

**ASIAN STUDIES IN AFRICA:  
An Imperative for a Sustainable World. Reasons and Possibilities.**

Accra, Ghana, September 24-26, 2015  
Roundtable proposed by Darwis Khudori

**Abstract**

The Roundtable will discuss two main questions:

1. Why are Asian Studies needed to be developed in Africa?
2. How should they be developed?

There are at least three reasons why Asian Studies are needed to be developed in Africa:

1. The “Bandung Conference” as a common heritage of Africa and Asia.

The 1955 Bandung Asian-African Conference is the first event in world history where representatives of the former colonised nations of Africa and Asia united their forces and proposed alternatives to the world order dominated by the superpowers. It has led to the complete reconquest of independence of Africa and Asia and to the formation of a Non-Aligned Movement. One of the common wishes declared in the Final Communiqué of the conference is the economic and cultural cooperation, including educational and scientific activities.

2. Africa and Asia as source and pool of diversity of life needed for the survival of the earth.

The UN declaration on 2010 as the Year of Biodiversity has recognised diversity as a fundamental condition for the survival of the planet. Africa and Asia are source and pool of diversity, either in term of culture, ecology, economy, politics, or religion and spirituality. Within the context of globalisation dominated by short term economical and materialist interests leading to a single model of development and threatening the survival of the earth, Africa and Asia must be theoretically able to contribute to directing globalisation towards a sustainable world.

3. The recent economic offensives of Asia to Africa.

Since the last decade, economic exchanges between Africa and Asia have been increasing. All the economic powers of Asia have developed economic relations and organised summits with Africa: Japan-Africa, China-Africa, Korea-Africa, India-Africa, Turkey-Africa, Iran-Africa. Asia has become the most important economic partner of Africa. Yet, the place of Africa in international trade remains marginal. The initiative of exchanges with Africa comes mostly from outside Africa. There is a risk that Africa continues to be an object instead of subject initiator of exchanges and that the destiny of African people is to be decided by others. So, Africa needs to get prepared to the economic offensives of Asia.

As for the possibilities of development of Asian Studies in Africa, it seems that there are three issues to be worked out:

1. Institutional issues: who are expected to plan, design, and implement the Asian Studies in Africa? State? Ministry of Education? Ministry of Research? Public institutions? Public universities? Private schools? Independent Research Centres?
2. Human resources issues: who are expected to lead and conduct the development of Asian Studies in Africa? African scholars? Asian ones? European, American and other Western scholars?
3. Financial issues: who are expected to fund the development of Asian Studies in Africa? State? International Financial Organisations? Private sectors?

The Roundtable will discuss diverse possibilities, especially in the field of education, training and research for African students on Asian Studies in general and on Economic Exchanges with Asia in particular.

### **Roundtable Convenor and Chair**

Darwis KHUDORI, Associate Professor Doctor, University of Le Havre, France

### **Roundtable Participants**

Kweku AMPIAH, Associate Professor Doctor, University of Leeds, United Kingdom

Bernadette ANDREOSSO O'CALLAGHAN, Professor Doctor, University of Limerick, Ireland

Adams BODOMO, Professor Doctor, University of Vienna, Austria

Joern GOTTWALD, Professor Doctor, Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Germany

Lazare KI-ZERBO, Doctor, Office International de la Francophonie, France

Illy OUSSENI, Doctor, African Centre for International Trade and Development, Burkina Faso

Dominique Martin SAATENANG, Master in Business Management, China-Africa Chamber of Commerce, Beijing

Maung ZARNI, Doctor, London School of Economics, United Kingdom

Meshach OFUAFOR, Master of Arts, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria

### **Extra Roundtable Participants**

If you wish to participate in the roundtable, please contact the convenor Darwis Khudori at [darwis.khudori@univ-lehavre.fr](mailto:darwis.khudori@univ-lehavre.fr)