



The West African Examinations Council

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PRESS RELEASE

WAEC ENDS MEETING IN ABUJA

The 70th Annual Meeting of The West African Examinations Council (WAEC) has ended with the election of the Head of the Nigeria Delegation, Hajiya Binta Abdulkadir, as the Vice-Chairman of Council for a one-year tenure. She succeeds Prof. Kwasi Opoku-Amankwa of Ghana. The meeting, which was hosted by the Government of Nigeria from Monday, March 14 to Friday, March 18, 2022, was formally opened by His Excellency Muhammadu Buhari, *GCFR*, President and Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, who was represented by the Vice-President, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo.

In his keynote address, President Muhammadu Buhari welcomed the delegates and said that the Government and people of Nigeria were happy to host the meeting in view of the important role of WAEC in educational development in Nigeria. He stated that the survival and future successes of all institutions, including WAEC, would depend on how well they embraced technological innovations and their ability to reinvent themselves in the ever-changing world. He emphasised that though WAEC had over the years demonstrated the capacity and dynamism to evolve and remain relevant in an aggressively mutating world, it should embrace more innovations across the board.

While acknowledging WAEC's contributions beyond being an examination body, President Buhari noted that the Council had in the last 70 years contributed to the promotion of sustainable human resource development, integration and cooperation among West African States. He added that currently, more than 90% of educated adults in the English-speaking West African countries were products of WAEC. The President stated that since its inception in 1952, WAEC had faced its challenges forthrightly, resolving issues of examination malpractice and evolving steadily and confidently into a more technology-driven organisation. He advised the Council to commence preparations for the future, as the decades ahead would come with vastly different challenges and opportunities. He reaffirmed his

government's support for the Council, and extended felicitations to delegates from Ghana, Sierra Leone, Liberia and The Gambia who were attending the event online.

Council, which is the governing board of WAEC, meets once each year and the meeting is hosted in rotation by the five member countries – The Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. Delegates from the member countries who attended the five-day 70th Meeting included government nominees and representatives of the ministries of education, universities, secondary schools and other interest groups.

During the deliberations, *Council* received the Registrar's Annual Report on the activities of the Headquarters and five National Offices, and ratified the decisions taken on its behalf by its committees in the preceding year. It also considered the action plans presented by the Headquarters and National Offices for their operations in the current year. *Council* received from the leaders of the five country delegations detailed reports on developments in the education sector in their respective countries, and commended the governments and relevant agencies for the various interventions aimed at improving the quality of education and performance in public examinations. It called on stakeholders to step up the fight against examination malpractice, and urged the governments to continue to sanitise and equip the school system towards optimal performance in the teaching/learning process.

Council commended the collaborative efforts of the governments and relevant stakeholders targeted at expanding access to quality education, and expressed delight over the initiatives being implemented to effectively address prominent challenges in the education sector such as the dearth of qualified teachers, high population of out-of-school children, inappropriate or outdated curriculum, and teachers' resistance to rural posting, among others.

At the formal opening of the meeting, three candidates - two from Nigeria and one from Ghana - were honoured with the WAEC International Excellence Award for their outstanding performance in WASSCE for School Candidates conducted in the year 2021. They were Miss Isabella Chinasa Nweze (1st Prize), Master Kwame Brako Asante (2nd Prize) and Master Izuchukwu Godswill Edeani (3rd Prize). They were selected from a total of 2,243,773 candidates who sat the examination in the five member countries. The *Augustus Bandele Oyediran Award for the Best Candidate in West Africa* also went to Miss Isabella Chinasa Nweze.

On the same august occasion, the prestigious award of *Distinguished Friend of Council* was conferred on two eminent citizens of Nigeria – Emeritus Prof. Pius Augustine Ike Obanya and Prof. Alex Ike Mowete – for their outstanding contribution to the achievements of WAEC.

The meeting also featured the 27th in the series of Annual WAEC Endowment Fund Lectures titled “*Assessing the Assessors: Looking Back and Looking Forward*”, which was delivered by Prof. Ngozi Azuka Osarenren of the Department of Educational Foundations, University of Lagos, Nigeria.

At the end of the week-long meeting, the Chairman of Council, Prof. Ato Essuman, expressed profound gratitude to the Governments of the five member countries for the confidence reposed in WAEC and for providing the enabling environment in which the Council had executed its mandate creditably since 1952. He expressed special appreciation to the Governments of Nigeria and The Gambia for their impressive responses to their financial obligations to WAEC, and urged the other member nations to pay greater attention to the funding of the Council.



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