

Report on African Coordination Group's visit to Tanzania.

On March 2, 2012, the Africa Coordination Group (ACG) members (Nombulelo Khanyile, Pieter Horn and Abiodun Owoseni), joined by Kenyan, Mediatrix Masava, arrived into the warm Tanzanian hospitality. We were welcomed by Joseph Badi (Secretary) and Doscar Vuhahula (Treasurer) who briefed them on the activities lined up for them by the Tanzania IofC team.



On March 4, 2012 the team travelled in the company of Doscar Dodoma, capital of Tanzania, to meet with the Dodoma youth team. We were received on arrival by Mr. Steve Masangia, Vice Chairman of Tanzania IofC and Remidius Emmanuel, co-ordinator of the youth team.

The following day we visited the Tanzania Cheshire Foundation, member of The Leonard Cheshire Disability Global Alliance, in the company of our host, Mr Steve Masangia who is Chairperson of the Foundation. We visited one of the disabled graduates of the Cheshire Foundation, now a trainer/employer in construction of tricycles for the disabled. The team was also shown around the very impressive Parliament Buildings of Tanzania by Deogratias Egidio (Assistant Director, Information).

Later in the day we met with over 48 young adults. After a welcome address from our hosts, Mediatrix challenged the potpourri of youth from the University, College and Training Institute to be part of the Eastern African Youth Conference (EAYC) and other programmes of IofC....“I see hope here and I have confidence in you,” she said. Nombulelo touched on the essence of IofC, i.e. inspiring people to change starting with themselves and to go deep enough.



An extract from the DVD, *A Man for all People*, based on the life and activities of the late Dr. William Nkomo of South Africa was presented. The film ends with Nkomo speaking at a conference in Switzerland stating, “...*I believe Africa is confused. There is a crisis in character – men who were united when they fought for the freedom of their continent and countries have now allowed self-interest and other things to take precedence in their lives and unless we can get an incorruptible type of leader who will not be bought with money, with position, with success, and the promise of other things that all these things can offer, then Africa will be doomed.*” Nkomo continued in his speech saying that we need a new way of life that starts, “...*when a man begins to listen to God and to live by the absolute moral standards. Then he need no longer needs to have a blueprint because he needs to know nothing more except to be sure that he lives at the Cross and he moves as God guides.*”



Discussion group lead by Mediatrix Masava

The youth were then divided into four discussions groups. On reconvening, a young man from the Commerce school openly expressed his resolve to “be the change I want to see in my school.” Another young man, speaking in Kiswahili, expressed his appreciation for the new awareness that change needs to start with him. We pledged to support these young people through collaboration and programme exchanges with young people from other countries, particularly those from East Africa, i.e. Kenya, Uganda, etc. We returned to Dar es Salaam where we were joined by Dr. Christaine Garin from Switzerland. The following day we were fortunate to spend time with the Hon. Anna Abdallah, Member of Parliament of Tanzania (former Minister of State)

The meeting provided the opportunity to inform Mrs Abdallah of the expansion of the “Creators of Peace” programme across the world which has grown out of the vision Mrs Abdallah had in 1990 on the role of women in peace making. It was a dream come true for Mediatrix and Abiodun to meet Mrs Abdallah. Madam Abdallah said that the secret to meaningful political and social changes is “to believe in and do what is right. It takes courage.”

There is a need to bridge the widening gap between the young and the old in the network of IofC, she said. She felt that, “the young need our hands to hold - they need our help and they must keep in touch.” The Hon. Abdallah expressed the wish of having a Creator of Peace Circles programme for the Tanzanian Women. The spirit of the meeting led her to shelve other appointments for the day and attend the meeting scheduled for the evening with the Dar-es-Salaam IofC team. Mrs Abdallah has agreed to be one of the key-note speakers at the forthcoming All Africa conference in Cameroon in May.



The Hon Anna Abdallah (3rd from left) with the team



Dr Fulgence Swai welcoming the guests.

Dr. Fulgence Swai, Chairman of IofC Tanzania, expressed his appreciation to the visiting team. Juliana Primus, who is working in agricultural programmes with rural women to feed their families and becoming economically independent, took a 4 hour journey from Tanga, north of Dar es Salaam to take part in the meeting. The team was also able to have a brief meeting with three members of the Farmer's Dialogue group.

The Hon Abdallah expressed the wish of having a Creators of Peace Circles programme for the Tanzanian Women Parliamentarians across the spectrum of political parties. Plans were also expressed of initiatives with young people in the country. The high point of the meeting was The Hon. Abdallah’s declaration of personal commitment and support for officers of the local team

On March 8, the team, in the company of Mrs Abdallah, received wonderful Tanzanian hospitality while visiting her country home in the coastal area of Dar-es-Salaam. We departed the following day for Burundi on the second leg of our three-country visit i.e. Tanzania, Burundi and Democratic Republic of Congo.

Compiled by Abiodun Owoseni – Nigeria

on behalf of the ACG