



**CONCEPT NOTE OF THE 2019 EDITION OF THE AFRICA WEEK AT UNESCO**  
**20-24 MAY 2019, UNESCO HEADQUARTERS, PARIS, FRANCE**

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**1. THE EVENT**

The **Africa Week at UNESCO** is an annual flagship event organized by the Africa Group at UNESCO, composed of 54 Member States. The Africa Week is organized to mark Africa Day (25<sup>th</sup> May), when the Organization of African Unity (OAU), predecessor of the African Union (AU), was founded in 1963.

A celebration of Africa, the event is unique in bringing together all the 193 Member States of UNESCO, Corporate entities and civil society in celebrating Africa's contribution to UNESCO values and to the world. The 2019 Edition will be held from **Monday 20 to Friday 24 May 2019** at **UNESCO Headquarters** in Paris, France.

**2. OBJECTIVES OF THE AFRICA WEEK AT UNESCO**

1. **Visibility:** To enhance the visibility of Africa's achievements in new and emerging technologies (e.g. Artificial Intelligence, cloud computing, data analytics), as well as the significant role Africa plays in the advancement of the Sustainable Development Goals.
2. **Partnerships:** To strengthen global partnerships and build rapport with the African Union, the United Nations family, Corporations, Research institutions and civil society.
3. **Regional integration:** To advance the integration of Africa through cooperation among African countries for education, culture, natural and social sciences, and communication and information.
4. **Celebrating Africa in UNESCO:** To pay tribute to outstanding African personalities and to the achievements of UNESCO in Africa.

**3. THEME**

The 2019 Africa Week at UNESCO will be held under the theme: ***"Peace, Innovation and Sustainable Development in Africa."***

Different events during the week will seek to highlight Africa's strong contribution to the promotion of peace and sustainable development in Africa and across its borders. Focus will be given to African innovations notably at the verge of the fourth industrial revolution - the advent of Artificial Intelligence and other technologies.

Furthermore, activities held during the Africa Week will contribute to the African Union (AU) 2019 theme of *"Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons in Africa: Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacements"*.

#### **4. KEY ACTIVITIES OF THE 2019 AFRICA WEEK**

The Africa Week Celebrations consist of a constructive array of activities highlighting Africa's contribution to the world:

1. **Exhibition & Handicrafts:** The best of African visual arts is exhibited at the UNESCO Headquarters, a jewel of modern architecture, located near the Eiffel Tower. A number of side segments: *African Language Safari, Live Arts, AfriKids*, will also be held alongside the Exhibition.
2. **Innovation Hub:** A creative, participatory and pedagogical space highlighting select African innovators and their state-of-the-art inventions. The Innovation Hub will give cognizance to the leading role African youth are playing in developing technology for concrete solutions to Africa's challenges and global challenges.
3. **Innovation Evenings:** Networking events celebrating the creative and innovative Africa, the Innovation Evenings will provide a platform for African inventors to interact and exchange with an audience composed of UNESCO, business entities and the public. The events will be followed by a cocktail.
4. **Cinema:** Projection of films from the thriving African film industry.
5. **Conference:** Interactive round tables that contribute to UNESCO's key function as a laboratory of ideas for the United Nations. Participants foster dialogue on critical issues related to Artificial Intelligence and new technologies, Education, Natural Sciences, Social and Human Sciences, Communication, and Culture.
6. **Dinner Reception:** An evening to explore African gastronomy and culinary arts; a networking opportunity to forge partnerships supporting the UNESCO Global Priority Africa Programme.

7. **Gala Night:** Organized in the iconic UNESCO plenary hall (Room I), the Gala is a celebration of performance arts that offers the 1,000 plus audience, the diversity of African cultural expressions.

## 5. VENUE AND DETAILS

The 2019 Africa Week at UNESCO will be held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France.

The historical building, UNESCO House, located at Place de Fontenoy, in Paris, was inaugurated on 3 November 1958. Nicknamed the '*three-pointed star*', the edifice stands on 72 columns of concrete piling. It is world famous, not only as the home of a prominent organization but also for its outstanding architectural qualities.

The building contains many remarkable works of art including masterpieces by Pablo Picasso, Joan Miró, Alexander Calder, Erró, Alberto Giacometti, Eduardo Chillida, Henry Moore, Rufino Tamayo or Isamu Noguchi, among others.

## 6. EXPECTED PARTICIPANTS

- High Profile Chief Guests
- Ministers and representatives of African Governments
- Representative of the African Union
- Director General of UNESCO
- UNESCO Ambassadors and Permanent Delegates
- Bi-Lateral Ambassadors
- Members of UNESCO Permanent Delegations
- UNESCO Secretariat
- Private Sector
- Civil Society
- Educational Institutions
- Diasporas
- General Public

## **7. KEY PARTNERS**

- UNESCO
- The African Union
- Permanent Delegations at UNESCO
- Private Sector
- Civil Society

## **8. CONTACTS**

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