



**KEY NOTE ADDRESS BY H.E BENING AHMED WIISICHONG,
SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE PAN AFRICAN YOUTH UNION AT THE
18TH AFRICA SCOUT CONFERENCE, NAIROBI 2022**

TOPIC: SHAPING CONNECTED FUTURES

Chairman of World Scout Committee (Andy Chapman), Secretary-General of World Scout Bureau (Ahmad Alhendawi), Chairman of Africa Scout Committee (Victor Atipagah), Regional Director of Africa Scout Bureau (Fredrick Tutu Kama Kama), Heads of National Scout Organizations, Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, gallant friends from the global and African scout fraternity present, Jambo Habari.

It gives me great joy and pleasure to be invited to participate in this 18th Africa Scout Conference and to address some of the most exceptional change makers in the world on the theme, ***“Shaping Connected Futures.”***

On behalf of the Executive Committee of the Pan African Youth Union, I extend our warmest congratulations to the Africa Scout Committee for their continued commitment to building synergies and social cohesion across the continent.

Let me also congratulate the organizing committee, the Africa scout support center in Nairobi for pulling together an outstanding 18th Africa Scout Conference in this beautiful city of Nairobi.

Amidst an unprecedented global pandemic and the electoral uncertainties of the just ended general elections in Kenya, the scout Africa Committee have proven that with determination and commitment, no challenge is insurmountable.

I believe each of you have been warmly welcomed with some hot ugali, Nyama-choma and kachumbari, a delicacy I believe will keep you in Kenya longer than you anticipate.

Fellow change makers, I have had my early life shaped by the activities of scout and as a social force for change; many young people have felt the tremendous impact of scout and the big six family.

I draw great inspiration from our fore bearers who built great solidarity and camaraderie to strive for the political liberation of our continent, our role as a generation is to continue the struggle, this time for economic emancipation, break the shackles of neocolonialism, deconstructing imperialist systems and joining forces to create a just and equal world where every life matters.

Permit me to quote from one of the greatest Africans yet, **“We must become bigger than we have been; more courageous, greater in spirit, larger in outlook. We must become members of a new race, overcoming petty prejudice, owing our ultimate allegiance not to nations but to our fellow men within the human community.” - Haile Selassie**

The new race that emperor Haile Selassie refers to, is a challenge to us all in this room, a challenge to stand up against injustice, inequality, poverty, hunger, marginalization and climate emergencies.

As a social change force, we must dedicate our ultimate allegiance to humanity, to the protection of liberties, freedoms and the fundamental human rights of all citizens.

The recognition of our intrinsic interconnectivity as human beings must shape our dedication to build a fairer, inclusive and egalitarian society where the quality of life irrespective of race, religion, sex, geography is guaranteed and human dignity protected.

We must adapt approaches that guarantee the participation of Young people both boys and girls in development processes, advocate Resilience and efficient adaptability mechanisms to build values that harness Connection between people irrespective of spatial and other considerations.

Another important reflection we must continually be reminded of, is sustainable development as a multi-sectorial and cross-cutting paradigm towards social change.

We must develop and commit to deep understanding of progressive Advocacy mechanisms, adopting the evidence based and rights based methodologies as efficient approaches to influence the social change we really want to see.

Our quest to shape our connected futures as young people can be better harnessed through the effective application of Technology and Innovation. The constructive use of social media (Facebook, Twitter, Tik tok, Instagram, Wechat, snap chat, YouTube and other social networking platforms)

Young people must learn and adapt the effective application of Internet of Things (IoT), disruptive technologies, Big data and Artificial Intelligence (AI) as tools to scale up our efforts for social change.

Permit me to touch on the strategic priorities or vision 2023 strategy of scout which emphasizes youth engagement, educational methods, diversity & inclusion, social impact, communication and external relations and good governance.

These strategic priorities are only achievable if we work in unison from an intergenerational perspective. We need the solidarity of all ages to achieve tangible and sustainable social change outcomes.

Scouting in Africa must work hand in hand with other youth development partners to confront the challenges of youth unemployment, peace and security, climate emergencies and

contribute meaningfully to consolidating democracy and good governance in Africa.

We must move outside our comfort zone to activate our civic responsibility and play a key role to building resilient and sustainable communities that are futuristic. Scouts can no longer be passive on matters of corruption and accountability.

Every young person must recognize that, the democratization of education be it access or quality assurance, provision of quality and affordable health care, employability, skills, jobs, political stability, economic inclusion and quality of life is directly connected to good governance.

Our future will be determined by the roles we each play to shape the spaces essential for social change.

The impact of scout on social change mechanisms continues to yield enormous dividends across the world, this 57million army of social change from 172 national scouting organizations from 224 countries and territories worldwide is the ideal army to change our world and guarantee a bright future where no one is left behind.

Our vision as a social force must be to scale-up meaningful youth engagements and participation across the globe, anchored on a revitalized and durable spirit of volunteerism.

African youth must birth a renewed impetus of solidarity to encapsulate a clear understanding of the aspirations of Agenda 2030 and AU Agenda 2063.

We must harness our youthful energies to develop social cohesion mechanisms, robust enough to guarantee an inclusive, prosperous and progressive Africa we want.

Our role as young people is to stimulate a deep spirit of African patriotism, a passionate sense of belongingness and collectivism to the ideals of Pan Africanism among fellow African youth; we must imbibe a renewed sense of commitment, confidence, dignity

and black consciousness, ready to dedicate ourselves to the socio-political and economic development of the continent.

I call on everyone in this room to be global citizens not spectators; our silence or indifference is a tacit endorsement of inequality, under development, marginalization and the systematic exclusion of the most deprived people across the world.

Your silence or indifference makes you complicit to all the crimes against humanity and the other injustices happening today.

No one can be silent or indifferent in the face of evil, you are either contributing or against it.

Ladies and Gentlemen, our commitment and dedication must be to the socio-economic transformation of Africa and our fellow youth. Let us work together with an ultimate resolve to change and transform our communities.

We must protect and defend the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human rights which was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on 10th of December 1948 ([General Assembly resolution 217 A](#)).

This will be how we shape our connected futures and build a truly transformational, inclusive and equal society.

While I express my deepest gratitude to the diverse development stakeholders for the tremendous change actions they have initiated to address the fundamental formative and educational needs of our youth, we at the Pan African Youth Union shall endeavor to support and collaborate with governments, development partners and social changes forces like Scout in the effort to address the physical and socio-economic aspirations of the youth who constitute about 70% of Africa's demographic.

A strong partnership between Africa Scout, the Pan African Youth Union and our National Youth Councils will reinforce our collective

objectives and give impetus to efforts towards social transformation and change.

Fellow change Makers, ladies and gentlemen, allow me to thank the organizers of this conference, the host government and all of you gathered here today, for giving me the opportunity to share these thoughts with you.

I wish to encourage each one of you to stand up and be counted; each of us must get involved in the process of shaping our connected futures and continually undertake meaningful and constructive actions that will transform Africa towards growth and prosperity.

Fellow change Makers, ladies and gentlemen, let me conclude with this quote from Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, who arguably is one of the most outstanding positive change revolutionaries the world has ever experienced;

“Countrymen, the task ahead is great indeed, and heavy is the responsibility; and yet it is a noble and glorious challenge - a challenge which calls for the courage to dream, the courage to believe, the courage to dare, the courage to do, the courage to envision, the courage to fight, the courage to work, the courage to achieve - to achieve the highest excellencies and the fullest greatness of man. Dare we ask for more in life?” - Kwame Nkrumah

God bless Africa, Make us Great and Strong.

Asante Saana for your kind attention.

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