencies for being involved in the disappearance of young Somali-American men who it is alleged they sent off to fight at the side of al-Shabaab extremists in war-torn Somalia.

"Suicide in killing oneself is con- demned by Allah and The Quran does not promise Heaven to those who commit suicide but rather the wrath and the condemnation to Hell, and if you kill others in suicide bombings, the punishment is even more," Omar Hurre, the director of Abu-Bakr-As Siddique Islamic center told the protesters.

Imam Hassan Mohamud of the Islamic Dawah Center in Saint Paul urged locals to work hard to pacify their homeland and the Somali in Somalia through non-violence means and to en- gage in dialogue. The Imam lended Al-Shabaab fighters to put down their weapons and to spare the lives of innocent civilians in Mogadishu, the bullet-ridden Somali capital.

The recent fighting between Al-Shabaab and forces loyal to the Somali government in Mogadishu has forced more than half-million civilians to run away from their homes.

The Imams in the rally reiterated their opposition and condemnation against suicide bombings one by one in different mosques.

Amira Adawe, one of the organizers who lost family and relatives in the latest suicide bombings in Beledweyne, a town in central Somalia, said more rallies and forums to come to encourage the Somali community in Minne- sota and beyond to be united in condemning suicide bombings and acts of extreme violence in Somalia.
2016 Olympic Games in Chicago, (continued from page 1)

it mean for the city?

"It will help improve transporta-
tion system and infrastructure...and again it’s not just the job
creation, it’s really the jobs
that remain for the future," says Mur-
nane. "We are not doing a great
deal of construction because
most of what we are doing al-
ready exists or what we are build-
ing will be temporary facilities
and so our construction costs
are significantly lower compared to
any other city that is competing
against us."

According to the Chicago 2016
Committee, Chicago’s plan uses
existing facilities, the lakefront
and parks, so no residents will be
displaced as a result of construc-
tion related to the Olympic and
Paralympic games. The new per-
manent venues that are proposed
would serve communities and
youth after the Games by provid-
ing sport facilities, pools, tennis
courts and recreational spaces in
our parks and our lakefront. The
proposed site of the village will
become a mixed-income housing
and retail community, with up to
30 % affordable housing, and will
be developed regardless of
whether Chicago hosts the
Games. Chicago 2016’s transport
plan has been designed by ex-
perts to accommodate additional
traffic for the Games and keep
the city running smoothly. Chi-
ago 2016’s legacy organization,
World Sport Chicago, has already
introduced 30,000 children to
Olympic and Paralympic sport
through programs and elite com-
petition. In fact, in June, the
Obama administration joined the
cause by creating a permanent
office in the White House to pro-
 mote Olympic, Paralympic and
youth sport across the country.

Murnane hopes that people
worldwide will see Chicago on
television and realize that Chi-
icago is a beautiful city and decide
to visit. Murnane and the
2016 Committee also predict that
international tourism will in-
crease. “You look at the tourism
industry in particular and right
now there is about a million peo-
ple from the international com-
 munity here in Chicago, which is
pretty low when you compare it
to other cities in the United
States like New York, where mil-
ions of immigrants have made
their home.”

The Chicago 2016 economic
impact study also shows that the
Games have the potential to pro-
vide a significant economic stimu-
lus to the local economy. The city
and state will also benefit from
the Games. The study estimates
$1.5 billion of direct business
will be generated within Illi nois; of that, $1.0 billion will be
within Chicago.

Through the 2016 Fund for Chi-
icago’s neighborhoods, founda-
tions have committed $10 million
for workforce development and
community programs. Chicago 2016
has worked with more than
700 community organizations to em-
phasize that economic opportunities in
construction, procurement and
jobs will be shared by all. With
the final decision on which inter-
national city will host the 2016
Games quickly approaching, the
committee realizes that it must
secure all votes, especially the
African vote.

Mukila Maitha, serving as the In-
ternational Relations specialist for
Chicago 2016, knows that the
task will not be simple consider-
ing that Africa is home to 16
SADC member committees. The final
vote is scheduled to take place
October 2, 2009. “My responsibili-
ties is to reach out to the African
ISU members and make sure they
know about our bid and an-
swer questions that they have,”
says Maitha, pointing out that his
latest development consisted of a
big presentation for the African
Olympic family in Abuja, Nigeria.

“We have a community mailing
activity where we have the mem-
bers write what they feel about
Chicago and why they feel Chi-
icago should host the games,” says
Maitha, who is also presi-
dent of United Kenyans of Chi-
icago. “We are trying to show Af-
rica that Chicago is a multicultural
center, that the African commu-
nity here is vibrant and engaged.”

In addition to the mailing ac-
tivity, Chicago 2016 has held
numerous forums to share their vision
of celebrating the Olympic Move-
ment’s power to unite all human-
ity. Chicago 2016 hopes by reach-
ing out to various communities in
Chicago, they will stage a truly
joyous festival of sport in the
heart of Chicago while helping
America reach our tradi-
b uild and
and so our construction costs are
lower compared to
any other city that is competing
against us."