



Conference Announcement and Call for Abstracts

SCIENTIFIC REVIVAL DAY OF AFRICA (SRDA) CELEBRATIONS 2023

CONFERENCE THEME: LANGUAGES AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN KENYA

Introduction:

In support of enhancing ‘Science, Technology and Innovation’ the African Union (AU), formerly the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on 30th June 1987 during the 46th Ministerial Conference in Addis Ababa declared 30th June as a special day to commemorate science and technology in the continent. This day should be dedicated to issues of science, technology and innovation (STI) for African countries to think about the role of this important subject in the development of Africa and re-examine the role that science and technology plays in African lives.

The Kenya National Academy of Sciences (KNAS) decided to link some of its activities with this effort and consequently started celebrating the ‘Scientific Revival Day of Africa (SRDA) annually since 2004. The Academy has in the previous celebrations addressed nine (9) themes focusing on science and technology with the last one in 2019 focusing on food security and universal health care in Kenya. Due to corona virus (COVID 19) outbreak and restrictions, there were no celebrations held in the subsequent years. This year’s celebration will focus on languages and national development in Kenya.

The Scientific Revival Day of Africa (SRDA) celebrations in 2023 will be hosted by the Kenya National Academy of Sciences (KNAS) and Ministry of Education in Nairobi on **October 17th 2023**. The celebrations will bring together the representatives drawn from the universities, government departments, non-governmental organizations, etc., to discuss the role played by languages in the national development. The outcome of the SRDA 2023 deliberations will boost Kenya’s capacity to meet challenges in national development enabling the policy makers communicate the development agenda in different languages to various sections of the country. The celebrations will provide the opportunity for the participants to discuss challenges facing the country on the use of different local languages. The conference hopes to return the development conversation to people’s consciousness by providing scholars with the opportunity to use language as a resource for the national development conversation.

Background:

The African continent finds itself in a quandary as the current period is marked by rapid technological, political, social and financial changes. The continent needs to better harness its

other resources to create opportunities for its increasing population and economy in line with the AU Agenda 2063 whose goal among others is a high standard of living, quality of life, and well-being of all citizens. Human beings are spiritual, economic, technological, emotional and cultural. Hence it has not taken scholars much time to come knocking at the linguists' door when they began looking at the cultural and social aspects of development because language is the embodiment of culture and social expression. Language is central to meaning making even in development. In addition, language is used to dominate and control environments and is a central vehicle for both concept formation and growth of new concepts. Also language is viewed as a tool for communicating and documenting national development.

Whatever the interpretations might be the digitalization of society and its technological transformation attempts to look at the past to design a better future are the issues that are at the art of the 2023 'Scientific Revival Day of Africa' celebrations which seek to provide a forum where scholars and researchers in social sciences can reflect on the challenges related to language.

Languages and the Kenyan Society:

The Kenyan Constitution, 2010 recognizes culture as the foundation and civilization of the nation and people. It also emphasizes the role of science and indigenous technologies in the development of the nation and guides that the state shall develop, promote, and protect the diversity of languages of the people of Kenya. Protecting indigenous languages and cultures will herald the beginning of national self-determination and separation from imperialism and decolonization. This is factored in the power of language as an expression of a people's thoughts, ideas, soul and culture.

Science Academies and National Development:

Globally science academies play a major role to aid in the achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs) and in Kenya the Academy has to be inclusive and should tap knowledge from social sciences. Generally the social sciences are often overlooked in national development conversations. Hence, there must be deliberate inclusion, celebration and elevation of social sciences in driving the national development conversation.

Whatever the interpretation might be, the digitalization of the society and technological transformation attempts to look at the past to design a better future are the issues that stand at the heart of the SRDA celebrations which seeks to provide a forum for scholars and researchers in social sciences to reflect on and debate the challenges to the three (3) interconnected sub-themes for the conference.

Conference Sub-themes:

The specific sub-themes of the Scientific Revival Day of Africa Celebrations 2023 include:

1. Language, quality of life and sustainable development.
2. The role of social media in linguistic evolution and transition.
3. Language, culture, and decolonization of education in Africa.

Instructions for Presenters:

Interested persons should forward their presentation abstracts in electronic form to the Editor-in-Chief, Kenya National Academy of Sciences (KNAS) to the following contacts:

vaseym@knasciences.or.ke or ysmwaja5@gmail.com and

info@knasciences.or.ke

Important Dates:

1. Submission of the abstracts: **15th September 2023**
2. Acceptance of the abstracts: **22nd September 2023**