



Africa
Diaspora
Investment
Forum
13-17th Sept
2005

Africa Diaspora Investment Forum 2005 Press Launch / Roundtable 31st August 2005

Chatham House
10 St James's Square
London SW1Y 4LE

Outcomes of the Press Roundtable

Over 60 delegates consisting of media organisation from the Diaspora, international institutions and media practitioners gathered at Chatham House Royal Institute of International Affairs to discuss the role of the press in facilitating investment by the Diaspora. The event also represented a press launch of the forthcoming Africa Diaspora Investment Forum (ADIF) 2005, being jointly organised by, New Partnership for Africa's Development, Economic, Africa Business Roundtable, Nigerian Stock Exchange, BenTV and AfricaRecruit.

The role of the press in facilitating an enabling investment atmosphere is overwhelming. An objective reporting is crucial. The press has the responsibility to report in a balanced manner. Philanthropy, certainly not in the press, is no longer fashionable. One question that readily comes to mind is why the press should report positively about Africa? There is a certainly a business case to make about balanced reporting for Africa. The focus should therefore be how should the media report positively about Africa? The press launch of today, as well as the actual weeklong investment forum provides excellent platform to confront diverse stakeholders on how they would like to be portrayed in the press.

Topics discussed centred on: whose roles it is to brand Africa as a whole, Is there a business case for marketing Africa, the capacity of African media to provide local content without total reliance on international/western medium's. The function of the media as the 4th realm of government in dictating the agenda in relations to national interest as well as using historical contexts in projecting Africa was highlighted. The responsibility of Africa governments, business and Africans themselves particularly those in the Diaspora were explored in depth.

Some of the comments from the floor included research into what the public want to know about Africa, rigid structures/bureaucracy in the international media does not enhance flexibility and therefore does not encourage a balance reporting on Africa.

There was an overall consensus on the need for the Diaspora Press to collaborate as effective stakeholders to access limited funds, lobby for change and engage with mainstream media.

Some of the recommendations:

- There needs to be synergy between African government especially in formulating policies relating to investments and a strong co-operation with the Diplomatic services and Africans in the Diaspora.
- A consultative forum should be created with emphasis on African media
- The Diaspora media should form an consortium to act as an effective stakeholder
- The "metro concept" should be replicated but with an African content"
- Steps should be taken to get wealthy Africans to actively invest in Africa media, this ideas must be branded and sold to them as a long term investment strategy and not as an instant money making scheme"
- The quality of the Africa media in the Diaspora needs to be improved and brought to the same level as the world media in order to actively compete in the industry."
- To pool information similar to that of AP creating a Diaspora news feed

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