



**COMMUNIQUE´ ON THE 5<sup>TH</sup> AFRICAN SCIENTIFIC,  
RESEARCH AND INNOVATION COUNCIL (ASRIC)  
CONGRESS**

**MOMBASA, KENYA**

**8 – 9 MARCH 2023**

## Communiqué

### African Research and Innovation Council (ASRIC) 5<sup>th</sup> Congress

The 5<sup>th</sup> African Research, Scientific and Innovation Council (ASRIC) Congress was held on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2023 in Mombasa, Kenya at EnglishPoint Marina Hotel. The Congress was held in a hybrid mode as some participants attended online while others participated physically. The Congress was to be held last year in November 2022 in Abuja Nigeria, but due to challenges beyond the control of ASRIC, the Congress was rescheduled to the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of this year. However, the Scientific Session of the Congress took place in November 2022 virtually where the meeting was attended by 100 scientists from all over the continent. The scientific papers focused on the theme of the Congress “**STI to Strengthen Food Nutrition, Health and Social Protection Systems to Accelerate Africa’s Socio-Economic Development “Human, Social and Economic Capital Development”**”.

The theme of the 5<sup>th</sup> ASRIC Congress was addressed and discussed during the Keynote addresses that focused on **STI for Eco-Agriculture and STI for Agrobusiness and Agripreneurship**. The **ASRIC Strategic Plan 2022 -2028** and the **ASRIC Resource Mobilization Strategy** were presented to the Congress during the Management and Governance session while Diaspora Chapters’ reports were presented during the same session.

The Flagship Projects constitutes one of the pillars of ASRIC in regard to both implementing its mandate and achieving its overall objectives. Three consecutive sessions were allocated to the lead scientists to present status reports on their respective projects. Their presentations attracted intensive discussions aiming at improving the conduct of the projects.

The Congress concluded with a session on ASRIC programmes and flagship projects challenges, and the way forward for improvement as well as the roadmap to overcome budgetary and programmatic challenges.

#### **The Congress made the following Decisions:**

##### **1. Keynote Address on the 5<sup>th</sup> Congress theme**

- a. The Congress **Encourages** the adoption of sustainable land and water use practices to ensure that the demands of Water, Energy, and Food production are met in a sustainable manner, and also **Recognizes** the need to adopt innovative technologies to that effect.

- b. The Congress **Emphasizes** the need to build capacity and promote knowledge sharing among scientists and stakeholders to ensure the effective implementation of the Water-Energy-Food nexus approach.
- c. **Realizing** the integrated Agribusiness development models for STI, the Congress **Calls upon** its Members to support existing Agroparks and Agribusiness Incubation Centres in order to boost agricultural transformation in the continent.

## 2. ASRIC Strategic Plan 2022-2028 and its Resource Mobilization Strategy

- a. The Congress **Appreciates** and **Commends** the efforts of the ASRIC Secretariat and the Bureau in the development of the documents and **Calls upon** its Members and their Institutions to integrate the Strategic Plan and its Resource Mobilization Strategy to their existing strategies.
- b. **Acknowledging** that the ASRIC Flagship projects cut across all the development priority areas under the AU Agenda 2063 and its aspirations, the Congress **Reiterates** its request to the African Union Commission to avail 1% of its Member States' assessed contribution to the AUC in a given budgetary year to ASRIC to facilitate the implementation of ASRIC Flagship projects that address Africa's development challenges.

## 3. ASRIC Australia Diaspora Chapters

### a. ASRIC Australia Diaspora Chapter:

- a.1. The Congress **Acknowledges**, with appreciation, the report made by the ASRIC Australia Chapter Chair and **Recognizes** the need to develop Student Exchange and Collaborative research programmes between Africa and Australasia. Furthermore, the Congress **Acknowledges** the need for developing a database on African Diaspora in Australasia and the need to establish African Studies Institutes to facilitate and boost the Australasia-Africa relationship.
- a.2. The Congress **Urges** the Secretariat to work with the Australia Chapter Chair to organize an African Diaspora forum on STI in Australia.

### b. ASRIC UK Diaspora Chapter:

- b.1. The Congress **Acknowledges** and **Appreciates** the report presented by the Chair of the Diaspora Chapter in UK. Furthermore, the Congress **Noted** with **Appreciation** the plan to conduct the Forum of African Researchers in the Diaspora (FARID) "AU-ASRIC/Lancaster University Science and Innovation Research Symposium" and the support received from the Lancaster Environment Centre of Lancaster University.

b.2. The Congress **Welcomes** the proposal on developing the capacity of African scientists on resource mobilization and **Recommends** that the Secretariat to work closely with the Chapter Chair to ensure its launching.

#### 4. On the ASRIC Flagship Projects

a. **The ASRIC Flagship project “Hepatitis-free village”:**

a.1. The Congress **Recognizes** the ASRIC Flagship project “Hepatitis-free village” as a model that can eradicate the virus from Africa and **Congratulates** the research team and **Calls upon** AU-STRC to finalize the STI Framework on Africa free of Hepatitis.

a.2. The Congress **Calls upon** its Members to present this project to the relevant authorities in their respective countries to ensure the benefits of African populace from this project.

b. **ASRIC Flagship Project Corona Viruses’ Diagnostic and Treatment for all:**

The Congress **Recognizes** the importance and potential of this project and **Calls upon** its Members to disseminate the project information to their respective Research Centres and Universities with the aim to encourage them to participate actively in conducting the research and for ASRIC cluster on Corona Viruses’ Diagnostic and Treatment for all.

c. **ASRIC Flagship Project on Stunting:**

The Congress **Acknowledges** the progress report on the ASRIC Flagship project on Fighting Stunting in Africa and **Recommends** that the scope be narrowed and an STI Framework be developed for the project.

d. **ASRIC Flagship Project on AI in Agriculture:**

The Congress **Notes** with **Appreciation** the achievement and the progress on the Flagship project AI on Agriculture and **Calls upon** its stakeholders and partners to continue supporting the project.

e. **ASRIC Flagship Project on Disaster Management Research:**

e.1. The Congress **Recognizes** the African Disaster Mitigation Reference Centre (ADMIR) as an ASRIC Centre of Excellence aimed at facilitating collaboration among scientists from diverse fields across Africa, including Natural, Biological, and Technological Hazards, as well as Economics, Social Science, and Diplomacy.

e.2. In addition, the Congress **Appreciates** and **Applauds** the gesture and generosity of the National Research Institute of Astronomy and Geophysics (NRIAG) of Egypt for availing the needed resources and Head Quarters for this Centre and **Calls upon** the secretariat to work with NRIAG to identify the ways and modalities that to maximize the benefits of its Members from ADMIR.

f. **ASRIC Flagship Project on IPAM:**

The Congress **Applauds** the progress made in the work of International Platform for Adaptation Metrics (IPAM) and **Urges** ASRIC Members and Institutions to join IPAM on the thematic of their competences and expertise and further **Requests** IPAM to envisage the possibility of accessing funding opportunities from the Green Climate Fund and other funding Institutions.

g. **ASRIC Flagship Project on Technology Hunters:**

The Congress **Appreciates** the presentation on Technology Hunter and **Requests** the working group to develop a Technology Hunter framework that to guide its Members.

h. **Flagship Project on ASRIC Scholarship Scheme:**

h.1. The Congress **Applauds** the progress made in the ASRIC scholarship schemes and **Appreciates** the generous contribution and the marvelous support by the President and the management of Euromed University of Fes (UEMF) for the Scholarship grants for the African students.

h.2. The Congress **Requests** the ASRIC Secretariat and the Bureau to seek more scholarship opportunities for African researchers and Scientists within the continent and beyond.

i. **ASRIC flagship project on Water for All:**

i.1. The Congress **Notes** with great concern the Copyright Registration of the Phyto-activated Moringa Sand Filter Hybrid Technology at the Nigeria Copyright Commission by the Principal investigator and **Acknowledges** with regret such action will hinder the dissemination of such technology for the benefit of African populace.

i.2. The Congress **Urges** and **Instructs** the Secretariat with the support of the Bureau to develop a draft Research Agreement that will henceforth guide the legal relationship between members of any research cluster that to be formulated in the future to protect the rights of ASRIC and the Cluster's members on the research outputs and findings.

i.3. The Congress **Requests** the ASRIC Secretariat and the Bureau to form an Adhoc Committee constituted of the Egyptian Patent Office, the Nigerian Copyright Commission (NCC), National Office for Technology Acquisition and Promotion (NOTAP) and other IP experts of ASRIC to discuss the issue of this Copyright registration and to advise the ASRIC Secretariat and Bureau on the actions to be taken in this regard.

## 5. Progress report on ASRIC Scientific Journals

- a. The Congress **Notes** the progress made in the management of the Journals and **Recommends** that advocacy be upscaled and more reviewers engaged in order to have the required frequency of publications.
- b. The Congress **Recognizes** and **Appreciates** the financial and technical support availed by Euromed University of Fes (UEMF) to develop the Journals' Website and Database.
- c. The Congress **Calls upon** the Pan African University (PAU) and Association of African Universities (AAU) to publicize the Journals among their Staff and Students; and to encourage them to use ASRIC Journals as a medium for their Scientific publications.

## 6. Appreciation

- a. The Congress **Appreciates** the host country, Kenya, and the Kenyan Academy of Sciences for the smooth and successful hosting of the 5<sup>th</sup> ASRIC Congress in Mombasa, Kenya.
- b. The Congress **Appreciates** the efforts of the ASRIC Bureau and the Secretariat in organizing and coordinating the Congresses and the Bureau meetings as well as the working groups despite their minimal number of staff the Secretariat has.
- c. Further, the **Appreciation** goes to the Members of the Congress and to the African Scientists who attended the 5<sup>th</sup> ASRIC Congress despite their tight schedules.

## 7. Endorsement

The Congress **Decisions** were **unanimously Endorsed** by the Congress participants on 9<sup>th</sup> of March 2023 at Mombasa, Kenya.