



ECHOES

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AFRICAN CONTINENTAL MEETING OF LEADERSHIP TEAMS

10 - 19 MAY 2023

KIGALI, RWANDA



THE LEADERSHIP TEAMS FROM THE AFRICAN CONTINENT:

Cameroun-Tchad, Congo-Burkina Faso, Lesotho, Rwanda-Uganda and South Africa gathered in Kigali, Rwanda on 9th May 2023. The same evening, the Novitiate community of Gikongoro gave a very colourful and culturally warm welcome to the participants. The General



Leadership Team animated the session. The participants introduced and greeted one another. It was a rich experience to meet one another in presence and walk together for the common mission.

DAY 1: 10 MAY 2023

The first day began with an Opening Prayer connecting the energies of all participants to respond to the Chapter call: *"Let us go over to the other side"*.

Sr. Ana Maria Alcalde, in her opening address, welcomed the participants, representing the Apostolic Sisters of the African Continent. She said:



"With this meeting in Africa, we are launching the Continental Meetings, which will bring together the Council teams of the respective continents. These meetings have the general aim of giving continuity to the Post-Chapter Process in order to deepen and implement the decisions taken."



She emphasized the objectives of the Continental Meeting as follows:

- ☞ To get to know each other and the reality of our countries.
- ☞ To live and explore together leadership towards transformation.
- ☞ To deepen “evaluation of our presence”, to make concrete decisions for the continent, and to make proposals for the Institute.



Then followed the sharing of the reality of each Unit. Positive realities were highlighted in each Unit. Many challenges were mentioned, however: mainly the economic crisis, unemployment, poverty, unending wars, terrorism, inequality in the education system,

etc. These realities have impacted the way in which the mission is lived.

There was time for questions and clarifications after each Unit presentation.

The day concluded with a prayer.

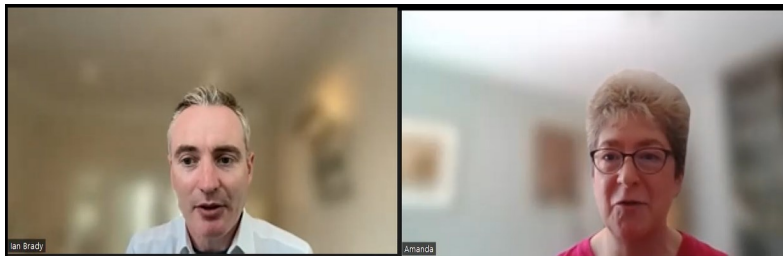
DAY 2: 11 MAY 2023

The second day of the meeting was entirely devoted to finances and resources.

Veronica Rapitso, General Bursar, and the financial experts **Amanda Francis** and **Ian Brady** (on -line intervention), with clear and well-prepared presentations, guided the reflection on the reality of the Institute and the need to make decisions to plan the future.

Ana Maria Alcalde gave an introduction to the day's work. She highlighted the interconnectedness of the global reality and our responsibility in the process of building the future.

The global economic situation affects the whole Institute and takes on different expressions according to the social context and the reality in which we find ourselves.



Veronica wrapped up the session of the day with practical issues that the participants needed to focus on emanating from the **2021 General Chapter**.



DAY 3: 12 MAY 2023



The third day of the African continental meeting emphasized deepening reflection on the reality of the Units, the Continent and the Institute through

the "Evaluation of our presence".

A summary of the Evaluation was presented by the General Council. The sharing was done via

PowerPoint, divided by topic: **Communities, Presence, Ministries, Impact, Challenges.**



After the presentation of each topic, the participants were invited to take time for personal reflection, followed by group sharing and reflection together in the assembly.

DAY 4: 13 MAY 2023

The fourth day was entirely a continuation of the previous sessions on deepening reflection on the reality of the Units on the African Continent.

After the morning prayer, the participants watched a videotaped conference “Current Situation of the Church in Africa”, given by **Fr. Charles Phukuta, CICM**.

His conference provided a wide view of the African reality, touching on:

Political Issues

Social Issues

Economic Situation

Environmental Issues

Religious realities in Africa

Possibilities and Opportunities

Challenges and Impact



The second session was a conference given, via zoom, by **Sr. Marie Power, Sister of the Holy Family of Bordeaux**, from Britain and Ireland Unit, on the topic **Human Trafficking**.

The rest of the day was dedicated to a deep reflection on the final topic of the Evaluation of Presence – **the New Needs** - in the Units and African Continent.

The day ended with a celebration, in which the Leadership Teams of each Unit reflected and expressed what they must **"let go of"** in order to make room for new processes.

In the evening, with typical dances, a lot of joy and creativity, a pleasant and fun cultural meeting took place.



DAY 6: 15 MAY 2023

The sixth day began, as usual, with morning prayer.

Then, the Leadership Teams were informed about the work done so far by the International Formation Team and its planning for the coming months: a process of reflection and deepening by the Formation Teams in the Units; **a meeting with all the Unit Teams, by Zoom, in September; a meeting of the International Team, in Rome, in October.**

The first item of the mandate the Team has received is to help the Institute to experience an interior transformation (a change in the way of thinking about the formation process).

The rest of the day was entirely dedicated to the topic of leadership.

The first session focused on the leadership we need today:

- ☞ What kind of leadership is needed today?
- ☞ What kind of leadership is needed in our Unit?



The afternoon session continued with sharing of lived experiences.

The day ended with a meaningful prayer of integration.

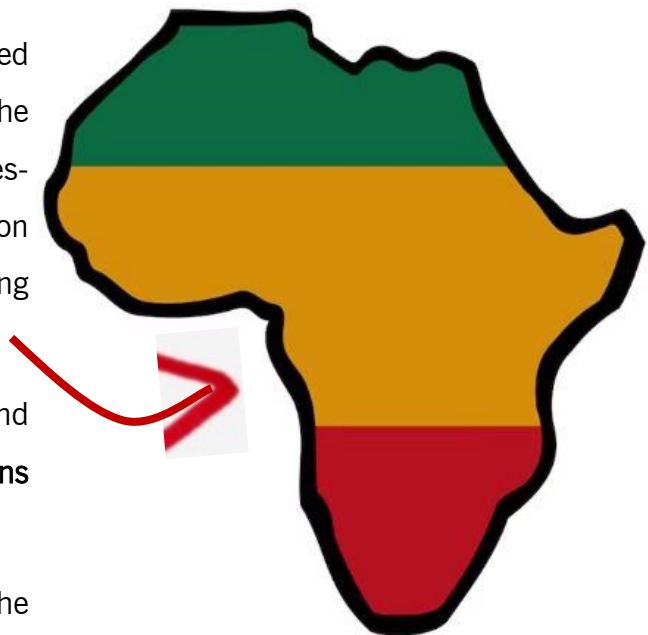
DAY 8,9: 17,18 MAY 2023

The eighth and ninth days were totally focused on planning the way forward, reflecting on the audacious and concrete steps, so that the presence of the Holy Family can have meaning on the African Continent, today and in the coming years.

The work began with a personal reflection and that of the whole group on **"What does it mean to go to the other shore?"**

This work was done in groups, according to the Languages that is French and English.

The two days were an intense exercise of discernment, in which the priority was to listen deeply to God, through each one's listening and sharing.



The fruits of this hard work are the audacious steps chosen:

- ⇒ To have a common Novitiate in the African Continent
- ⇒ New presences of the Holy Family in Africa to respond to new needs
- ⇒ Financial sustainability
- ⇒ Justice, peace and the integrity of creation (JPIC)

The participants were again asked to continue working in groups on the four chosen steps, drawing up an action plan for each of them.

In conclusion, despite the hard work, the participants were happy with the results achieved.





DAY 10: 19 MAY 2023

The programme for the last day of the meeting consisted of:

- Proposals for the Institute
- Questions that arose during the meeting not yet considered
- Information on the Founder's Cause
- Evaluation of the 10-day process

The closing words of Ana Maria, in which she encouraged everyone *to bring to life, with all the Holy Family Sisters of Africa*, the audacious steps taken. She thanked each one for the active participation in the meeting and all those who had made this event possible, especially the Council of Rwanda/Uganda for everything they had done and are still doing to welcome

everyone.

Theresia Selete, provincial of Lesotho, addressed a warm word of gratitude to Sr. Ana Maria, General Council, Council of Rwanda/Uganda and all the participants.

The last act was a meaningful Closing Prayer prepared by the Leadership Teams from Rwanda/Uganda and Lesotho.



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