



Africa Center for Strategic Studies
Centre d'études stratégiques de l'Afrique
Centro de Estudos Estratégicos de África

Background/Concept Paper
Africa Center for Strategic Studies

- i. Community Leadership Conference Program**
- ii. Background**

The Africa Center Community Leadership Conference Program is an annual conference for ACSS Community leaders throughout Africa. The program has two components:

1. *Continent-wide conferences* that bring key community members together in a forum to exchange ideas and best practices for their Community Chapter Programs, and to receive valuable training to improve their capacity to promote stability and security in their countries. Continent-wide conferences enable participants to share insights on important security issues, discuss strategies to enhance security cooperation around the region, and help the Africa Center remain relevant to the wider security community in Africa. The intent is to conduct this type of conference every few years, as needed or upon completion of the annual cycle of regional conferences, as described below.
2. *Regional Community Leadership Conferences* designed to help ACSS community chapter leaders accomplish the same goals as above on a regional level; and to help them develop the capacity to work together to address security sector reform issues within their regions.

- iii. Objective**

The ACSS Community Chapter program is designed to encourage and support African leaders who complete ACSS programs and events to establish and sustain formal communities of interest in their respective countries that will enable them to build on the lessons and experiences they have gained from ACSS. The Chapters have been an invaluable source for senior U.S. government leaders and non-government opinion leaders to gain access to senior African leaders during official visits to Africa. Through chapter projects, such as research papers, conferences and other professional events, the Chapters have become a valuable source to the U.S. for information related to African perspectives on national security issues. Supporting the professional development of community members and the expanding network is critical to the Africa Center mission.

iv. Expected Accomplishments

This event:

- Enhances dialogue and understanding of issues of importance to African and U.S. leaders;
- Provides valuable training to improve Chapters' capacity to promote stability and security in their countries;
- Promotes stronger communication and increased collaboration among Africa Center Community Chapters, and between Chapters and ACSS.

v. Indicators of Achievement

- Support of the event demonstrated by attending and participating in the program and related activities;
- Increased long-term communications and interactions with target audience.

vi. Main activities

This program is open to eligible ACSS participants who have actively worked in their countries to establish and maintain relationships with other ACSS community members; and who have sought to maintain a dialogue among and between U.S. and African policymakers and opinion leaders. In FY10, we anticipate that 2-3 representatives from 30 countries with community chapters will be invited to the Washington, DC event.

Guest Speakers and Facilitators will be drawn from the United States, Africa and the international community, and may include ACSS faculty, security sector professionals and alumni affairs experts.

The primary format will be informational briefings followed by questions and answers and dialogue among the participants. Breakout sessions will allow participants to delve more deeply into their specified areas of interest.

The Continent-wide programs are anticipated to rotate between African and U.S. locations depending on the specific intent and content of each program. The regional conferences will take place in Africa in countries that have developed strong ACSS community programs.

Program Overview:

The 2010 continent-wide program will provide briefings, present information and discussions on capacity-building, cooperation, and collaboration among the ACSS communities of interest. A proposed program schedule will be attached when completed. The following areas of interest may be addressed:

1) Community Chapter leadership programs:

- Developing media strategies to expand Chapter influence and reach
- Partnership and fundraising strategies
- Building partnerships with local NGOs and other civil society groups
- Best Practices, presentations by individual Chapters
- Feedback: what do Chapters need from ACSS? From the U.S. Embassy?
- Case Study: Eastern African Sub-Regional Conference (FY09) as an example of successful regional cooperation

2) Academic training and continuing education

- Emerging Threats in Africa
- Civil military relations
- U.S. interests, policies and programs in Africa
- Using MERLN and ACSScommunity.org resources to support regional operability for Chapters

3) Networking Events

- Organized Dinner/Reception event
- Diplomatic Corps Networking event

vii. Relationship to Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Goals

This event supports the Secretary of Defense for Policy Goals of focusing “on building and sustaining a networked and empowered community of current and future security leaders who share common values and perspectives...” and promoting “greater cooperation in the international arena.” The event is a networking tool that facilitates communication and collaboration, and provides a vehicle for strategic communications.

viii Budget

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