ACALAN'S SYNTHESIS CONFERENCE ON

NATIONAL POLICIES ON THE ROLE OF CROSS BORDER LANGUAGES AND THE PLACE OF LESS DIFFUSED LANGUAGES IN AFRICA

AU Headquaters, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
5th - 7th Feb 2009

Draft Summary: Report by Rapporteurs

Words of welcome and presentation of programme to delegates by the Executive Secretary, Mr. Adama Ssamassekou:

Introduced :
- The Nucleus consisting of 8 eminent academicians drawn from the five regions.
- Members of the scientific committees.
- Coordinators of regional focal points.
- Partners of ACALAN available at the Synthesis Conference in Addis.
- Regional Economic Committees at the Synthesis Conference in Addis.

Opening Ceremony:
The conference was opened by the Commissioner: Human Resource, Science & Technology. Also present were the Acting Director of Social Affairs representing the Commissioner in charge of Social Affairs; representatives of International Organization of Francophonie (OIF) and UNESCO; Representatives of Regional Economic Communities and ACALAN partners.

The Executive Secretary (ES) presented the path along which ACALAN has walked to date. He raised the challenges and aspirations of ACALAN as targeted by the curent conference being one of the footmarks in the ACALAN walk. He expressed hope that it would be possible, through ACALAN, to go beyond the structures and address all possible issues touching on the implementation of language related matters through specific proposals that would target appropriate and applicable frameworks in order to address African languages (i.e. integration of mother tongue in education) alongside colonially inherited languages.

The current Synthesis conference aims at:
- Synthesizing the findings of the regional conferences and emerge with tangible proposals towards setting up vehicular cross border language commissions while addressing national & regional structres for recommendation to governments.
  - o This should help the secretariat and the Nucleus to put in place all the organs of ACALAN.
- Be clear on the methodology by ensuring flexibility in sharing, working sessions, integrating and strategizing findings.
  - o ensuring assurance and re-assurance on the role and aspect of African languages to the people of Africa – partnership in linguisitc space sharing. *« Let us do it because we can »*.

Reminded, Role & Goal of the 5 Regional conferences:

- To take stock of the language situation across Africa by establishing the cross border and vehicular cross border languages; address issues of language as instruments of development while appreciating the need to forge cohesion in diversity hence appreciation of Africa's multilingualism as an asset. Need also to establish a strategic approach towards addressing the desires on African languages - - identity and role towards unity.
- Used to initiate working structures of ACALAN
- Establishment of Regional and National Focal points in order to address language issues.
- Functional convivial/Harmonous multilingualism addressing local, national, regional and continental levels.
- Research on language development in Africa

Opening Speech: AU Commissioner, Human Resource, Science & Technology
He acknowledged the high powered nature of participants at the conference. They were made up of top level African academicians in the area of linguistics. He observed that ACALAN was one of the latest innovations of AU (idea to set up ACALAN was mooted together with the one that set up the newlook AU and NEPAD) but had moved relatively fast with its agenda. Khartoum 2006 meeting had endorsed and adopted the basic ACALAN proposal that sought the documentation and enrichment of African Languages. He observed that the ES's presentation had for sure justified the existance of ACALAN.

He acknowledged the pioneer leaders who had contributed to the inception and running of ACALAN since inception i.e. former President Alpha Oumar Konare and Mali government that have supported ACALAN as an institution by providing space for setting up the offices and sustaining the sectretariat. The Secretariat was also appreciated, especially in relation to the activities that have so far been undertaken culminating in the current conference.

He also acknowledged the distinguished academicians present and the role they have played at various levels, nationally, regionally, and nontinentally; he also recognized the role of partners such as UNESCO, OIF, ADEA, Swiss Cooperation, Spain and OSTREA.

He observed that, on 26th June 2006, the Interim Governing Board and the Interim Executive Secretariat of ACALAN had been set up. Since then a number of milestone activities had been undertaken including celebrating the Year of African languages; Documentation of significant information; holding of five (5) regional conferences on **National Policies on the Role of Cross Border Languages and the Status of Lesser Used Languages**; setting up of Regional Scientific and technical committees as ACALAN organs; undertaking the Universal Multilingualism within the framework of MAAYA being a partner in linguistic diversity. That the current conference was a further culmination of the agenda on African languages: setting up a strategy for pursuing Vehicular Cross Border Languages and related language Commissions.

The Commissioner further observed that ACALAN which fell under the Social Affairs Commission had the opportunity to present a clear picture of the status of languages across Africa and also give a road map on the way forward. In this way it would play its part in the fulfilment of the MDG goals while availing an opportunity for the role of culture, especially

languages in these goals. All languages have a role to play i.e. ensure participation in development through communication and the role of language.

Keynote speech, Prof. Sammy Beban Chumbow:
Language Policies and the role of Cross Border Languages and Less Diffused Languages in the Socio-cultural, Political and Economic Development of African Countries: The Vision of ACALAN

The presenter observed that language is power and an instrument of power; a powerful instrument at the disposal of those with power but also a double edged instrument – sword. Language matters are very significant in the mediation of power from cultural, social, political and economic dimensions. Socio-economic development of Africa is heavily dependent on language development and the use of African languages. Language is therefore a significant factor of development. i.e. a number of development agenda have not been realized because the language aspect has not been integrated e.g. OAU/AU series of 5 years development plans that indicate focused development against massive poverty ; SAPS, NEPAD all of which are not sensitive to the language issue. Amongst issues discussed include:

- Dependence on foreign (colonial) languages ;
- Economic and social transformation being confined and transmitted by a small fraction of people while the larger majority are marginalized through language alienation
- Need to enhance foreign languages as partner as opposed to main languages
- Illiteracy being a disease that can be cured through knowledge hence effective access to change through African languages
- Language & Cultural Development – link between language and culture hence language being a medium of expressing culture, a symbol of ethnolinguistic indentity
- World decade of cultural development (1988-1997) thus affirming and enriching cultural identities.
- UNDP report (2004) on developpment: Development divorced from cultural context is development without a soul. Cultural renaissance included language development; language is a vehicle of culture. Cultural development is synonymous to language development hence the role of language in social and economic development.
- World Bank report on MDGs in Sub-Saharan Africa observes a noticeable effort but the rate of achievement is very low hence a challenge to achievement by 2015. The significant documents are available only on foreign languages yet the critical mass is not endowed with functional competence in these languages.
  - o There are significant gaps in languages that governments use to administer government hence gaps in effectiveness – language gaps – being barriers that require bridging.
  - o Link between language and economic development and economic power hence correlation between language and economic development.
- Language in the era of globalization
  - o Current world economy is driven by knowledge
  - o Knowledge economy calls for social knowledge and knowledge economics based on language as a means of conceptualization and access: production, acquisition and dissemination.
- Language and political development

- o Move towards stemming negative political tides through embracing organizational principles of human rights and participatory democracy.
- o Risk of marginalizing rural areas by shrouding political issues in the mystrery of foreign languages; need to demystify them through language empowerment; democratization of access to information hence participatory democracy.
- Cross Border Languages: languages that are common to two or more states and domains straddling various usages.
  - o AU singling out vehiclular cross border languages as building blocks of implementation of the language policy and the integration of the African continent. Ref. to ACALAN Statutes 3, Article 22 on AU in promotion of cross border and Vehicular languages through set and working structures – national focal centres and vehicular cross border languages.
  - o Statutory and scientific membership to ACALAN – identification of crossborder and vehicular cross border languages hence retention, development and Empowerment.
  - o Origin and nature of cross border languages – partition of Africa at Berlin conference (held from nov 22nd 1884 to fevb. 26Th 1885) in disregard or linguistic units; migration of populations and trade.
  - o Cross border languages and regional integration: cultural links through ethnic and linguistic unity as antithesis to political borders hence significance in regional, international and continental integration for peaceful co-existance.
  - o Envisaged by AU not as zones of tension and conflict but as meeting points and bridges into interstate cooperation
- Cross border languages and cooperation
  - o Documentation of oral preliteracy knowledge
  - o Activities such as standardization, norms of orthography, grammar, technology use
  - o Crossborder language committees and vehicular cross border languages: to draw representation from among the speakers with specific terms of reference; harmonizing activities i.e. role as agents of peace.
- Challenges for ACALAN
  - o Strategic plan through SWOT analysis following given guiding principles.
  - o Criteria for selection of Cross Border Vehicular Languages ; guidelines and instruments of measurement
  - o Action Plan to ensure minimum package of required aims and objectives
  - o Work to erase negativer attitide towards African languages by Africans especially in Education and Service provision by developing strategies and resources for response ; justifying and empowering African language-use and presence in Education domain ; diagnosis, treatment and outcome ; volarization of the function of African languages
  - o Functions of African Language (Bamako Conference – Nov. 2008)
  - o Volarization & changing of negative attitudes
  - o Challenge of resources: language planning is resource demanding hence development of African languages alongside inherited colonial languages requires critical mass of language experts, financial resources, relevant materials
  - o Need for strategic fund raising in order to accelarate pace of action

- Language Planning and assigning of roles to minority (lesser used) languages.
    - Cross border languages and endangerment of lesser used languages
    - Need for mediation processes to ensure peaceful coexistance of all African languages
    - Government agenda in revitalization of minority languages through attitude reingineering.
- *Development ruled and driven by knowledge hence knowledge is power. Language is an instrument and medium of accessing knowledge hence language is power. Language is needed in the negotiation of power and development. ACALAN therefore challenged to revolarize, revitatlize and reingineer the development of African languages.*

Discussion:

The Commissioner for Human Resource Science & Technology of the AU raised the concern and challenge on the effectiveness of African languages following the impact of mega languages especially in Science and technology, especially in the possible achievement of access to knowledge and development through African languages – mega languages vs African languages and the instrumentation of knowledge.

It was explained by the Keynote Speaker, Sammy Chumbow, that language is a means of doing science. Language needs to be viewed in both natural and social science perspectives against both mega and minor languages. All languages are endowed with the capability for instrumentation and intellectualization if given the opportunity and the means. All mega languages have a story to tell on how they rose to their mega status i.e. the history and significance of Greek and Latin as once reigning mega languages and the rise of later mega languages such as English, French ; and the recent emergence of other mega and self sustaining (Science & technologywise) world languages such as Japanese, Chinese etc.

The democratization of knowledge implies dissemination and empowerment in order to minimize exclusion. Knowledge society in Africa can only be achieved through African languages. Scientists can only be relevant to Africa by using African languages in service provision to Africa.

Synthesis of Regional conference reports presented by Marcel Diki Kidiri.

- Approximately 50 languages identified as VCB within the five regions (*List the VCB languages as identified.*) discussed and highlighted gaps i.e. the WA report to present consolidated list of all the VCB.

TOR for focal points:

TOR for the regional focal points and reporting mechanism to be included in the document submitted to ACALAN.
- It was suggested that proposals be generated based on the uniqueness of each focal point in relation to the languages as prioritized. They should indicate how the focal point will contribute to the ACALAN agenda in order to create regional process on the VCB languages

- Focal points should in their TORs contribute in giving guidance on what ACALAN needs to engage with at a regional level.
- Identify the main locus of each language and establish the means of reaching the relevent memberships (stakeholders and partners).
- Establish criteria for member identification.
- Establish networks of focal points dealing with other languages but to foreground the prioritized VCB languages in the regions.

In summary, regions were requested to submit to ACALAN TORs in order for the formalization of the structure and role of Regional focal points.

Appreciated the role of partner languages i.e. English, French, Spanish, Portuguese in the address of African matters.

ACALAN documents (regional conference reports and synthesis conference report) be sent back to the regions for feedback and synthesis before a final document is arrived at. Further that, channels of communication will be undertaken through the existing structures of ACALAN.

Presentation: Criteria for Selection of Vehicular Languages Cross Border languages. By Ayo Bamgbose

Eight (8) criteria identified, tabled and discussed with an inclusion of 2 more criteria (9 & 10) following discussions.
1. Number of regions in which the language is spoken therefore the more the regions the better the chance for selection.
2. The number of countries in which the language is spoken
3. Number of speakers of the language
4. Range of vehicularity, and user spoken languages
5. Language development status
6. Scope of literature available i.e. literary works and other materials available in the language
7. Domains of use i.e. education, media,
8. International recognition i.e. use in foreign broadcasts, translation of materials (UNESCO History of Africa). This factor can be used as criteria for knocking out competing languages.
9. Legal status and
10. Willingness to work together

The presenter observed, following discussion, that languages such as Kiswahili have enjoyed the benefit of contact with very many language communities, within and without the continent over time. The people have facilitated its enhancement through absorption from among other languages. Other languages too have enjoyed this attribute albeit at different levels of communication and exposure.

The data on demographies is important but it was observed that ACALAN cannot put on hold and limit its activities due to the absence of actual demographic data. There however exists lots

of differentiated demographic data in many domains i.e. UNESCO year book. There however is need of research into demographic issues alongside other ACALAN activities.

The pidgin languages across Africa are recognized as languages but seen to be lacking mutual intelligibility i.e. the West African varieties vary semantically and structurally (Nigerian pidgin and Creole) ; as do the Indian Ocean Island varieties.

It was further suggested that languages and their dialect clusters be considered alongside linguistic affinity and sociological attributes of the given language – within cross border considerations. It was however observed that there were empirical methods with which to test mutual intelligibility among given languages hence further establishing the cross border nature and vehicularity of the said languages. Of significance was for the countries to be seen to be working together on a common course – the identified vehicluar cross border languages.

Also considered was the aspect of numerical strengths of cross border languages vs the attribute of being vehicular and major language i.e. Afar language is spoken across four (4) countries but has low numerical strenths as compared to Amharic which is a major language spoken only in one country.

The aspect of basing the criteria on scientific and empirical evidence further calls for the inclusion of sociolinguistic approaches; coordination of what is already undertaken on the languages with benefit from technological intervention; instrumentation and technological accelaration. Prioritaization was also to be gauged against usage status in the media – print media, electronic media, terminology development and link to education in public life.

It therefore was significant to emerge with a decision on working languages and it was recommended and agreed that, the current forum would declare the cross border languages as identified at the regional conferences in order to form the pool from which the vehicular languages were to be identified (as had been identified at the regional conferences too) for target in both planning and research as aimed at by ACALAN.

From a list of hundreds of cross border languages, **approximately 50 languages had been identified as cross border and vehicular languages following the five regional conferences** (See Regional reports for details). These were therefore presented at the Synthesis Conference for acknowledgement and consideration as media through which to foster the regional and continental integration agenda through language development.

The exercise of identifying cross border vehicular languages as carried out through the Regional Conferences was particularly significant since, **for the first time, Africa was articulating its linguistic structure and landscape**, an issue that has variously been articulated by Africanists from without the continent. **ACALAN was therefore making decision in principle following proceedings and recommendations as arrived at during the regional conferences.** ACALAN was therefore making a mark by articulating its position on prioritization of African languages for Africa's development and integrattion. It needs to make a mark with the policy makers through a clear agenda by giving clear guidelines for harmonized and prioritized activities. In this manner it would be possible to influence policy and implementation on one hand, and

planners and practitioners on the other.

Of significance therefore was the functional nature of the languages as identified, the vehicular nature of the languages and the multifunctional roles. The status of the languages was therefore to be appreciated within the context of the diversity of the identified languages – national, legislative, psychosociological and functional roles and identities.

Dynamism in language status i.e. rise and fall of languages in terms of linguistic strengths and function across time and space was seen as a factor for consideration too in prioritizing the cross border vehiclular languages. The cross border languages enjoy varying legal status within the nations and regions where they are found. There however is a danger of legislation that is not accompanied with practice at implemenattion.

The operationalization of the given criteria would therefore contribute to the expected outcome of the objective of the current Synthesis Conference following which not only the prioritized vehicular languages would be identified but also the setting up of Regional language Commissions would commence. It was therefore mandatory that a list of prioritized Vehicular cross Border language commissions would be arrived at and validated for further advancement of setting the ACALAN structures and agenda.

It is symbolically important to show that:
- The Linguistic intelligentia and leadership in Africa is moving forward by articulating Africa's linguistic landscape and prioritizing it for action.
- No African language group is being left behind.
- A research agenda has emerged in order to address all languages and cross border languages of Africa; one that seeks to eventually present and use exhaustive and definitive data.
- Sociolinguists and politically involved participants are engaged in the language agenda and are also part of the desired solution and resolution.
- ACALAN will facilitate the collection and documentation of materials, data and information by gathering existing works for reference and application amongst other obligations.

Working Group Reports: Synthesis of Regional recommendations on prioritization of vehicular cross-border languages

An intensive discussion ensued particularly on Fulfulde in the western region; malagasy in the Eastern region; the issue of the TOR and reporting mechanisms for regional and national focal points; and relevant African languages' bibliography and related projects (i.e. the proceedings of the Harare Conference); the national languages that are not cross-border (e.g. Amharic).

Initially ACALAN recommended and required ten (10) VCB Languages for prioritization from the regional recommendations, (2 from each region), but following indepth discussions on the strategic and geographic locations of Malagasy (The Indian Ocean Islands) and Fulfulde (the larger part of Western Africa), it was agreed that Eastern Africa should have three VCB languages and Western Africa should also have three VCB languages to focus upon hence an

arrival at 12 VCB languages and ultimately 12 language Commissions.

Summary of prioritized regional VCB languages:

North Africa:
1. Modern Standard Arabic
2. Berbère

West Africa :
3. Hausa
4. Mandeng
5. Fulfulde

Eastern Africa :
6. Kiswahili
7. Somali
8. Malagasy

Southern Africa:
9. Chichewa/chinyanja,
10. Setswana

Central Africa :
11. Lingala.
12. Beti-fang

Report on ACALAN Projects :
- The eight continuing ACALAN Projects were presented in summary by the ES.
- Delegates were adviced to visit ACALAN and Specific Project websites for details.

Need to address the issue of language in Africa i.e. lexicography and terminology issues. Bilingual teaching often based on foreign languages but recommendation made that African languages be engaged. Issue addressed in the report on projects of ACALAN. A seminar is underway on the partnership betwen foreign languages and African languages i.e. As addressed in the Bamako forum (2008) on multilingualism. Plan of action based on teaching of maternal languages in the first 8 years without neglecting the foreign languages. In brief, the issue is under consideration.

Setting up of the Language Commissions:
The Nucleus tabled six (6) guidelines for the composition of VCB Language Commissions which were discussed and approved as a working instrument. These are as follows :
1. The composition and functioning of vehicular cross border language commissions should be done in compliance with the ACALAN Rules and Procedures, Section G, Article 3;
2. The 10 Members of each Language Commission shall be distributed as follows :
    a) 2 Members of respective economic, linguistic/cultural regional organizations

such as CELHTO, CEMAC, CERDOTOLA, COMESA, ECOWAS, SADC, etc. these organizations shall indicate the members of the vehicular cross border language commissions on written request by ACALAN Executive Secretariat in not later than a week from the end of the Synthesis Conference

b) 5 members who are experts in diverse areas of linguistics, language, educationists, language material developers, working on vehicular cross border languages concerned

c) 3 members who are creative writers in the languages concerned, literary critics, specialists in the art and culture, journalists, etc

3. A Task Force for identification of suitable members of the Vehicular Cross Border language Commission in conformity with the criteria should as far as possible be established by the end of the Synthesis Conference. This task Force is expected to undertake, in line with the criteria above, a search for competent individuals to propose for the vehicular cross-border language commissions. In this exercise, the Task Force shall consult with the existing language committees in the different countries of the region(s), language research centres, relevant university departments, national language academies etc. throughout the region and beyond. The selection of the candidates should be based on sufficient information in professional competence evidenced by CV's that specifiy the area of competence of each candidate.

4. The entire exercise should be completed and submitted by the end of March 2009.

5. Modality of submission should consist of a file for each candidate consisting of a report signed by at least two members of the Task Force (namely the Chairperson and the Secretary) accompanied by the respective CV's.

6. It is expected that the regional workshops will be held as from May 2009 to finalize the composition of the Vehicular Cross Border language Commissions.

Discussion :
- Specific discussion around items 2 & 3 ensued, especially concerning :
  - o Composition of the Language Commissions, and
  - o Task Force establishment leading to selection of Language Commissioners
- Agreed to set up regional Task Forces that will facilitate the setting up of VCB Language Commissions in compliance with the guidelines, regulations and Rules of Procedure governing ACALAN.
  - o Task Forces to draw from the memberships present and other possible members following recommendation.
  - o Task Forces to address the VCB languages within their region.
- *Recommended and agreed to break away into Regional working groups in order to set up Task Forces.*

Working Group report on setting up of Regional (VCB Language) Task Forces

Members were requested to submit clear and harmonized VCB Language-specified Task Force lists, (12 Task Forces as by the 12 VCB languages).

West Africa :
- 7 Members proposed for Task Force.
- To be distinguished as by each of the 3 VCB Languages (Hausa, Mandeng, Fulfulde).

Central Africa
- 6 Members proposed for the 2 VCB languages, (Lingala & Beti-Fang)

Southern Africa
- 6 Members of task force for the 2 VCB languages (Chinyanja/Chichewa & Setswana).
- The four members here-present and Felix Banda and Al Mtenje
- Specific assignments to the task force membership outlined.
- *Nevile Alexander offered to formulate and circulate through the Nucleus a set of guidelines for the operations of the Task forces.*
  - o *Suggestion appreciated and accepted.*
  - o *The document to be approved and circulated for reference by the Task Forces.*

Eastern Africa
- Three task Forces set up for the three prioritized VCB languages, (Kiswahili, Somali, and Malagasy).
- A total of thirteen (13) members identified.

Northern Africa
- Two task forces set up for the 2 VCB languages (Modern Standard Arabic & Berber)
- A total 8 Members proposed

Caution: That Reunion is a French government department while Morocco is not a member of AU therefore not to be considered under the Task force exercise.

Observation & Recommendation:
- The Task Forces to ensure access to all the regions where the VCB language is spoken when searching for potential commission memberships.
- Exercise to engage in rigorous verification of the members proposed i.e. CVs and track record of applicants showing contribution in the language area under consideration.
- Geographic distribution of task force membership noted for logisitics.
- Adviced to operate mainly via internet.
- Strong clear and convincing arguments justifying the choices and prioritization of VCB languages; and the setting-up of language commissions should be made by ACALAN with the contribution of all relevant organs including this conference.
- Endorsing the Bamako resolution on promotion of Multilingualism in the world, based on the rooting of mother tongue and co-existance of colonial and African languages.

Statement by Sylvester Anami : Status and position of Kiswahili at Continental level

- *Status of Kiswahili* as we juggle with African languages in endevour to elevate and promote them to regional, continental and international levels.
- *Nairobi Declaration:* Considered identification of more visible languages for elevation to international level i.e. culture of people marks their scope of participation in matters at levels where their culture is reflected.
- *Kiswahili therefore a significant African language at international level* – identification and participation by building on gains made for the language so far i.e significant language activities through ACALAN. Observed that Kiswahili is an AU working language. The Principals have endevoured to use the language at the summit; Kiswahili is recognized at UNESCO and is reflected in documentations on the UNESCO and other websites.
  - o There is need to widen posting of documents in Kiswahili on international websites and our own websites.
- We need to identify and consider other African languages to promote alongside Kiswahili.
- There is the temptation of keeping visible languages within regions of origin, i.e. Kiswahili being limited to the Eastern Africa Region, a move that is detrimental.
- **We therefore need to recognize and elevate Kiswahili to a position where it stands to reflect its actual status and position as by the evidence given.**

Discussion and Observations following Anami's brief:

- ACALAN is awake to and aware of the Pan African and International status of Kiswahili as reminded by Mr. Anami. Members were reminded of the OAU position on Kiswahili alongside Arabic, Hausa, and a Nguni-related language for Southern Africa. It also appreciates and acknowledges that currently, two (2) languages, Kiswahili & Hausa, have realized the position as desired but more definitely needs to be done i.e.
- Encourage translation into Kiswahili of important documents – Neville spearheading translation exercises of documents into Kiswahili.
- Recommendation for Kiswahili to be taught as prioritized African language where it is not taught across the continent.
- Anami's contribution requires the deliberate consideration and placing of the Kiswahili issue on ACALAN's agenda
- Observed that the issue is already on the ACALAN agenda i.e. dynamism of ACALAN foregrounded Kiswahili on the language promotion exercise.
- 2002 meeting of experts following establishment of ACALAN's Continental structure expressed need for meeting of experts to carry on the process i.e.emerging with Resolution 86 that made Kiswahili an AU working language. Chairmanship of Chisano desired to make speech in Kiswahili but lack of interpreters handicapped the actualization.
- AU former President Alpha O. Konare of Mali recognized the Kiswahili agenda at AU as significant and recommended that the target was to work towards making it an international language.
- 1st Pan African conference on curriculum and publishing of text books (2nd Decade of Education in Africa) is scheduled for 24th – 27th March 2009 in Dar es-Salaam.

- o Creation of visibility of the conference
- o Promote Kiswahili – use in all African educational systems
- Appreciation of Kiswahili as the first African language to be taught in all African countries.
  - o Tribute to late Miriam makeba who desired for all African children to speak one language.
    - At least one African language besides their own.
- African tribute to Miriam Makeba's role in promoting the language issue.
- Current practice should move to make people confident in the use of their languages across Africa.
- Agreed that ACALAN promotes all relevant languages as by the spirit in this symposium.
- Anami appreciated the Executive Secretary's response and the inspiring guidance and spirit given to his brief on the position of Kiswahili.

Forum of senior organizations on Implementation of Khartoum decisions on language issues and culture (Culture and education). Ministers of Education to reform the systems and use of National languages and mother tongues. (Restructure with facts).
- *Heads of state resolutions on Year of African languages*
- *Acknowledge low level implementation of the Year of African Languages. Members to use opportunity to review implementation of the processes ; International communities to choose African languages for instruction and Education (decisions relating to languages);*

Reference to Regional Reports following Regional Conferences on CBL & VCBL:
- Delegates were adviced to look at the regional conference reports and to make any relevant contribution on matters arising i.e. the current Southern Africa report contains part of the eastern Africa report and that the correction will be made.
- Bank documents and use of African languages ;
- Comment on aspect of partners of ACALAN at the conference and Members invited in personal capacities i.e. 2 Members – Congo & Rwanda delegates were invited in individual capacities hence not products of either partners or regional Scientific Committees.

On the Summary by Marcel & Hassana on the Regional conference deliberations:
- What do we do with the recommendations, particularly new ones that emerge following the synthesis undertaken by the two members as mentioned?

This conference addressed the synthesis following the five conferences. After submission of the synthesis recommendations were made i.e. the one on West African VCBL's was found to be lacking hence provision given for its improvement, especially in the listing of cross-border languages and identification of vehicular cross-border languages.

Ngalaso's input and brief :
- Recommendation to states on setting up of African languages departments at university: These exist at some universities i.e. African Language departments. Recommended that

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they be considered and systematized in institutions where they are not yet addressed.
  o Regarding the media – television, radio and press – it was observed that African languages were marginalized.
  o Recommended that there is need for allocation of space for African languages in International media besides the European languages i.e. CNN. Noted however in discussion that some international media already broadcast in African languages i.e. Kiswahili
- On Dictionaries, mention many more valid instruments beyond monolingual dictionaries. i.e. Pre-lingual dictionaries (Decoplus project) in order to aid teaching of languages (trilingual dictionaries mentioned i.e. Kiswahili-French-Hausa).
  o Need for monolingual dictioneries assumes that most dictionaries are bilingual. Monolingual dictionaries are however seen to deepen the information as documented on the languages. This however does not preclude the need for bilingual and trilingual dictionaries.
- For ACALAN: now that Kiswahili is an AU language, we should put into practice the resolution by featuring Kiswahili in working documents i.e. Kiswahili to be reflected in the AU letterhead.
- Need to take stock and appreciate other language related projects initiated outside the orbit of ACALAN i.e. member carrying out a project funded by France on Kiswahili. Need to set up synergies with such projects.

Mr SAMASSEKOU in response :
- Requested for members to submit significant recommendations to the secretariat for consideration and inclusion in the synthesis report.
  o Recommendations specific to the state by ACALAN
  o Kiswahili document translated into Kiswahili by Prof. Kiango (TUKI)
  o Colloquium to recommend for Kiswahili in the AU headers alongside other working languages i.e. Spanish does not appear on the header either.
  o ACALAN – African Academy of Languages NOT Academy of African languages – to acknowledge other projects undertaken on African languages. Recommendations on partners and submission to Council of Ministers for ratification.

Chairman, Conference Bureau – Ayo Bamgbose :
Appreciation of attendance and consistence across the three days.
Appreciation of the Ethiopian delegates and their consistency and manner of attendace.
Appreciation of the moderator on offering to draft the guidelines for the Task forces.
Appreciation of the rapporteurs on their work and recording.
Appreciation of the Executive Secretary and his committment and passion for ACALAN
Appreciation of the interpreters and their deligence
Appreciation of the organizers of the conference

Closing Ceremony :
The closing ceremony was seen as symbolic and not definite because it marks the begining of greater work by ACALAN as we aspire to germinate and grow into what we desire for Africa

and the international community in relation to the African language agenda.

Through a vote of thanks, the conference was appreciated ; Organizers of the conference and especially the ES, Mr. Adama Ssamassekou was lauded for engaging the participants in the great historical movement that is of linguistic, cultural and social significance – a movement that seeks to liberate and integrate the African people linguistically ; The hospitality offered by AU and ACALAN secretariat was appreciated ; the impact of the current resolutions and activities towards the future of Africa was noted and anticipated.

The Executive Secretary, in his ending remarks, specifically appreciated the commitment of all the participants and specifically singled out the Chairmanship of Kenya at the Nairobi potocal, Dec. 2005 (When the interim ACALAN structure was put in place) and at the Bamako protocal, June 2008 (when the substantive ACALAN structure was approved and ratified). Kenya was therefore seen to have been significant and witness to ACALAN's major milestones. The current conference was also recognized and appreciated, having been anticipated for the last three years that were to see the five (5) Regional conferences take place before its actualization towards the synthesis of the regional findings and recommendations. It therefore is key and foundation upon which the language commissions are to be set following the identification of prioritized vehicular cross Border Languages. The current conference therefore marks a historical stage for the establishment of working strucutres of ACALAN. It therefore has been a clear vision yet ambitious project that requires strengthened mobilization in order to meet the struggle and challenges ahead.

It is clear that the setting up of ACALAN structures should be done from the highest to the lowest levels – AU, regional, national levels that should integrate the Regional Economic organizations – while operating within the set ACALAN structures in the addressing of the language issues. It is also necessary to move into concrete plans with the support of natrions, delegates and partners, towards Education For All (EFA) by 2015 through Multilingual teaching processes. There is need for Regional Mobilization for operationalization Seminars on harmonization of VCBL development and mobilization of relevant resources through addressing the prioritized 12 VCB languages as selected at this conference.

The condusive environment under which the work was done was appreciated. i.e. the arrival at consensus on the prioritized 12 VCB languages and pledge to work hard at the realization of the set agenda.

It was observed that the AU is giving visibility to ACALAN through its prioritized agenda. Holding the conference at the AU headquaters when the AU summit was on was a point in reference and the fact that the ACALAN delegates led by the ES had been received by the AU Chairman.

The ES acknowledged and appreciated the partnership of UNESCO, IOF, ADEA, COMESA, OSSREA, Other regional Economic Organizations, Swiss Coorp ; the role of the Secretariat, hospitality team, Interpreters and support staff. The collaboration towards the renewal and rebirth of the African Continent linguisitcally was lauded.

Closing Speech : AU Head, Division of Culture & Sports :
By appreciating the opportunity to close the conference, *(having attended all sessions, yet very newly appointed into the office hence marking his first week of office with attendance of this conference)*, the Head, Division of Culture and Sports observed that Africa was moving towards total integration through the inclusion of all members of the African society as had been shown by the participation and agenda at the conference. He observed that the African intellectuals here present were the mirror of the African society. They were symbolically taking up the role of elders hence role in liberating Africa. He acknowledged the importance of being a society of knowledge hence the role of intellectuals in liberating Africa. He further observed that just about 10% of African population could speak European languages hence the apparent marginalization of 90% of Africa's population.

The ACALAN agenda is therefore very significant to the African continent. He therefore acknowledged and appreciated all the Professors at universities who are working on the promotion of African languages. The Mali government was singled out for recognition and appreciation for hosting ACALAN and setting aside five (5) hactares of land for the construction of ACALAN headquaters. The partners who have and continue to work with ACALAN were also appreciated.

The principle of consensus and flexibility at the conference was further lauded. i.e. the dialogue that saw the move from the anticipated 10 VCB languages to 12 prioritized and approved VCB languages for initial ACALAN activities. The inclusion of Malagasy (Indian Ocean Islands) and Fulfulde (West Africa) in order to be sufficiently inclusive and representative was specifically foregrounded and appreciated.

He also observed abd appreciated the gender representation at the conference.

The specific sensitivity to the parts of Africa under distress due to conflict in the language agenda was lauded i.e. the prioritization and selection of languages such as Somali, Lingala and Swahili indicates a move towards pacifying the regions that are assailed by conflict such as the states of Somalia and DRC.

The presenter observed that courage and heroic acts such as those seen at this conference are mirrors and light of the continent. Language is sacred i.e. God created the world/the universe with '*Words*' hence the sacredness of the goal and delegates at this gathering, not to mention the noble action as undertaken through the deliberations. Members were therefore encouraged to promote the sacredness and respect of the '*Word*' ; to develop language in order to promote respect of the '*Word*' ; and to ensure that AU listens to Africa's people within the context of AU's vision. He also underscored the importance of respecting and listening to both the masses and the academicians while taking up responsibilities to ensure attainment of the given recommendations.

2009

Draft Summary: Report by Rapporteurs. ACALAN's synthesis conference on national policies on the role of cross border languages and the place of less diffused languages in Africa. AU Headquaters, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 5th - 7th Feb 2009

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