



COMMUNIQUE AT THE 30TH AFRICAN PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSOCIATION (APRA) ANNUAL CONFERENCE HELD BETWEEN 9TH - 11TH MAY, 2018 AT THE TRAVELODGE CONFERENCE CENTRE, GABORONE, BOTSWANA.

Over 120 Public Relations and Communication Professionals from across the continent converged in Gaborone, Botswana for the 30<sup>th</sup> African Public Relations Association (APRA) annual conference.

The delegates drawn from thirteen countries deliberated on the theme “Re-PResenting Africa: Focus on Ethics of PR Practice in Africa” at the Travelodge Conference Centre from May 9-11, 2018. They were engaged in plenary sessions, roundtable discussions, videos and represented the host country Botswana, Bulgaria, Gambia, Ghana, Ireland, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, United Kingdom, Zambia, Zimbabwe. United Kingdom, United States of America

The opening address was delivered by Mr. Yomi Badejo-Okusanya, APRA President while His Excellency Quartey Kwesi, Deputy Chairperson, African Union Commission (AUC) presented the keynote address.

Delegates thereafter agreed as follows;

1. For Africa's perception to change, the African Union (AU) must lead other stakeholders in dealing with the internal factors militating against repositioning Africa. An external campaign will then follow and be supplementary to the internal re-branding. That the African Union (AU) should swiftly convene an all-stakeholders forum technically driven by APRA to comprehensively evolve strategies for revamping Africa's reputation.
2. That Africa must recognize the youth as its most vital resource and not natural resources. This calls for the fashioning of appropriate curriculum and educational platforms by national-governments for promoting knowledge, science and technology.
3. That in re-telling the African story, APRA, and communication practitioners on the continent must engage at a higher level, data analytics, research and training to boost the quality of content currently generated. Africans must learn to tell and re-tell their own stories.
4. That the use of social media in changing the narrative is key and must be optimized. Emerging global trends demand that public relations practitioners should expect dynamism in societal expectations, new technology, gender activism, talent/skills integration, content mobility and power of the social media in managing clients' business needs.
5. That Public Relations practitioners must engender trust which serves as the license to operate and serve as bridge builders for governments, businesses, the media and NGOs.
6. That African governments through the AU's peer review mechanisms must vigorously commit themselves to sustainable development for their citizens to enjoy good and decent life eradicating poverty, destitution, illiteracy, poor health, polluted environment and contrived political systems.

**Office of the President**

**African Public Relations Association**

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7. That Public Relations and Communications practitioners on the continent must conform with the highest ethical standards of practice, accountability, transparency, probity while upholding industry reputation in telling their stories.
8. That Public Relations Practitioners should champion public education on media literacy, critical thinking skills, and be more discerning in the consumption of news, especially in this era of fake news.
9. That there is the need for an authentic African voice through its own dedicated channel that will continuously promote and tell the African story. This can be achieved in collaboration with existing media channels.
10. That Public Relations in itself needs public relations. This can be achieved under the banner of an advocacy christened Affirmative PR. It must draw vital lessons from the women's rights movements.
11. That in marketing Africa, security and security communication have vital roles to play.

Delegates further RESOLVED and DECLARED as follows:

1. That African countries and national Public Relations associations must 'walk the talk' in building and marketing 'Brand Africa'.
2. That APRA contextualizes the definition of PR through the Gaborone Statement that should read: 'Public Relations is the strategic management function that fosters understanding, builds strong reputation, promotes good governance, ethical behavior and optimizes diversity with all stakeholders using all forms of communication and research'.
3. That Public Relations practitioners in Africa must enter more works for continental and international awards and recognition, observing that there is a lot of good works being done but remain undocumented.
4. That, APRA must engage the entertainment industry in Africa as an essential tool for Re-PResenting Africa.
5. That, the APRA Annual Conference be adjourned till the 7th of May, 2019 in Kigali, Rwanda.

Signed



Jane Gitau  
Secretary General  
May 11, 2018

Rapporteurs

1. Raheem Olabode
2. Kayode Yeku
3. Thelma Okoh

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