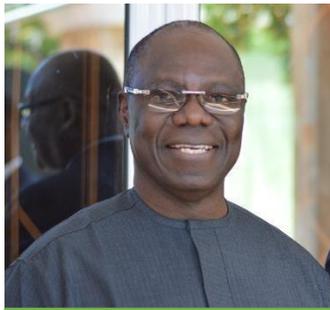


HANDING OVER CEREMONY of the Society for AIDS in Africa (SAA) between the outgoing President, Dr. Ihab Ahmed and the newly elected SAA President, Prof. John Idoko, at the Fiesta Royale Hotel, Accra- Ghana.

**SAA ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL 2018 - 2021**



Prof. John Idoko



Hon. Dr. David Parirenyatwa



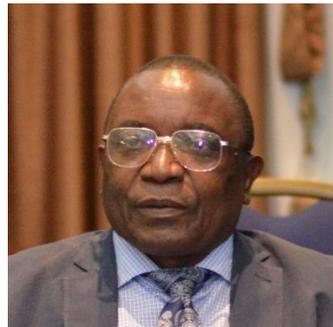
Prof. Tandakha Ndiaye Dieye



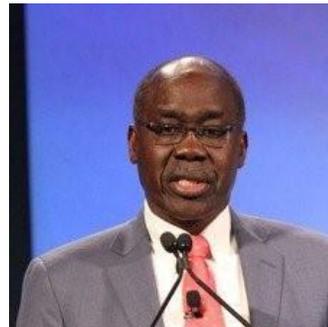
Mrs. Sahra Guleid



Dr. Namwinga Chintu



Prof. Samuel E. Kalluvya



Prof. James Hakim

On 8<sup>th</sup> May 2018, the Fiesta Royale Hotel, Accra-Ghana, witnessed the renewal of governance of the Society for AIDS in Africa in accordance with articles 10.1, 10.2 and 12 of the SAA Constitution. After the regional electronic voting system which facilitated the elections of the new Administrative council members, six of the newly elected council members came to SAA's Headquarters in Ghana to democratically elect their new Executive Council for a tenure of 4 years (2018- 2021). The executive council elections were held at the SAA Permanent Secretariat, located at Adjiringanor, East Legon. The presiding election officer was Prof. Robert Soudre from Burkina Faso, member of SAA board of Trustees, seconded by Dr. Amissa Bongo, immediate past Vice President as electoral commission secretary.

The following Administrative Council Members were elected as Executive office Bearers:

<b>President:</b>	Prof. John Idoko. (Nigeria)
<b>Vice President:</b>	Hon. Dr. Pagwesese David Parirenyatwa (Zimbabwe)
<b>Secretary-General:</b>	Prof. Tandakha Ndiaye Dieye (Senegal)
<b>Deputy Secretary-General:</b>	Mrs. Sahra Guleid (Somaliland)
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Dr. Namwinga Chintu. (Zambia)
<b>Deputy Treasurer:</b>	Prof. Samuel Elias Kalluvya (Tanzania)

The SAA Permanent Secretariat coordinator, Mr. Luc Armand Bodea in his welcoming speech at Fiesta Royale Hotel stated that it is the 6<sup>th</sup> handing over ceremony of the Society. The First President was, Prof. Bensilman from Morocco, followed by Dr. Pierre Kelibou Mpele (Democratic Republic of Congo), and the third President, Prof. Femi Soyinka (Nigeria) who established the SAA Permanent secretariat in Accra in 2009, then the 4<sup>th</sup> President, Prof. Robert Soudre (Burkina Faso) followed by Dr. Ihab Ahmed A. (Egypt) the current out-going President. He further said the strength of the organization resided in the constitutional respect of the governing board and also the establishment of the SAA Permanent Secretariat. Civil society organizations such as NAP+ Ghana with members of the international Community, were in attendance with Mrs. Angela Trenton – Mbonde country Representative of UNAIDS, Amb. Dr. Mokowa Blay Adu Gyamfi, Director General of Ghana AIDS Commission and Mr. Hamidu Adakurugu, representative of the Minister of Health, Ghana.

The immediate past President of the 5<sup>th</sup> SAA governing Board officially handed over the leadership of the organization to the new SAA President Prof. John Idoko. In his speech, Dr. Ihab commended the outgoing fellow board members for their dedication and selflessness that permitted him to steer the affairs of SAA for the term of four years with good governance, integrity, and excellence. Dr. Ihab said and I quote: “Over the past years in office, we have demonstrated the need for a more innovative approach to prevent, control and mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS in Africa, this has been achieved through various initiatives mainly ICASA conferences. We tried as much as possible to give more visibility and transparency to SAA as an institution. This humble achievement could not have been possible without the support and commitment of our various stakeholders, civil society organizations, UNAIDS, WHO, Ghana AIDS Commission, Donors and others,”

In this direction, he expressed utmost gratitude particularly to Ghana AIDS Commission for its support to SAA Headquarters since the establishment of the Permanent Secretariat in Ghana. “I also thank WHO, UNAIDS, USAID, AU and all other UN agencies as well as all Donors working for the noble cause of preventing HIV/AIDS, TB, and Malaria in Africa. He, therefore, urged the incoming SAA President, Prof. John Idoko and his team to build on the past achievements that he believes now more than ever needs the absolute attention of this young generation of leaders to achieve the SDG’s and beyond while targeting the three 90.

The newly-elected SAA President, Prof. John Idoko, in delivering his official address commended Dr. Ihab and the past board members for their commitment and for organizing a transparent and democratic election which brought him into office. He emphasized the need to train younger research scientists to improve research towards achieving 90, 90, 90 and end AIDS. He further stressed that HIV/AIDS pandemic for past four decades taught us a lot and we need those experiences to efficiently tackle other emerging diseases like Ebola, Zika, Hepatitis, Cancer, Tuberculosis among others set in to destabilize our efforts, adding that there were areas that the organization would have to expand its scope to have better health for all.

The representative of the Minister of Health, the Director General of Ghana AIDS Commission and the Country representative of UNAIDS Ghana all acknowledged that since the inception of SAA with its ICASA platform the burden of HIV and related diseases in Africa has stabilized in the face of considerable progress in access to prevention, treatment, care, and support. They emphasized the relevance of the ICASA platform in helping to increase knowledge, experience sharing and development of strong networks and significant reduction of stigma in our society. They, therefore, commended the out-going President and newly elected President for their achievements and commitment in Africa’s effort to respond to HIV and AIDS, which has enhanced tremendously the image of SAA. Mr. Hamidu Adakurugu representing the Minister of Health concluded that, as Ghana is the host country of SAA Headquarters, Ghana has failed to secure several ICASA bids and it is the Governments’ wish for Ghana to Host ICASA.

The first board of the Society for AIDS in Africa (SAA) was established in Kinshasa in October 1990 during the 5th International Conference on AIDS and Associated Cancers in Africa, a precursor to the International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa (ICASA). ICASA is a biennial and bilingual (English & French) conference that convenes 7,000 to 10,000 plus delegates.

The formation of SAA with the support of the World Health Organization (WHO) brought to an end, the practice of organizing the International Conference on AIDS in Africa, outside the African continent. At the same time, it empowered Africans to address and respond to the challenges posed by HIV/AIDS on the continent.

#### **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

##### **About The Society for AIDS in Africa (SAA)**

The Society for AIDS in Africa (SAA), the custodian of ICASA was founded in 1989 at the fourth International Symposium on AIDS and Associated Cancers in Africa (now ICASA) held in Marseille, France by a group of African scientists, activists and advocates in response to this epidemic. SAA envisions an African continent free of HIV, TB and malaria and their debilitating effects on communal and societal structures, where people are socially and economically empowered to live productive lives in dignity. For more information on SAA please visit [www.saafrica.org](http://www.saafrica.org).

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