

My beautiful EXSSA UK Sisters,

Another EXSSA UK Convention has come and (sadly) gone. All say "aaaaahh!"

However, the **excitement**, the **feel good energy**, the **visual resplendence**, the **bonding**, the **belly laughs** and **fond memories** of three wonderful days at the Coppid Beech Resort in the city of Bracknell, Royal County of Berkshire, continue to reverberate amongst the EXSSA global community, near and far. Those who attended were left breathless with over-enjoyment and those who didn't green with "wish I was there!"

Ladies, you made me **proud to be your President**, you **made yourselves proud** and you certainly made your husbands, boyfriends, children, families and friends proud of their association with you. We showed, once again, why we are the most admired alumni from Cameroon (if not Africa). **YOU ALL ROCK!**

The **Convention Committee scored big** yet again, taking their event organization prowess to another level, and demonstrating that exemplary spirit of commitment to the sisterhood that we should all emulate - **Dialle, Mantina, Dibo, Yoti, Playne, Janet, Linda, Karen, Sharon, Doreen, and all Royal County ladies** who worked hard to make the event a success - you all deserve a big "thank you" pat on the back and some well-deserved rest (before we start planning the next one). It is a labour of love and my personal gift to you is only a token of appreciation that doesn't even begin to compensate for the hard work and sometimes personal expenses that you put into planning and bringing the whole event to fruition.

I should take this opportunity to appeal to all EXSSA members to PLEASE pay their ANNUAL REGISTRATION FEES; it's only fair! Furthermore, it is critical for facilitating the running of the organization and meeting our philanthropic commitments to our alma mater Saker Baptist College.

HIGHLIGHTS of 3 memorable days in Bracknell

FRIDAY saw the arrival of the early birds and our **Special Guest Speaker, Ma Etonde Mbiwan Monjimbo** plus other **USA guests** - Dolly Lyonga Lambe and Sis Roselyn Nzegge Ngaaje. They were treated to a sumptuous Fufu & Eru supper in the home of one of the Royal County ladies. At the Hotel, each guest was welcomed with a bottle of wine & fine chocolate in their room. A Common Meal at 8pm was followed by lots of singing and a spiritual pep talk from Sister Christine Mbafor. Staying with the theme of *Each One Reach One*, she counselled; "You never know who might just need a hug or call from you to make their day".

The girls then hit the Hotel night club in the basement. The DJ, under the EXSSA 'spell', rolled out a variety of Afrobeats whose infectious rhythms combined with the hypnotic hip movements of the girls compelled the Caucasian English revelers to join in, and the

fun night went on well into the wee hours. Some people, including Ma Monjimbo, had to be politely 'ushered' out for the club to close!

On SATURDAY the whole hotel ambience was now overwhelmed by a show-show sea of all shades and styles of Coral - from Breakfast, through AGM, to the Mbanga Bush Challenge and the inevitable 'impromptu' singing in perfect harmony on the steps of the entrance of the hotel. Saker girls no dey joke oo!

AGM - Key Take Outs:

1. **EXSSA UK is now an official UK CHARITY** (Yayyyy!). We are a bona fide UK **registered charity number 1158298**. This is thanks to the diehard persistence of the trio of **Irene Molulu Shupo**, **Barbara Epie** and **Yoti Mofa Obenge** who have worked assiduously on the matter for the past 2-3 years. While this is a great achievement, it also means that our activities, particularly **Fund raising and Expenditures**, are now more stringently subject to the rules and guidelines of UK Charities, including Regional chapters' activities as far as the management of monetary inflows and outflows. Regional chapters must not behave as standalone organizations; they are a sub-set of the National body. Hence, any Regional charitable activity done in the guise of EXSSA UK must be executed under the aegis of the umbrella National body.
2. Our **Septic Digest Project** for improving the sanitation/drainage of washrooms and toilets in Saker Baptist College is having such a positive impact that the product currently in stock will last till 2016. Thus, it was agreed that we look into the possibility of deploying this year's (2015) funds towards the acquisition of an **Incinerator** and a **Generator** for the School to salvage the current desperate situation where third parties are collecting the used sanitary materials to be burnt outside of the school. Sister Kofo Anjorin will explore and revert.
3. **MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION FEES - PLEASE PAY!** The record of payment is embarrassing compared to the total membership base. Ladies, please pay; **Ladies, please pay: it is simply the decent thing to do and only once a year - not much!**
4. Our dear big AUNTY, EYERE TAKOR, made a lovely surprise appearance during our AGM, all the way from Cameroon! This was one noisy interruption of our AGM proceedings that we were delighted with and welcomed with great joy and excitement!

Saturday Night GALA

The copious numbers of pictures circulating around the internet tell the story better than I can write it. Indeed, the **Fashion** was such an explosion of vibrant colours, dripping with Hollywood glamour that even Joan Rivers (God rest her soul) would have been impressed! Down the red carpet to the **Champagne Reception** and then to the **Gala/Banquet hall**, where personalized place settings and immaculately dressed tables added even more sophistication to the soiree.

The President's welcome address was followed by a powerful rendition of our Saker anthem. We engaged in exciting games - *Prince Charming & Cinderella*, *UnScramble and Win*, etc. - in between the dishes of our 3-course meal, with prizes won. Then it was time to hear from our Special Guest Speaker, the incomparable Mrs. Egbe Etonde Mbiwan Monjimbo: - *"Everyone has a purpose on this earth, we are not here by mistake, don't wish to be like this or that one when you are uniquely and wonderfully made differently for the fulfilment of YOUR own purpose, ..."* are just a few of the gems of wisdom that kept us rapt as we listened to this our extraordinary Sister *cum* 'Mother', the proud Founder/Publisher of Sakerpride.com, our go-to place for all things Saker. She is the perfect combination of spiritual depth, humility, wit, warmth, intelligence, wisdom and beauty. It was an absolute joy to have her with us.

Now, I didn't think we could top last year's **"EXSSA Got Talent"**, but boy oh boy, we managed it, with jaw-dropping performances in this year's **"EXSSA Does Strictly"**. Compered by Njie Ntuba and Playne Agbor with Judges Dr Aloysius Mbako, Chris Nasah & Mrs Vivian Effiom, the **standout performance has to be Miss Cynthia Asuagbor's brave Burlesque, sensually rendered and in fabulous costume**. Phew! Say no more!

Aunty Kofo Anjorin then took to the floor to preside over the Fund raising and Raffle draw which saw winners emerge for (1) a **Luxury Hamper**, (2) a **3-Course Lunch for two at the Ritz Hotel London**, and (3) the spectacular **4-day mini break for two to a European City of choice**.

***** **Dance Dance Dance till 4am** *****

Sunday Church Service and BBQ

We praised and thanked God with Rev Richard Glover, while Sister Patience Moffah reminded us of the spirit if *Each One Reach One* - "to make a conscious effort to reach out to others who are not necessarily in our year group or our clique of friends, in line with our ethos of Love Unity & Sisterhood. Somebody might be the only one from her class; she still needs to feel part of the sisterhood.

A sumptuous BBQ ended our 3 days of fun, excitement, glamour, inspiration and sisterhood bonding. It was a Right Royal Ball! EXSSA UK ladies, you really rock!

SAVE THE DATE 29th-30th AUGUST 2015! BE THERE OR BE GREEN!

In Love, Unity and Sisterhood,

Celine Edimesumbe LOADER

National President, EXSSA UK & Ireland