

SPEECH BY THE CHAIR OF PANGeA

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Makerere University

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The Vice-Chancellor

The Deputy Head of the German Embassy in Uganda

Our Partners and Funders

Ladies and Gentlemen

All Protocol Observed

We find ourselves in a global village that is bound to unbalance the flow of human capital within and across national, regional and international boundaries. Strength is in partnerships, progress is in networking.

Responding to the challenge of the brain drain from Africa, to reverse the decline of science and scholarship in African higher education and to increase home-grown training programs, the Partnership for Africa's Next Generation of Academics (PANGeA) initiative came into existence during a workshop which was held at Stellenbosch University for Principals and Deans of Colleges, Schools and Faculties of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences in November 2006. Discussions resumed in Uganda in March 2009 around the establishment of a resilient partnership between the partner universities to recruit students and staff to participate in the PANGeA network and resulted in the signing of a Letter of Intent. A second meeting held late 2009 in Tanzania produced a draft multilateral memorandum of understanding which was negotiated by management on the partner campuses and officially signed by the Vice-Chancellors of the all partner institutions on 12 November 2010.

PANGeA's vision is to promote Africa's next generation of academics, professionals and leaders. Its strategy is to build and sustain world-class doctoral programmes and scholarship communities through partnership and collaboration with leading African universities, focusing on the arts, humanities and social sciences.

This strategy rests on the belief that the interchange of human capital between the global North and South will become more equitable when African institutions are recognised – in Africa and abroad – as sustainable sites of research and higher learning. Thus all training and research conducted under the auspices of the PANGeA network take place on the African continent in order to strengthen South-South research partnership and collaboration as well as assist African countries in retaining expert-level skills. Statistics indicate that an overwhelming percentage of Africa's talent who relocate to study in Europe or North America, tend to do so indefinitely; further perpetuating the brain drain in Africa. Furthermore, locations influence research design and subject so having doctoral candidates pursue studies on the continent significantly increases the likelihood that they will address subject matter relevant to Africa in a range of academic disciplines.

The network aims to strengthen the development of higher education in Africa by creating opportunities for collaborative research and exchange among partner institutions, full-time doctoral study and, in the longer term, the establishment of joint doctoral degree programmes specifically in the arts, humanities and social sciences.

For the past seven years, PANGeA has focussed its efforts around doctoral training. Students from across Africa as well as academics based at PANGeA partner universities have been able to pursue full-time doctoral degrees via the PANGeA doctoral scholarship programme. Since the doctoral scholarship

programme commenced in 2010, a total of 66 candidates have been nominated by PANGeA partners and enrolled for a PhD. To date, 36 have completed their studies and resumed their academic positions at their home university, 81% of whom graduated in three years or less.

While this is a big feat, we also need to focus our attention on expanding our activities to additional avenues of generating more human capital and improving the skills and career-readiness of university staff members who fall within the network and beyond.

I have enjoyed great fundraising trips across Europe and Africa with my colleagues at the University of Stellenbosch. We are also actively reaching out to Governments and agencies/Foundation in other parts of the world. Increased funding, staff retention and sustainability are elements that we are watching very closely. It is on that note that I'd like to invite the Chair of the Executive Board of the Gerda Henkel Foundation - Dr Michael Hanssler – to say a few words about PANGeA-Ed, the training and skills development programme which we are launching today.

OFFICIAL LAUNCH AND CLOSE OF CEREMONY

A special word of thanks to the Robert Bosch Foundation and Gerda Henkel Foundation. Their support over the next five years will not only expand the core activities of PANGeA but consolidate our status as one of the most successful collaborations in higher education on the continent.

A word of thanks also goes to the PANGeA Board members for their continued commitment to the partnership, keeping the network and network activities alive within their respective universities, and, of course, the many years of friendship between us.

A word of thanks to the presenters of the various workshops and all the registered participants. I wish you all the best over the next three days of training and every success in putting your newly acquired skills into practice.

Thank you to everyone for your support today. I'm proud to announce that the new training and skills development programme - PANGeA-Ed is now officially open for business.

Please join us for some refreshments in celebration. Thank you.

* We will do a few official photos while the guests help themselves to refreshments after which the training and skills development workshops will commence for the next three days.