



## The Africa Commission

*Commission on Effective Development Cooperation with Africa*

**Thematic Conference on the Educational Challenge  
Ouagadougou , 16 April 2008**

### *Practical information for Commissioners*

The aim of the conference is to provide input for the Africa Commission on the educational challenges in relation to the creation of job opportunities for Africa's youth. Following the working program adopted at the first meeting of the Africa Commission on 16 April 2008, four additional thematic conferences will follow prior to the Second meeting of the Commission in Addis Abeba on 20 November 2008. Members of the Commission will participate and co-chair each conference.

**Participants:** The participants in the Ouagadougou conference are representatives from civil society, international and regional organizations, academia and government. A preliminary participants list is attached for your information.

**Discussion and background papers:** Two papers have been distributed to the participants prior to the conference. The discussion paper outlines the questions at hand, including sub-themes and guiding questions for the working groups. The background paper provides a broad overview with emphasis on the sub-themes. [Bullit-points with key-messages will be prepared by the Secretariat for the Africa Commission.]

**Role of Commissioners:** Commissioners Dr. Chambas, Ms. Løj and Dr. Holm-Nielsen will host the conference. Dr. Chambas will welcome the participants and introduce the Africa Commission and the theme of the conference. Dr. Chambas will also introduce the key-note speaker Ms. Odile Bonkougou, Ministre de l'Enseignement de Base et de l'Alphabétisation.

Ms. Løj will speak on the educational challenge from a UN perspective and Mr. Holm-Nielsen will speak on education as a key factor in development and introduce the working method of the conference.

During the working sessions, the Commissioners will be mainly responsible for 2 or 3 working groups and are encouraged to provide guidance to the group and participate actively. A special high-level session will be organized for the ECOWAS Ministers of Education. The following division of responsibility is suggested:

Dr. Chambas:

1. A comprehensive approach to the educational sector
7. Policy Level Working Group (High Level Working Group)

Ms. Løj:

5. Equal access to education, including gender equality
6. Education in post conflict countries and countries in fragile situations

Dr. Holm-Nielsen:

2. Primary education
3. Secondary education, including technical and vocational education and training - skills development
4. Higher education and research.

Each Commissioner will have the opportunity to make concluding remarks at the final session.

**Working sessions:** The aim of the working sessions is to arrive at concrete, applicable and operational recommendations, which can feed into the Commission's work. Following the themes identified in the discussion paper, the participants are divided into working groups. The working groups are marked by different colors and lists of participants will be distributed to the participants along with other conference material.

A moderator and a rapporteur will be appointed in each group. These persons are responsible for guiding the discussion, presenting the conclusions of the group in the plenary session and preparing a short report on the main points of the discussion and the recommendations. The moderator and rapporteur will be briefed by the Secretariat prior to the conference.

The attached template will guide the discussion and the report from the working groups. The result should be concrete recommendations directed at specific target groups.

**After the conference:** The interventions from the final session and the recommendations from the working groups will be consolidated into a conference paper. The paper will be widely circulated and fed into the Commission's future work.