



ASSITEJ in Africa International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People

ACYTA MEETING JOHANNESBURG 2009

It was my pleasure to meet all of you, who managed to come for the 2009 meeting of the African Children and Youth Theatre Arena, especially after an attempt to meet in Cameroon failed. I hope and trust that you had a wonderful time and great opportunities for networking, especially those who managed to attend all the three meetings (ACYTA, Arterial Network Conference and the World Summit on Arts and Culture), and that you are now safely back home.

Many thanks to the South African centre for hosting us once again. Special mention must be given to Yvette and Janet. During the ACYTA meeting, a lot of things were discussed. Among those issues was how to strengthen our network, and build capacity in terms of training and financial resources. Three more portfolios were created to boost the capacity of the Coordinating Committee. The portfolios are: Fundraising to be co-ordinated by Mohamed Kareem (Egypt), Capacity Building, co-ordinated by Janet (South Africa) and Artistic Exchanges, co-ordinated by Etoundi Zeyang (Cameroon). It was also agreed that the two representatives in the Assitej International board should be the Chair and the Deputy respectively and Hope Azeda was retained as the Deputy Chairperson with Yvette Hardie taking over from Cheela Chilala who was not present at the meeting, due to other commitments (His reports will be posted on our website for your attention). Robert Chirima (Zimbabwe) also took over the Communications portfolio from Yvette, and Samuel Kyagambidwa (Rwanda) was seconded to take charge as Secretary. Sandile Ndzimande (Swaziland) retained his former portfolio as Treasurer of the organisation.

We also spoke about new centres, and a delegate from Mali was able to report on what was happening with theatre for children and young people in that country. We are hoping that by the next Executive Committee meeting in February 2010, we will have several more African chapters joining us as members of ACYTA. We encourage you to tell us about activities in the field in countries where there may not be an Assitej chapter, in order to identify the most appropriate individuals to lead the establishment of these new chapters.

We had an opportunity to discuss with donor bodies and partners, such as AMA, the French Institute, and the Goethe Institut, among others. We also had the privilege to have the champion of Africa when it comes to Theatre for Children and Young People, Niclas Malmcrona from Sweden, the former Assitej International secretary general, now the Assitej World congress secretary general. He was given an opportunity not only to invite, but also to encourage Africa to participate in the upcoming World Congress in 2011.

Lots of festivals are on cards in the next 12-18 months, including: Egypt, Cameroon, Rwanda and Zimbabwe. Rwanda is hosting the EC Executive in August 2010. Our next ACYTA meeting could be in Egypt as they pledged to find support for it.

Whilst I have a lot to learn from Yvette, I also would like to encourage you to supply me

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with information and news from your centres. This is my first communication to you; let's keep communicating. Please note that for the moment until we have additional systems in place, we are still using Yvette's email system for bulk email communications; however, please address your responses to info@acyta.co.za, which is an address that I am now accessing and using as Communications Officer of ACYTA. You will be receiving more information about the meeting, including the minutes and other important documents (the finalised ACYTA policy document) in due course. We look forward to hearing from you in response.



Some of the delegates at the 2009 ACYTA Meeting.

Again I say many thank yous to the South African team for hosting us. The South African team worked very hard. On behalf of all the committees, I would like to thank you all for your engagement in this meeting and I applaud you for your commitment to the future of theatre for children and young people.

Yours Sincerely

Robert Chirima

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