

The Regional Dimension: Report on the Regional Office for Africa

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Member, ICSU Regional Committee for
Africa**

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE



- Founded in 1931
- NGO representing a global membership that includes both national scientific bodies (103) and international scientific unions (28)
- Coordinates interdisciplinary research to address issues relevant to science and society
- Universality of Science Principle

Progress since 27th GA



- Letters sent to all National Members in Africa inviting them, to host the Regional Office (May 2003)
- Offers received from Kenya, South Africa and Zimbabwe
- Meeting of ICSU National Members in Africa (February 2004) recommends that South African proposal be accepted
- ICSU Executive Board accepts recommendation for location and appoints Interim ICSU Regional Committee for Africa (February 2004)

Regional Meeting for Africa



- Organized in October 2004 in Harare with participation of many countries, Scientific Unions and Interdisciplinary Bodies
- Objectives to agree on initial priorities
- Meeting programme focussed on:
 - setting the stage
 - building on experiences
 - shaping the future
 - the regional dimension
 - from words to action, and
 - defining the agenda

Proposed Activities for the Regional Office



- Dissemination of information
- Establish a data base of experts
- Encourage capacity building
- Promote indigenous and traditional knowledge
- Promote centres of excellence
- Increased participation of African scientists in ICSU programmes
- Strengthened collaboration with key partners (TWAS, UNESCO, AAS, NASAC, NEPAD, etc.)

Memorandum of Agreement



Between ICSU and the National Research Foundation of South Africa signed during the Harare meeting:

- Significant financial support from the host country (€700 000 per year) for a total of six staff
- Office space and in kind support from NRF
- Agreement for 10 years with evaluation mid-term

ICSU Regional Committee for Africa



appointed by the ICSU Executive Board:

Chair: Gabriel Ogunmola (Nigeria)

Members: Ayite-Lo Ajavon (Togo)

Manuel Chenene (Mozambique)

Francis Gudyanga (Zimbabwe)

Khotso Mokhele (South Africa)

Dominic Makawiti (Kenya)

Mary Stravens (Seychelles)

Vincent Titanji (Cameroon)

Ex Officio: Thomas Rosswall (Executive Director, ICSU)

Sospeter Muhongo (Director, ICSU Regional Office)

The ICSU Regional Committee for Africa



**Front Row (from left to right):
Gudyanga, Ogunmola,
Muhongo, Stravens, Titanji**

**Back Row (from left to right):
Ajavon, Rosswall, Chenene,
Mokhele, Makawiti**



First Meeting of Regional Committee



- Gabriel Ogunmola elected Chair
- ICSU membership in Africa should double within one year
- Budget for first year approved
- Draft business plan for first year developed
- Submission of input to Commission for Africa noted

Office established



- The post of Director was advertised widely
- Ca. 70 applications received and 5 interviewed
- Professor Sospeter Muhongo, University of Dar es Salaam appointed Director
- Additional staff seconded from NRF and francophone and lusophone staff members will be sought

Website established



The screenshot shows a Mozilla Firefox browser window with the address bar displaying <http://www.icsu-africa.org/>. The website content includes a navigation menu with options: GLOBAL SITE, AFRICA, LATIN AMERICA, ASIA, and ARAB REGION. The main header features the ICSU logo and the text "REGIONAL OFFICE FOR Africa". Below the header is a horizontal strip of six images: a satellite, a woman's face, a savanna landscape, a woman in a lab coat, a group of people, and a scientist in a lab. A dark red banner below the images contains the text "Strengthening international science for the benefit of society". The main content area has a yellow background and is divided into two columns. The left column lists: **ICSU in Africa**, Vision, Mission, Objectives, **Resource Centre**, **Secretariat for Africa**, and **Upcoming Events**. The right column is titled **LATEST NEWS** and contains three news items: "UN General Assembly urged to strengthen worldwide capacities in Science, Technology, and Innovation" (16/09/05), "Regional Office for Africa launched" (01/09/05), and "Inauguration Ceremony of the ICSU Regional Office for Africa: statement from the Director (Sospeter Muhongo)" (30/08/05). The browser's status bar at the bottom shows the URL <http://www.icsu-africa.org/events.htm>.

Second Meeting of Regional Committee



Based on the ICSU Draft Strategic Plan, our priority areas identified:

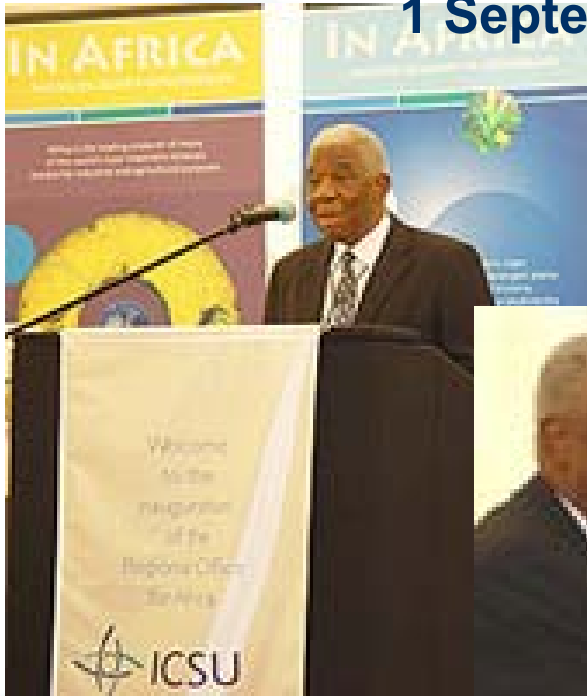
- Health and Human Well-being
- Sustainable Energy
- Natural and Human-Induced Hazards
- Global Climate Change

Operational Strategy

- Well-functioning Regional Office
- Data base of African experts
- Identification of African scientists in diaspora
- Capacity building
- Gender balance
- Promotion of Indigenous knowledge and skills
- Outreach (advocacy) activities
- Strategic partnerships
- Fund-raising

Inauguration Ceremony

**Honourable Mosibudi Mangena, Minister for
Science and Technology of South Africa
officiating at the launch of the Regional Office
on
1 September 2005**



ROA at ICSU 28th GA

- The ICSU ROA very visible at the General Assembly
- Chairman of the RCA report at the GA
- Two members of the RCA elected to the ICSU Executive Board: Khotso Mokhele (South Africa) as VP for SPR and Francis Gudyanga (Zimbabwe) as Ordinary Member representing National Scientific Members.

The Way Forward

- Preparation of project documents for the four priority areas
- Identification of key partners, including ICSU Scientific Unions
- Additional scientific staff employed
- Next Regional Committee meeting in January 2006
- Next Regional Meeting for Africa mid-2006