WELCOME MESSAGE

John K. Tsebe

AfLIA President

It is a great honour and special privilege to welcome you all to the First African Library and Information Associations and Institutions (AfLIA) conference at the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) Conference Centre, Accra, Ghana. This First AfLIA conference is also meeting at the occasion of the Third African Library Summit.

The First African Library Summit was held on 11-13 May 2011 at Misty Hills Hotel Conference Centre & Spa, Muldersdrift, South Africa, hosted by the University of South Africa (UNISA) with financial support from several organizations and institutions including UNISA and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

At that summit delegates from African Library and Information Services (LIS) community from several countries in Africa agreed to some recommendations. A motion put forward for the establishment of a continental African Federation for Library and Information Services was carried. Another recommendation was the continuity of the African Library Summit (ALS) which was also agreed upon by all the delegates and this was followed by a statement signed by all the delegates.

Since then there has been a lot of work done by the Exploratory Committee set up by the IFLA Africa Section to set up the association. AfLIA is now established. AfLIA will have a recognisable status at the African Union (AU) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) as well as other regional economic bodies in Africa, which will enable it to promote and advocate for the development of library and information services sector in all Africa countries.

We should all be proud of where we are today and be enthusiastically zealous about the positive future ahead of us. It is an exciting time for the LIS profession in Africa as we continue to adapt, grow, and always remain adaptable, being positively responsive and motivated by accepting the dynamic transformation processes in the continent.

On behalf of the Executive Council, I would like to personally welcome each and every one of you to this historic First AfLIA Conference and to thank our major sponsors the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and INASP of Oxford, United Kingdom, and Publisher sponsors Sabinet, Wiley, Emerald
and Springer. You as leaders in the profession, have the knowledge, skills, experience, expertise and the power to enable the LIS profession to contribute towards Africa’s development and sustainable growth. Throughout the conference, I very humbly ask you to please remain focused, positively engaged, and give us your creative, innovative and proactive ideas for future development of the LIS profession in Africa. You, as organisational leaders and people of influence in your countries, please take the initiative to ensure that both your Associations and Institutions are members of AfLIA. Our personal respect and word of gratitude goes out to all of you!!

Welcome to the historic First AfLIA Conference in Accra, Ghana.