



316 F Street, N.E., Suite 101, Washington, D.C. 20002
Tel: 202.371.0588//Fax: 202.371.9017//E-Mail: intern_cfa@yahoo.com

CONSTITUENCY FOR AFRICA “STATE OF THE ORGANIZATION”

Friends of the Constituency for Africa:

I am truly pleased to share with you an update of the “state of the Constituency for Africa going forward into 2013 and beyond”. Despite the negative impact that the ongoing global economic crisis has had on the African advocacy NGO community, it appears that the Constituency for Africa (CFA) is more relevant than ever and going forward I believe that CFA’s advocacy work will be critical in the shaping of U.S.-Africa foreign policy with a particular focus on the interrelationships of “people of African descent”.

This year, CFA will celebrate its twenty-third year (1990-2013) of “building a constituency for Africa in the United States”. The principal purpose for launching CFA was to educate Americans about Africa and African development issues; to improve cooperation and coordination among the various organizations and institutions that work on African issues; and to help shape U.S. policies toward Africa by encouraging Americans, especially outside of the Washington beltway, to weigh-in with policy makers on African issues.

Over these past twenty-two years, CFA has established itself as one of the leading organizations in the United States committed to educating and mobilizing the U.S. public on matters pertaining to Africa and the African Diaspora. As a result, CFA has done much to increase the level of cooperation and coordination among a broad-based coalition of American, African and international organizations, businesses, and individuals committed to the progress, development, and empowerment of Africa and African people. In addition, CFA’s achievement in advocacy education and information dissemination has led to a greater understanding and awareness of Africa among all groups.

CFA has pioneered a highly touted series of Town Hall Meetings on Africa, which have taken place in many cities and towns all across America. CFA’s Town Hall Meetings have enabled Americans across the United States to better understand African policy issues and to actively participate in the policy formulation process. CFA also organizes the Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series, held each year in September in Washington, D.C., which coincides with the Congressional Black Caucus’ (CBC) Annual Legislative Conference. The Ron Brown Series has continued to serve as a unique platform for linking the CBC members and staff with African-focused organizations, African diplomats and policy-makers and the leadership of the grassroots community.

CFA’s strength has always been its insightful and highly experienced Board of Directors. CFA currently operates under the leadership of Stanly L. Straughter as the Chairman and Melvin P. Foote as the President and Chief Executive Officer. CFA’s Board of Directors is comprised of highly regarded Africa advocates with international stature, extraordinary professional accomplishments and proven dedication. Over these many years, CFA has established itself as one of the premiere NGOs in the United States committed to educating and mobilizing the American public on matters pertaining to U.S.-Africa foreign policy and has a well documented record of significant accomplishments.

Several major accomplishments over the past two decades included CFA being intricately involved in the passage of two of the most important pieces of U.S. legislation impacting Africa. This was achieved through CFA’s ability to conduct more than fifty town hall style meetings across the United States in

support of the successfully passed African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) during the Clinton Administration and CFA's stewardship of ground-breaking HIV/AIDS legislation that evolved into President George W. Bush's \$15 billion President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief initiative (PEPFAR). In addition, CFA in 2002 founded the African American Unity Caucus (AAUC), a network of African-Americans and other Americans of African descent, who lead or are leaders of African-focused organizations and groups. Through the efforts of CFA's supportive nurturing, the AAUC has now emerged as a leading force in mobilizing the African Diaspora in North America and the western hemisphere as well as with many other ongoing initiatives and programs in support of Africa.

Listed below is a brief summary of CFA's major achievements over these many years:

- CFA organized an African Policy Briefing with the Honorable Congresswoman Karen Bass (D-CA) (January) 2013.
- CFA organized an African Diaspora Policy Briefing with the Honorable Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (October) 2012.
- CFA signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) during the 2012 Ronald H. Brown African Affairs in order to assist the ACBF with its collaborations in the United States focusing on "Strategies for Engaging the African Diaspora in capacity Development in Africa".
- CFA organized an Africa Policy Briefing with the Mr. Mahktar Diop, Vice President of the African Region of The World Bank (June 2012).
- CFA was a contributing partner with the African Diaspora Marketplace (ADM) initiative grant in collaboration with the U.S. Agency for International Development and Western Union. Included within this effort, CFA conducted a seven-city "road show" to promote the engagement of African Diaspora interest in an ADM Business Plan Competition.
- CFA organized an Annual Africa Policy Briefing with the U.S. State Department (February 2011).
- CFA facilitated the smooth transition of the AAUC Coordinator and established an AAUC Executive Steering Council (December 2010).
- Mel Foote (CFA) engaged Youth Leaders in the West African nations of Senegal and The Gambia in conjunction with U.S. State Department's Diaspora Outreach Initiative (December 2010).
- AAUC Delegation participated in 3rd World Festival of Black Arts and Cultures (December 2010).
- AAUC planned and executed a number of Activities and Events during the Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series (September 2010).
- CFA organized an Annual Africa Policy Briefing with the U.S. State Department (September 2010).
- CFA conducted, over the course of a seven year period (2002-2010), a highly successful African American Unity Caucus (AAUC) Initiative through a grant from the Ford Foundation which included organizing annual leadership retreats, convening monthly and quarterly working group meetings, designing and marketing a variety of related activities and events and maintaining written reports of retreats and meetings.
- AAUC organized a Next Generation Initiative with the U.S. Peace Corps (September 2010).
- CFA participated with White House Conference on Young African Leaders (August 2010).

- AAUC functioned as the Secretariat for the U.S. Civil Society Coalition for AGOA (July 2010).
- CFA organized an African Policy Brief with the Millennium Challenge Corporation (March 2010).
- CFA organized an AAUC Briefing with Madame Obiageli K. Ezekwesili, Vice President of the African Region of the World Bank (July 2009).
- CFA organized an Annual Policy Briefing with the U.S. State Department (June 2009).
- CFA convened Four Annual AAUC Leadership Retreats (2006-2009).
- CFA organized a visit of a delegation of twenty Nigerian State Legislators from Kebbi State and Sekoto State in Nigeria, West Africa to participate in a series of seminars/forums focusing on the 2008 US Presidential elections.
- CFA established a Plum Book for the 2008 Presidential Elections (May 2008).
- CFA established a Task Force for the 2008 Presidential Elections (February 2008).
- CFA administered a U.S. Agency for International Development grant for an African Trade and Investment (ATRIP) Policy in 2002. CFA conducted eight (8) African Business Roundtables in the United States as well as two (2) African Business Roundtables in Dakar, Senegal and Accra, Ghana.
- CFA established an African Embassy Economic Counselors Advisory Forum in 2001 at the Ralph J. Bunche International Center on the campus of Howard University in Washington, D.C.
- CFA coordinated an African Immersion Internship Program with the U.S. State Department and the Washington Internship Center and in the process CFA successfully mentored over sixty students over a ten year period (2001-2011).
- CFA conducted a highly successful first-of-a-kind CFA Town Hall Meeting at the Democratic National Convention (DNC) in Los Angeles, California August 15, 2000. Major outcome of this Town Hall Meeting was the development and adoption of a “plank” in the DNC’s international platform that specifically addressed U.S.-African foreign policy.

Based on all of CFA’s accomplishments and ongoing efforts we ask that you please consider making a financial contribution to support our endeavors. CFA is a 501(c) non-profit organization and we would greatly appreciate your financial support.

In closing, on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Constituency for Africa I wish to express my utmost appreciation for all of your support over these past twenty-two years and look forward to “doing more on behalf of Africa and its people” with your help in 2013 and beyond!

Sincerely,

Stanley L. Straughter
CFA Chairman