

Uppsala 2009-05-05

Julius Nyerere Intellectual Festival Week
University of Dar-es-Salaam 13 – 17 April 2009

Between 13 and 17 April NAI Director Carin Norberg and NAI Research Director Fantu Cheru, participated in the first Julius Nyerere Intellectual Festival, at the University of Dar-es-Salaam. The festival was organized by Professor Issa Shivji, Mwalimu Nyerere Professor of Pan-African Studies. In Professor Shivji's own words: *"Though Africa has undoubtedly suffered from the neoliberal onslaught of the past two decades, Pan-Africanism as a progressive ideology is now firmly back on the historical agenda"*.

At the festival Fahamu Books launched the book "Where is Uhuru? Reflections on the Struggle for Democracy in Africa" by Professor Issa Shivji.

The event drew a large crowd of African scholars. The Key Note Speaker was Noble Laureate Professor Wole Soyinka, who gave two lectures on the theme of "New Imperialism". The lectures were attended by large numbers of students, academic staff and other personalities including Salim Salim, former Executive Secretary of OAU, and Anna Tibaijuka, Executive Director of UN Habitat in Nairobi plus other invited guests. The lectures were followed by hour long audience participations. The students were very active in the debate and raised many critical issues relating to the present situation on the African continent. As one participant phrased it "Africa is poor but African leaders are rich".

This theme was also picked up by the famous Tanzanian singer Karola Kinasha who performed at her old Alma Mater with a poem called The African Parliamentarian and a well known (at least judging by the applause) song in Kiswahili.

Other interesting interventions during the festival was a speech by Olivier Frantz Fanon, son of the legendary Algerian writer Frantz Fanon, author of well known books such as "Black Skin, White Masks" and "Wretched of the Earth".

Professor Kofi Anyidoho from Ghana gave the Nkrumah Centenary Lecture and also read some of his beautiful poems.

NAI Research Director Fantu Cheru gave a very much appreciated lecture on "African Union, Pan-Africanism and Development". In conjunction to this lecture the book "The African Union and New Strategies for Development in Africa" edited by Said Adejumo and Adebayo Olukoshi was launched.

The final of the festival was the Valedictory by professor Adebayo Olukoshi, CODESRIAs outgoing Executive Secretary (and former research coordinator at NAI in Uppsala). Below you will find the message to Professor Olukoshi from NAI on his last day in office.

Dear Adebayo,

On your last day as Executive Secretary to CODESRIA we at the Nordic Africa Institute would like to pay tribute to one of our “sons”, the elusive Prince, the much appreciated partner. Your period at the institute in the nineties was one of development and academic richness. In one of the many papers you wrote during this time you put the question “Is there any basis for hope and optimism in the future of Africa?”. Your answer then was yes, that the governments on the continent would have to contend with a more vigilant populace. It is my belief that it is people like yourself who has and will continue to contribute to this vigilance – through addressing the complicated questions and through being actively involved in the public debate. On behalf of all staff of the institute I would like to wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

Carin Norberg

Director