



COMMUNIQUE

ISSUED AFTER THE MAIDEN EDITION OF THE ACGN DIRECTORS WEEK CELEBRATION AND EXCELLENCE AWARDS

HELD ON 17TH NOVEMBER 2022 VIA THE ZOOM PLATFORM

Introduction

The African Corporate Governance Network (ACGN) held its maiden edition of the ACGN Directors Conference on the 17th of November 2022.

The conference was opened by the Honorable Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Relations, Honorable Lejone Mpotjoane, a former member of ACGN and Chaired by Mr. Rockson Kwesi Dogbegah, ACGN Chairman. The Keynote Speaker was Prof Mervyn King.

Ms. Susan Mutangadura, the Past President of the Institute of Directors, Zimbabwe and Rev Mrs Angela Carmen Appiah, the Vice President of IoD-Gh were the Conference Directors.

The following issues were noted:

1. ACGN seeks to promote Good Corporate Governance through ethical and effective leadership in Africa and beyond. Ethical and effective leadership, in turn, are linked to enhance sustainability performance from the five key indicators (i.e., Plant, People, Partnership, Peace and Prosperity).
2. ACGN believes their mandate rest in the center of the Board of Directors of corporate entities. This is because the board of directors represent the hearts, minds and souls of listed and unlisted corporate entities. Put differently, effective leadership with high ethical values is critical to advance Agenda 2030 in the African context, with weak institutions.
3. Effective leadership promotes trust and confidence, thereby enhancing the firm's legitimacy to access critical resources required for the promotion of sustainable development. In sum, Effective Corporate Governance is the cornerstone of sustainable development. This suggests that directors must change their mindset to embrace sustainable value creation, on the one hand. This is also a wake-up call to ACGN to promote the agenda of creating the appropriate framework to encourage director utilisation across the continent, on the other hand.

Accordingly, ACGN outlines the following nine principles to assist the board in pursuing the outcome-based governance agenda through ethical and effective boards in Africa:

- i. Boards must set high standards of accountability and ethical values.
- ii. Boards must promote strategies to advance a common good for the People in Africa. Specifically, policies aimed at ending poverty and hunger in all forms and ensuring dignity and equality in all 54 countries in Africa.
- iii. Boards must promote strategies to protect Africa's natural resources and climate for unborn generations.
- iv. Boards must promote strategies to ensure prosperous and fulfilling lives in harmony with nature.
- v. Boards must promote strategies to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies.
- vi. Boards must promote strategies to improve the continent's implementation, monitoring, and evaluation culture.
- vii. Board charter is required to capture issues such as punctuality and conflict of interest on the continent. Here, Punctuality was adopted as one of the key corporate governance imperatives.
- viii. Boards must promote strategies to "Walk-the-Talk". Here, boards are encouraged to be composed of committed individuals, those who lead by example. Thus, board appointments must be informed on the past and present reputation of people to be hired to guarantee the three elements required for positive outcomes, namely, integrity, intelligence, and energy.
- ix. Directors must wear the ATTIRE (Accountability, Transparency, Trust, Integrity, Responsibility and Excellence) of good corporate governance in all their endeavours.

Way Forward

Going forward, the ACGN will:

1. Play a more critical role as the continental coordinating platform to facilitate sharing of information and experiences and interaction among the key players involved in corporate governance.
2. Explore and create a generic framework of principles, standards, codes and tools to facilitate a common understanding of the objectives to be achieved and the various aspects that need to be addressed in Africa, depending on the regional and national context and identified priorities.
3. Establish a continental corporate governance resource center, depository and data bank of knowledge, ideas, lessons of experience, tools and technical resources from which countries can draw. This so as to ensure that the limited

resources available are pooled together and harnessed to ensure their maximized efficient use for the greatest mutual benefit, the best interests and the priorities set by the continent.

4. Develop a harmonized training program in corporate governance that seeks the attainment of similar, networked and integrated curriculum, content and certification processes to improve the performance effectiveness of Boards and directors based on a commonly agreed benchmark of excellence or level of competence.
5. Establish Corporate Governance Institutions in other Countries where it's nonexistent and promote membership growth to develop critical human resources to improve good governance outcomes on the continent.

Issued by the ACGN

Dated 20th November 2022