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APARC Communiqué

BOSTON UNIVERSITY AFRICAN PRESIDENTIAL ARCHIVES AND RESEARCH CENTER NEWSLETTER

Obama Officials Address BU Policy Conference

Diplomats, dignitaries, public and private sector leaders gather to discuss African American influence on U.S. Foreign Policy

On October 27-28, 2010, Boston University's African Presidential Archives and Research Center (APARC) and the African American Studies Program convened a three-day conference on African Americans and U.S. Foreign Policy.

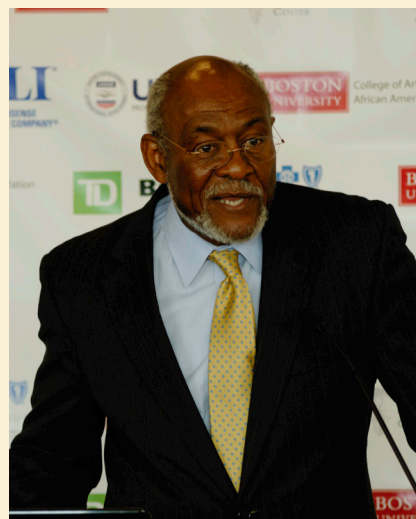
Beginning with the arrival of Africans in North American colonies through the abolition of slavery to contemporary U.S. foreign policy, the conference delved into the influence of individuals, movements, and institutions and their role in shaping the policy framework defining American foreign policy. The emergence of Pan-Africanism, the importance of the African independence movement, the role of the Black Church, and United Nations and State Department politics were all topics addressed over the course of the conference.

Speakers included the Obama administration's Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson and USAID Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator for Bureau for Africa Sharon Cromer.

The election of Barack Obama was an obvious benchmark relative to the influence of African Americans on U.S. foreign policy, and with it carried heightened expectations in Africa. In speaking as an appointee and representative of President Obama, Assistant Secretary Carson provided insight relative to the bilateral challenges entailed in dealing with African nations in the wake of the Obama Presidency, as well as in the post-9/11 foreign policy environment.

Another politico on the program was Bush era Assistant Secretary of State Dr. Jendayi Frazer. During her tenure, she oversaw an unprecedented and dramatic shift in U.S. Policy relative to Africa. She served as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs from 2005-2009.

Prior to her appointment she served as the Senior Director for African Affairs on the National Security Council.



Assistant Secretary Johnnie Carson gives the keynote lecture on day two of the conference.

Assistant Secretary Carson's speech provided a comprehensive overview of the Obama Administration's foreign policy towards Africa:

"[President Obama] pledged to work with Africans as partners as we repond to the continent's challenges and opportunities, and to the many challenges we—the United States and Africa—face as part of the global community.

...Our overarching goal is to nurture the development of stable and democratic partners who are committed to the rule of law, human rights, transparent governance, and the welfare of their citizens.

As much as we and our African and international partners share common goals, there are political leaders and organizations that are indifferent to those goals. This makes it all the more imperative that we work as closely as possible together. We believe this is the best approach for building African will and capacity to meet the many daunting challenges effectively over the long term. We also believe this is the best approach for realizing Africa's full potential and promise."

AFRICAN AMERICANS AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICY CONFERENCE USAID Representative Speaks to Success and Progress in Africa

Sharon Cromer, USAID Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Bureau of African Affairs, contributed to the conversation during the conference's second day. Below are excerpts from her remarks:

"Especially now, in a time of scarcity and austerity, we need to ensure our limited resources achieve substantial returns. We are focusing our resources, policy tools, and engagement in places where the conditions are right to establish and sustain progress.

Thanks to this new Global Development Policy, USAID now has a very ambitious development agenda—perhaps the most ambitious agenda since our founding.

Our new approach to high-impact development is built on four core areas of focus—priorities that reflect the overriding objectives of the U.S. global development policy.

First, we are recommitting ourselves to the Millennium Development Goals by building sustainable governance and delivery systems to support healthy and productive lives. These goals are a symbol of our common humanity. They are a declaration of the world's commitment to eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, achieving gender equality and environmental sustainability, and extending hope and opportunity to millions across the developing world. The Obama Administration fully embraces the Millennium Development Goals, and we are focused on sustainable progress toward higher standards of living in the developing world.

Under the President's new policy, we are also investing in country-owned models of inclusive growth and development in a focused set of countries that are well-governed, economically stable, globally connected, and market-oriented. Our assistance will respond directly to each country's specific priorities, and we will empower responsible governments to drive development and sustain outcomes by working through national institutions, rather than around them.

Thirdly, we are developing and delivering scientific and technological breakthroughs. This is one of the areas where USAID's Administrator is most passionate. Some of the greatest development 'game-changers' in history have originated through scientific and technological discovery. Promising innovations in vaccines, clean energy, and information technologies can produce especially dramatic results in Africa, where even small-scale or low-cost technologies like mobile phones can leapfrog traditional development hurdles and yield exponential development gains. With President Obama, Dr. Shah is committed to a renaissance of innovation at USAID, where we are leading the charge toward solving the world's greatest development challenges.

Finally, we will continue to utilize our expertise on humanitarian response and recovery to help people affected by conflict. Operating in conflict areas around the world, USAID is pursuing innovative and effective solutions to respond to the far-reaching challenges posed by fragile and post-conflict states in the 21st century. Our active engagement in these settings ensures that development is incorporated into the broader interests and foreign policy of the United States.

These last 50 years have seen dramatic ups and downs, soaring successes and distressing challenges, for both Africa and USAID. I remain hopeful that the opportunities far outweigh the many challenges."



USAID's Sharon Cromer discusses the department's progress in Africa.

BU Confab on Blacks and U.S. Foreign Policy Breaks New Ground

The historic conference, hosted by the African Presidential Archives and Research Center and the African American Studies Program was the first-ever effort focused on the influence of African Americans on United States' foreign policy. The event drew diplomats, academics, students, and public and private sector leaders from around the world. The conference featured notable keynote addresses by current Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson, and former Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Jendayi Frazer. Representatives from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), which helped fund the initiative, were also involved; among which was Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator for Africa, Sharon Cromer.

Deliberations were organized around six panels that ranged from discussions on "racism and the role of African Americans in diplomatic relations", to "the role of hip-hop in 21st century American diplomacy".

The opening reception on Tuesday, October 26th at the historic Boston University Castle, featured opening remarks from co-host Ambassador Charles Stith, director of the African Presidential Archives and Research Center. The Inner Strength Gospel Choir, Directed by Herbert S. Jones, provided the evening's entertainment. Dr. Linda Heywood, Director of the African American Studies Program and the other co-host for the event, closed the evening with a brief introduction to the next days' proceedings.



AFRICAN AMERICANS AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICY CONFERENCE
Program of Events

The African Americans and U.S. Foreign Policy Conference

October 26-28, 2010 at Boston University

Sponsored by USAID, TD Bank, SBLLI, Blue Cross Blue Shield, and the Boston University Humanities Foundation

Wednesday, October 27: (Boston University Photonics Center)

10:00 AM – 11:15 AM Session I: Foreign Policy in Pre- World War II Period

Presentations by Allison Blakely on “Blacks in the Diplomatic and Consular Services, 1869-1924” and Getachew Metaferia on “Racism and the Role of African Americans in the Diplomatic Relations between the U.S. and Ethiopia” and Vera Grant on “White Shame / Black Agency: Race as a Weapon in Post-World War I Diplomacy”

11:30 AM – 12:30 PM Working Lunch with presentation by Moeletsi Mbeki, CEO of Endemol (South Africa)

12:30 PM – 1:45 PM Session II: Foreign Policy in World War II, The Cold War, and The Civil Rights Movement

Pearl Robinson on “Ralph Bunche, the Atlantic Charter, and Africa: Working for Decolonization from the Inside,” Abdul Karim Bangura on “Malcolm X and U.S. Policies toward Africa” and Michael Krenn on “Carl Rowan and the Dilemma of Civil Rights, Propaganda, and the Cold War”

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM Session III: The Black Church and U.S. Foreign Policy

Presentations by Brandi Suzanne Hughes on “African American missionaries in Africa in the 19th Century,” and Pastor Robert Kelley on “The Role of the Black Church in U.S. Foreign Policy Formation”

Thursday, October 28:

9:30 AM – 11:15 AM Session IV: Music, Student Activism, and Cultural Diplomacy

Presentations Lisa Davenport on “The Paradox of Jazz Diplomacy” and Charles Moses, Cynthia Hewitt, and Najwa Gadaheldam on “Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) as Foreign Policy Catalysts: The Case for Peace in the Sudan” and Joseph L Jones on “Hegemonic Rhythms: The Role of Hip-Hop Music in 21st Century American Public Diplomacy”

11:30 AM – 12:30 PM Session V: The United States and the Question of Haiti

Presentations by Millery Polyné on “To Combine the Training of the Head and the Hands: U.S. African Americans, the Good Neighbor Policy, and Educating Haitians during the U.S. Occupation, 1930 - 1931” and Sherri McFarland on “The Black Foreign Policy Constituency for Haiti”

12:30 PM – 1:45 PM Working Lunch with keynote lecture by

The Honorable Johnnie Carson, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs
and remarks by

Sharon Cromer, USAID Assistant Administrator for the Africa Bureau

2:00 PM – 3:15 PM Session VI: The Obama Administration, Black Diplomats, and the World

Presentations by Ibrahim Sundiata on “Obama, African Americans, and Africans: The Double Vision,” and Lorenzo Morris on “The Work of Susan Rice and its Effect on International Affairs”

7:00 PM – 9:00 PM Closing Dinner (Boston University Trustee Ballroom)

Keynote Lecture by The Honorable Jendayi Frazer, former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs
in the Bush Administration



On Wednesday, October 27th conference attendees and discussants gathered for the opening panel session on Foreign Policy in the Pre-World War II Period. The discussion, chaired by Dr. Linda Heywood, featured presentations from three esteemed academics. Dr. Allison Blakely, Professor of African American Studies at Boston University, presented his study on “Blacks in the Diplomatic and Consular Services”. Next was a discussion on “Racism and the Role of African Americans in Diplomatic Relations between the U.S. and Ethiopia” by Professor Getachew Metaferia, Associate Professor of Political Science at Morgan State University. The third panelist was Professor Vera Ingrid Grant, the Executive Director of the W.E.B. Du Bois Institute for African and African American Research at Harvard University. She delivered a paper entitled “White Shame / Black Agency: Race as a Weapon in Post-World War I Diplomacy”. Dr. Timothy Longman, head of BU’s African Studies Center moderated the session and managed questions from the audience.

After a Working Lunch and presentation from Moeletsi Mbeki, author of *Architects of Poverty* and Chairman of Endemol, South Africa, on issues affecting U.S. – South Africa bilateral relations, the panels continued.

The subject of the second session was “Foreign Policy in World War II, The Cold War, and the Civil Rights Movement”, chaired by Dr. Adil Najam, Director of the Frederick S. Pardee Center for the Study of the Longer-Range Future at Boston University. The lead speaker was Tufts University Associate Professor of Political Science, Dr. Pearl T. Robinson. Her presentation focused on research relating to Ralph Bunche. Her paper was titled “Ralph Bunche, the Atlantic Charter, and Africa: Working for Decolonization from the Inside”. The second presentation was on “Malcolm X and U.S. Policies Toward Africa” by Dr. Abdul Karim Bangura, Professor Research Methodology and Political Science at Howard University. The third discussant, Professor Michael Krenn of the Appalachian State University Department of History,

shared his views on “Carl Rowan and the Dilemma of Civil Rights, Propaganda, and the Cold War”.

The afternoon of day one continued with a session on “The Black Church and U.S. Foreign Policy”, which was introduced by the moderator Dr. Walter Earl Fluker, Martin Luther King Jr. Professor of Ethical Leadership at Boston University. The first panelist was Professor of History at the University of Michigan, Dr. Brandi Suzanne Hughes, who presented her study, entitled “For Such a Time as This: The Foreign Mission Board of the National Baptist Convention and Reconstruction’s Revival in the African Mission Field”. Following her was Pastor Robert Kelley III, Senior Pastor of My Father’s House Christian Fellowship Church in South Africa, who discussed the role of the Black Church in U.S. foreign policy formation.

Day two began with Session Four: Music, Student Activism, and Cultural Diplomacy. The session was moderated Dean Hardin Coleman of the School of Education at Boston University. Discussants included Dr. Lisa Davenport, Dr. Charles Moses, Najwa Gagaheldam, and Dr. Joseph Jones. Dr. Davenport, author of *Jazz Diplomacy: Promoting America in the Cold War Era* kicked off the discussion exploring an issue raised in her book, “The Paradox of Jazz Diplomacy”. Next, authors Dr. Charles Moses, Professor at Clark Atlanta University and Najwa Gagaheldam, Development Officer at the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, discussed their study, “Historically Black College and Universities (HBCUs) as Foreign Policy Catalysts: The Case for Peace in Sudan”. Lastly, Dr. Joseph Jones, Political Science professor at Johnson C. Smith University, presented an intriguing defense of his paper, “Hegemonic Rhythms, The Role of Hip Hop Music in 21st Century American Public Diplomacy”. The sweep of history and current events covered by this panel precipitated a vigorous debate and discussion.

Session Five centered on “The United States and the Question of Haiti”, chaired by conference co-host Dr. Linda Heywood. The first presentation by New York University Dr. Millery Polyné was on The U.S., African Americans, the Good Neighbor Policy, and educating Haitians during the U.S. occupation from 1930-1931. The second paper, presented by Professor Sherri McFarland of the National Defense Intelligence College, examined “The Black Foreign Policy Constituency for Haiti”. Both presentations provided a historical context in which to understand the present challenges in Haiti’s recovery from the devastation of the 2010 earthquake.

After lunch, with the conference hall at capacity, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson captivated the audience with an important speech on U.S. foreign policy on Africa in the Obama Administration. Assistant Secretary Carson entertained almost 30 minutes of questions by the audience further clarifying the Obama Administration’s Africa agenda.

In a perfect complement to Carson’s speech, USAID Senior Deputy Administrator Sharon Cromer, gave an enlightening and student-targeted talk on the nexus at which U.S. foreign policy and development meet. In addition, she punctuated the importance of a new generation of Americans taking up the mantle of service through entities like USAID. She said:

“USAID is proud to support Boston University’s APARC and African American Studies Program in this important historic and contemporary look at the significant role that African Americans have played and continue to play in shaping U.S. foreign policy. As an African American woman with more than twenty years experience working as a foreign service officer with USAID, I am especially delighted to take part in these deliberations.



Dr. Joseph Jones of Johnson C. Smith University answers audience questions.

Human capital is USAID's strongest asset, and the Agency is making great strides in strengthening its workforce. As part of its human capital initiatives USAID strives to increase diversity in workforce that are integral to USAID's objective of supporting a vibrant, world-class, development agency. And for those of you students out there still wrestling to shape your future careers, please consider USAID and the tremendous opportunities that exist to shape policy and contribute to sustainable development throughout the world."

Bringing the conference to a close, moderator Dr. Willard Johnson, Professor Emeritus of Political Science at MIT introduced a discussion on "The Obama Administration, Black Diplomats, and the World". Professor of History and Afro-American Studies at Brandeis University, Dr. Ibrahim Sundiata, presented his paper on "Obama, African Africans, and Africans: The Double Vision". The next paper, discussing the history and relationship between the United Nations and African Americans, was presented by Dr. Lorenzo Morris, Professor of Political Science at Howard University. The discussion provided a stimulating and thought-provoking end to the panel discussions.

That evening, conference guests, discussants, moderators, and speakers gathered for the closing dinner at the Boston University Trustee Ballroom for the capstone of a successful two days. The dinner speaker was The Honorable Jendayi Frazer, former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs. Introduced by long-time friend and colleague, Ambassador Charles Stith, Ambassador Frazer engaged the audience with a candid commentary on her role at the White House during the Bush Administration. In speaking about the socially and politically significant appointments of Colin Powell and Condoleezza Rice as Secretaries of State, Jendayi said, "For the first time ever, for eight years straight, the lead diplomat of the United States Government was an African American or African Diasporan: Secretary Powell and Secretary Rice. [They] gave the administration the ability to engage Africa as a strategic partner." Her speech, ranging from a formal discussion of issues faced during the Bush Administration, to anecdotes of her experiences during her time at the post, provided a perfect conclusion to the days' proceedings and discussions.

Asked his assessment of the two day confab, APRAC director Charles Stith said, "in terms of information and inspiration, what we accomplished with our colleagues at the African American Studies Program far exceeded our expectations. This effort represents an important baseline on which other scholars and policy-makers will build."



Assistant Secretary Frazer gives a keynote lecture at the conference's closing dinner.



Dr. Timothy Longman partaking in conference discussion.

AFRICAN AMERICANS AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICY CONFERENCE
Conference Partipants



AFRICAN AMERICANS AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICY CONFERENCE
Conference Participants



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Newsletter of the African Presidential Archives
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If you are interested in supporting the African Presidential Archives and Research Center in its American-African Universities Collaborative and more, please contact Courtney Blum, Project Coordinator, for donation levels and other information.

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