



# TALKING DRUM

## AFRICAN SCHOLARS FORUM NEWSLETTER

### Spring 2020 EVENTS



February, 2020

**MARCH 6 (AFRICA DAY 2020 CELEBRATION)**

*Theme: "Challenges to Pan-Africanism: Afro-phobia and migration across African Borders".*

**Venue:** Campus Center Ballroom, 3rd Floor, Umass Boston.

**Time:** 12pm-8pm.

Opening Luncheon Keynote Address by Ambassador Fatima Kyari Mohammed, Ambassador to the African Union (AU)



Gala Reception keynote by Rahman Oladigbolu, a Boston based, Nollywood Filmmaker, Producer and Director.



*The talking drum is one of the oldest musical instruments from West Africa and it is prominent among the Yorubas and Hausas. It can be regulated to mimic the tone of human speech. It is used as a form of communication to send messages to people both home and faraway.*

**Keynote Plenary Panel titled:**

*Between Afrophobia and Afrophillia: Pan Africanism is a Middle Ground*

**Panashe Chigumadzi**



**Munya Bryn**



**Olaocha Nwadiuto  
Nwabara**



**Chipo Dendere**



**Daniel Agbiboa**



## UMASS BOSTON AFRICA DAY 2020 CELEBRATION

**Africa Day** (formerly African Freedom Day and African Liberation Day) is the annual commemoration of the foundation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) (now known as the African Union) on 25 May 1963. It is celebrated in various countries on the African continent, as well as around the world. Africa Day continues to be celebrated both in Africa and around the world, mostly on 25 May (although in some cases these periods of celebrations can be stretched out over a period of days or weeks). For a number of Africans on the continent and part of the diaspora, Africa Day is a day when many different cultures of people from all African backgrounds come together to celebrate the diversity and transformation of Africa. Furthermore, it has also helped the continent to raise political awareness in African communities across the world about the struggles for liberation and development.

Although it looks to celebrate how far Africa has come, it is also a day to reflect on how far Africa still has to go in building a unified and decolonized continent. For example, in recent times, literature highlights that the continent's attempt to achieve integration and unity across its deeply pluralistic and diverse borders are fraught with challenges such as Afrophobia- a form of Xenophobia directed by Africans towards other Africans. Evidenced by the surge of violent xenophobic attacks against African migrants to South Africa in 2019, Afrophobia has led to severe discrimination among fellow African migrants and it challenges Pan Africanism.

In deliberation of this phenomenon, the University of Massachusetts Boston is hosting her Africa Day 2020 celebration with the theme "**Challenges to Pan Africanism: Afrophobia and Migration across Borders**". This celebration pulls together Africanist scholars and policy makers, including the African Union (AU) permanent observer of the AU to the United Nations (UN), Ambassador **Fatima Kyari Mohammed**, Boston-based filmmaker, **Rahman Oladigbolu** and Greater Boston area scholars **Panashe Chigumadzi**, **Chipo Dendere**, **Munya Munochiveyi**, **Daniel Agbibo** and **Olaocha Nwadiuto Nwabara**. This is an opportunity to celebrate African diversity and success, and to highlight the cultural and economic potential that exists on the African continent, as well as the progress that Africa has made, while reflecting upon the common challenges that the continent face in a global environment.

# As we prepare for the Africa Day 2020 celebrations, here are few things about

## Black History Month

### Black History Month, with love from Africa

Although this Africa Day's theme touches on aspects of Afrophobia and the challenges to Pan-Africanism, we also discuss migration within and across Africa's borders. With many people of African descent visiting their homeland for the very first time whether through Ghana's Year of Return or by other means, it calls attention to that connection formed through the oppression of our people around the world. From the documented migration from Africa's borders to the colonies in the Americas 401 years ago to earlier documentation of our ancestors crossing the once Green Sahara to explore the continent as a whole before settling and creating the cultures we honor and know today.

Yes, some of those connections were formed by horrific means; it has never stopped the descendants from returning home. With this month being Black History Month, we honor the month that celebrates blackness and reminds of us the new relationships formed through the concept of Pan-Africanism. With the great civil rights movement activists visiting varying African states at the time of their independence, to the "return home" initiatives that call upon members of the African diaspora and descendants of those we lost to the "Door of No Return", the connection is stronger than ever. February is Black History month but that history is also African.

Despite our event (Africa Day 2020) not being held in February this year, we want to make sure to celebrate with our brothers and sisters as we celebrate our shared history and our shared future. Let us continue the momentum this month brings at UMASS Boston Africa Day celebration on March 6th.



*Written by Yaa Opoku-Agyeman*

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