

Countdown to Highway Africa begins

The Highway Africa conference takes place from 4-7 July 2010 at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, Eastern Cape, South Africa. Themed 'African Voices in the Global Media Space' speakers include former Ghanaian president John Kufuor, Advocate Pansy Tlakula, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and founder and head of 20FourLabs.com, Matthew Buckland.



The conference will kick off on the evening of Sunday, 4 July with the Telkom-Highway Africa New Media Awards. Prizes will be given to three Africans that have excelled in the use of online technologies to produce and deliver news and information.

Using a combination of plenary sessions, keynote addresses, debates, training workshops, networking dinners and book launches, the conference aims to explore how the internet and mobile technology are transforming Africa's media and society. A key feature of the conference is the Reporting Development Forum - a series of plenary sessions in which leaders in media and broader society discuss how Africa's media is framing the continent's role in the global development agenda.

Some of the key questions the sessions will interrogate include:

- Africa's relationship/partnership with China;
- Africa's recovery and growth trajectory in the aftermath of the "global financial crisis";
- Africa position in relation to global trade rules and the emerging re-alignments;
- Africa's democratic prospects (has Africa finally turned the corner in terms of dictatorships and human rights violations)?
- Africa and the meaning of the 2010 FIFA World Cup?

In other sessions the conference will look at how the business of the media is changing in light of the rapid uptake of internet and mobile technology. Going beyond the usual debates around the death of print, the sessions will seek to explore how African media companies are harnessing technology to grow audiences and revenue.

As part of the conference's social programme, Absa will host a dinner in honour of the former President of Ghana, John Kufuor and MTN will host a Fan Zone for delegates to watch the two 2010 FIFA World Cup semi-finals.

The conference is expected to be attended by about 500 delegates drawn from over 40 countries, ending on Wednesday, 7 July with a closing speech by Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

The 14th Highway Africa Conference is co-hosted by Rhodes University, SABC and the South African Department of Communications. The key sponsors for the event are Telkom, MTN and Absa. The event, the largest annual gathering of African journalists, exists to provide a platform for journalists to demystify and

utilise ICT in their work and media businesses.

Key highlights of the 2010 Highway Africa Conference

Key speakers include:

- John Kufuor, former president, Ghana;
- Advocate Pansy Tlakula, chief electoral officer, Independent Electoral Commission, South Africa
- Archbishop Desmond Tutu, South Africa Professor
- Alfred Opubor, secretary general, West African Newsmedia and Development Centre (WANAD), Benin
- Dr. Diana Senghor, executive director, Panos Institute of West Africa (PIWA), Senegal
- Mathatha Tsedu, former editor now heading Media24 Journalism Academy, chairperson of TAEF and member of SANEF, South Africa
- Amadou Ba, executive director, African Media Initiative and founder/president, AllAfrica.com, US
- Prof Mindy McAdams: University of Florida, US
- Cheriff Sy, analyst, columnist and publisher, *Bendre* newspaper, Burkina Faso
- Robert Kabushenga, CEO, *New Vision*, Uganda
- Professor Adam Clayton Powell, vice provost for Globalisation, University of Southern California, US
- Matthew Buckland, founder and head of 20FourLabs.com, South Africa

Key sessions:

- African media and the global media development agenda: How is African media framing Africa's role on the global stage in relation to the emerging economic order, China, climate change, 2010 FIFA World Cup etc.
- Mobile is the future, the future is here
- ICT trends and innovations in Africa - what is and what is not happening on the continent
- New forms of journalism - ICT and its impact on storytelling
- Emerging media business models

Key networking events:

- Telkom-Highway Africa New Media Awards and gala dinner - Sunday, 4 July
- Absa Africa Night Dinner - Monday, 5 July
- MTN Africa United Night and soccer viewing in MTN Fan Zone - Tuesday, 6 July
- SA Tourism "Taste South Africa Night" - Wednesday, 7 July

Training workshops

- MDDA Training Workshop: Business models for community media and small media
- SABC Digital Skills Training Workshop: New media skills in search and mapping
- Highway Africa Workshops: Using Twitter in journalism and business; Teaching online journalism; Using Google Tools in the newsroom: Using ICT in disasters; ICTs for climate change
- Upstart-MDDA media literacy exchange programme

Book launches

For more information, go to <http://highwayafrica.com>.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>