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**THE 6TH ANNUAL EAST AFRICAN COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION (EACA) CONFERENCE 2016**

**CONFERENCE THEME: MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION: THE AGE OF REGIONALISM**

**HOSTED BY MAKERERE UNIVERSITY, KAMPALA, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY, MUKONO.**

**Introduction**

The Department of Journalism and Communication, Makerere University (Mak) in conjunction with the Department of Mass Communication, Uganda Christian University (UCU) will co-host the 6th Annual East African Communication Association (EACA) conference on 26th - 27th August, 2016. The conference is typically hosted by a journalism and communication training institution, and in 2016, it will be will be hosted at Makerere University. The conference intends to provide a forum for free exchange of ideas on the key issues and directions affecting the media and communication industry in the region and beyond. This conference will be held in the midst of the East African Community (EAC) regional integration project which has been galvanising efforts towards the formation of a renewed and solid regional bloc in East Africa. The conference will bring together trainers, scholars, researchers and practitioners from around the East African region and beyond.

The papers presented at the conference will provide a strong basis for understanding the role and place of the media and communication in these efforts and will further provide a critical cornerstone in the thinking about how integration projects of this kind affect and impact on media and communication as an industry, and as instruments of social change.

**Background and context**

Regional integration has undoubtedly become a core issue to sub-regional and continental development in Africa. Now, more than ever, African leaders recognise the need for integration on the continent. At the same time, theory and experience have proved the underlying importance of media and communication in social processes—such as peace building, regional integration and economic growth—that underpin sustainable development. A free and independent media and communication sector allows dissemination of information, as well as open discussion and debate. One example of this is how functional research and debate on media and society have brought to light the crucial role that the media have to play in intra-regional trade, strengthening regional arrangements, visibility as well as linkage between regional member states through creating an information community. A vibrant and strong media and communication sector, for example, could potentially draw the attention of the public and policymakers attention to policies that address regional issues and thwart regional challenges to growth and development, just as a weak one could do the opposite. As East African countries advance on the road to regional integration, the role of the media and communication sector will be vital. Thus, considering media and communication in this context raises the important question: ***(How) Is the media playing its role in regional integration***?

Scholars have also proposed and investigated a view of integration and regionalisation as having strong direct and indirect opportunities and risks for the development and operation of the media and communication sector. There are many questions pertaining to such opportunities and risks, but the most common ones address issues of content, media convergence, ownership and the regulatory environment. The conference will discuss these and related issues with regard to media operations in the East African regional context.

Overall, the aim of the conference is to examine media and communication developments from the perspective of the East African integration project. Thus, the focus on ***media and communication: the age of regionalism*** is not only linked to the media and communication's potential to contribute to, but also benefit from regional integration in East Africa.

**Output**

It is expected that the conference will generate a variety of analytical papers and presentations**.** The presentations made during the conference will be summarised in a conference report. In addition, it is expected that several of the presentations will be published in peer reviewed regional and international journals. In addition, the conference is expected to stimulate public debate and discussion on the role of the media and communication in the regional integration project and the importance/influence of the EAC on the growth and survival of the media and communication industry. A dedicated link will be incorporated onto the Makerere Department of Journalism and Communication website and UCU’s Mass Communication site to host the proceedings and outputs of this conference so that the conversation can continue after the conference.

**Expected Impact**

The conference's is expected to give greater publicity to issues of the EAC, especially policies and initiatives in the area of media and communication, and to raise the profile of the same across the region. This is expected to mobilise efforts that will support and sustain reforms in the region for the integration project in general and the media and communication industry in particular.

**Call for Abstracts**

Abstracts are invited in any of the following (or related) thematic areas. It is preferred that the scope of the papers be related to Africa, but not necessarily limited to Africa.

1. Media and Communication Development in the East African Community and beyond.

2.Media, communication and regional integration in East Africa and Africa.

3.Media legislation and regulation in the context of regional Integration.

4.Media and communication as business in a regional integration context.

5. Media and digital migration in East Africa and beyond.

6. Media and freedom of expression in a changing regional environment

7.Opportunities and innovations in building capacity for changing media and communication environment in a regional context.

8. Social change communication in the context of regional integration.

9. Development and role of indigenous language media in Africa.

10. Strengthening Public Relations in the East African Community

**Guidelines for Submission**

Prospective delegates and authors should submit abstracts of between 250 and 300 words to eaca2016@chuss.mak.ac.ug. The submission to be sent as an attachment (word format) should clearly indicate the title of the paper, author name(s) and contact details, including phone, institutional affiliation and email address; as well as a short biography/biographies of the authors.

**Panel Discussions**

Prospective delegates are invited to propose topics for panel discussion within the overall theme of the conference. Abstracts for these should include: (i) a title; (ii) motivation of not more than 300 words; (iii) a brief description of each panel paper, and (iv) a full list of participants with their telephone, email contacts and biographies. All other abstract formatting guidelines apply.

Policy-makers and industry participants are especially encouraged to submit panel proposals.

**Guidelines for submission of full papers**

Full papers may be submitted in soft copy following the same format as the abstract. Papers should be between 6000 and 8000 words. Submit to eaca2016@chuss.mak.ac.ug Please note that while submission of a full paper before the conference is highly recommended, it is NOT a pre-requisite for participation in the conference.

**Key Dates:**

* Abstract submission: 15th April, 2016
* Notification of abstract acceptance: 5th May, 2016
* Delegate registration deadline: 1st August, 2016
* Conference dates: 26th -27th August, 2016

**EACA: MEMBERSHIP AND BENEFITS**

Delegates may enroll immediately to become members of EACA at an annual fee of $35 for students and $30 for others.

Membership benefits include connection to a wide and diverse network of scholars, mentoring and peer review opportunities on EACA journals.

**CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FEES**

• Registered EACA members- $25

• Non-EACA members-$35

• Corporate (10 members at the minimum)-$20 for each member

• Students-$20

**Important Note**: The conference will be held at Makerere University main campus. All registered delegates will be given further logistical information concerning recommendations for accommodation, transport and meals.