

AFRICAN UNION

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**Choreography of the African Union Kwame Nkrumah Continental
Award for Scientific Excellence Award Ceremony**

2020 Edition

Friday 26th February, 2021

Time: 15:35-15:55

H.E Pr. Sarah Anyang Agbor, Commissioner, HRST

- Your Excellency H.E. Dr. Elioda Tumwesigye, Chair STC-EST3,
- Excellences, Ministers of Education, Science and Technology
- Your excellency, The EU ambassador to AU
- Distinguished guests of honor and recipients of the African Union Kwame Nkrumah Regional and Continental Award for Scientific Excellence
- Dear participants
- All protocol observed

On behalf of the Chairperson of the Commission, I welcome you all to the 2020 African Union Kwame Nkrumah Regional and Continental Award for Scientific Excellence ceremony.

Our desire to maintain the Kwame Nkrumah science awards is at three levels: national, regional and continental, to recognize African men and women in science who have distinguished themselves through their contribution to research and training for the continent's development.

Today's ceremony is for the regional and continental awards. Usually this award ceremony happens during the Summit of Heads of States and Government, but for the new normal we have found ourselves, this year award is virtual, and so the usual physical presentation of the prizes will be missing. We could not also present during the virtual summit of the head of states in February, 2021 because of time constraint, the agenda of the head of states was limited to a bare minimum. I will read out the biography of each awardee starting with the continental winners and at the end one of the recipients will give a short vote of thanks on behalf of all the laureates. The Biography is also posted on the website of this meeting.

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The 2020 Edition of the AU Kwame Nkrumah regional and Continental Award for Scientific Excellence, is attributed to women and men scientists in two categories:

- Life and Earth Science
- Basic Science, Technology and Innovation

For the 2020 Edition, the jury of the award, composed of imminent African scientists and researchers, have selected two laureates for continental and five for regional wards.

Each laureate for continental prize will receive US \$ 100,000, while for the regional, will each receive US \$ 20,000,

For the Continental award,

- Under the Basic Sciences, Technology and Innovation category: **Prof OBAYYA Salah from Egypt is the winner.**
- For Life and Earth Sciences category: **Dr Assefa Armidie Abraham from Ethiopia is the winner**

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For the Regional award,

- For Life and Earth Sciences category from Western Region: **Ms Ojmelukwe Philippa Chinyere from Nigeria** is the winner
- For Life and Earth Sciences category from Eastern Region: **Prof Swai Hulda from Tanzania** is the winner
- Again, For Life and Earth Sciences category from Northern Region: **Prof ELHAM Mahmoud from Egypt** is the winner
- For Basic Science, Technology and Innovation category from Northern Region: **Prof Heakel Fakiha from Egypt** is the winner
- For Basic Science, Technology and Innovation category from Western Region, **Prof Fuwape Ibiyinka from Nigeria** is the winner

Your excellences, you will permit me to read out short biography of the winners.

We have 2 Continental laureates : Prof OBAYYA Salah and Dr Assefa Armidie Abraham.

Moderator to invite Prof OBAYYA SALAH ON THE SCREEN AS SHE READS HIS BIOGRAPHY

1. Prof OBAYYA Salah joined Zewail City of Science and Technology (ZC) in 2012 where he is now Chair Professor and Founding Director of Center for Photonics and Smart Materials (CPSM). He occupied the positions of the Vice Chairman of Zewail City and Director-General of Research Institutes at the same institution.

He has established an outstanding international reputation in the area of green nanophotonics with focus on the intelligent computational modeling of modern nano-photonic devices enabling technologies needed to realise low-carbon green society. He has published **262** journal publications, mostly in OSA, IEEE and IET/IEE, authored **3** books (Computational Photonics, Wiley 2010 and Computational Liquid Crystal Photonics, Wiley 2016, Computational of Photonic sensors, 2018) both are adopted references for Graduate Programs in Photonics at international Universities such as MIT, Purdue University, Indian Institute of Technology, National University of Singapore, Mansoura University and Zewail City.

He led the team that developed one of the world's best comprehensive numerical packages for the analysis, design and optimization of nano-

photonic devices, and subsystems, where a number of “world-first” numerical approaches have been developed.

Recently, Dr. Obayya was elected as the first Arab and African Fellow of Optical Society of America (OSA), and IEEE Fellow of IEEE Photonics Society among several others.

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Moderator to invite DR ASSEFA ARMIDIE ABRAHAM ON THE SCREEN AS SHE READS HIS BIOGRAPHY

2. Dr Assefa Armidie Abraham has conducted several studies on infectious disease microbiology, immunology and epidemiology in collaboration with national and international partners. His research focused on generating the evidence base for improved practices, policies and strategies that would save lives in Ethiopia and the African region. He has co-authored over 400 publications in peer reviewed journals. He has co-supervised over 30 PhD and 50 MSc postgraduate students in biomedical sciences. Dr Aseffa has also been active on strengthening regional partnership particularly in clinical trial capacity building and health research ethics. He has served in several WHO/TDR, WHO and EDCTP advisory bodies. He is a member of the Ethiopian (EAS) and the Third World Academy of Sciences (TWAS). He was Director at AHRI between 2010-2016. He is currently serving as Unit Head for Research for Implementation (IMP) at the Special Programme for Research & Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR) since Feb 2020.

In his work at the WHO Immunology Research and Training Centre in Lausanne in the laboratory of Prof Jacques Louis, demonstrated the relevance of a regulatory T cell population to immune control of a parasitic disease using a murine model of *Leishmania major* infection. This was one of the first reports on the role of these cells in regulating infectious disease pathogenesis.

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For the Regional laureates we have 5 winners.

Moderator to invite Prof ELHAM MAHMOUD ON THE SCREEN AS SHE READS HER BIOGRAPHY

1. Prof Elham Mahmoud is a full professor of Environment and Oceanography at the University of Suez. She also worked as the director for Suez University International Relations Office. Prof Ali has over 56 research articles, 3 books, 4 book chapters and 5 review articles mostly published in prestigious highly ranked journals with pronounced impact factor.

Prof Ali also works as environmental consultant for different national, regional and international entities like EPA-KUWAIT, GISCON, World Bank IPCC.

Currently, she is a member of the international panel for climate change (IPCC) and serve as contributing lead author to the sixth report (AR6) and the coordinating lead author for Mediterranean cross chapter.

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Moderator to invite Prof HULDA SHAI DI SWAI ON THE SCREEN AS SHE READS HER BIOGRAPHY

2. Professor Hulda Shaidi Swai from Tanzania is a Professor at the Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology (NM-AIST), Arusha, Tanzania. She is a Nanotechnology Scientist with over 28 years of experience. Currently, She is the Centre Director of the Africa Centre for Research, Agricultural Advancement, Teaching Excellence and Sustainability in Food and Nutritional Security in Africa (CREATES-FNS) funded by the World Bank in the World Bank’s African Centres of Excellence (ACE II) initiative.

Professor Swai is also a Director and Principal Investigator of a Regional Incubation Centre on Data Driven Innovation for food and nutritional security (DDI). She is a Research Chair in the O.R. Tambo Africa Research Chairs Initiative. She has published 76 peer reviewed articles in high impact international journals and 40 of these reported in Scopus. She is an Editor in

the International Journal of Nanomedicine and an Advisory Board Member of WIREs Nanomedicine and Nanobiotechnology which is a Journal with an Impact Factor of 7.689.

Prof Swai is the immediate former President of the African Materials Research Society (AMRS) where she was elected in 2018.

Moderator to invite Ms PHILIPPA CHINYERE OJIMELUKWE ON THE SCREEN AS SHE READS HER BIOGRAPHY

3. Philippa Chinyere Ojmelukwe is a food biochemist with 32 years' experience as a lecturer and researcher in the university system in Nigeria.

She has served in several university administrative positions such as head of Department; Dean of a College and Director of University Research. She has over one hundred and twenty publications, focusing mainly on African food crops. Several of these publications are in Web of Science indexed journals and have citations in all the continents of the world.

Her research focus is on the nature, composition and factors that promote the post-harvest preservation of African food crops. She has conducted research on at least fifty (50) African food crops focusing on the post-harvest systems that promote the effective use of these crops as sources of nutrients and for commerce.

She is being recognized for her research contributions in identifying excellent sources of micronutrients health promoting bioactive compounds from African food plants; up-grading of traditional African food processing methods and the use of plant products for food preservation.

Moderator to invite Prof Fakiha El-Taib Heakal ON THE SCREEN AS SHE READS HER BIOGRAPHY

4. Fakiha El-Taib Heakal is a professor (Emeritus) of Physical Chemistry at Faculty of Science, Cairo University, Egypt.

She obtained a higher diploma in 'Electrochemical Engineering' from Tokyo Institute of Technology (TIT), Japan in 1979. Her work at Tokyo Institute of Technology contributed in serving the scientific community with pioneering work using electrochemical impedance spectroscopy (EIS) in corrosion science, leading to device an automated system replacing the tedious manual one. In addition, her outstanding research work yielded innovated ways to mitigate corrosion in metallic materials whether used in industry or orthopaedics.

Prof Heakal introduced the powerful EIS technique in the curriculum of undergraduate and graduate students at Faculties of Science at Cairo University and Saudi Arabia universities as well. She is the founder of establishing schools in electrochemistry and corrosion measurements utilizing EIS-based technique at Cairo and Saudi Arabia Universities.

Moderator to invite Prof Ibiyinka Fuwape ON THE SCREEN AS SHE READS HER BIOGRAPHY

5. Prof Ibiyinka Fuwape is a Professor of Physics at the Federal University of Technology Akure, Nigeria, she was appointed the Vice Chancellor of Michael and Cecilia Ibru University, Agbarha-Otor, Delta State, Nigeria for a tenure of five years in 2017.

Ibiyinka Fuwape’s area of research is in Condensed matter physics, Climate Change, Air quality and Biophysics. She heads the condensed matter research group at the Federal University of Technology, Akure. Her research interests include theory of chaos and application of non-linear dynamics in coupled oscillator systems, neuronal systems, lower and upper atmospheres. She has established the existence, implications and significance of dynamical complexes in atmospheric parameters. She has over 100 publications in reputable journals, as well as book chapters, conference abstracts and proceedings. She has supervised many undergraduate and postgraduate students. She has been the Team leader for Nigeria on the International Union of Pure and Applied Physics (IUPAP) Working Group of Women in Physics (WIGWIP) since 2002.

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Moderator to all laureates on the screen for a group screen photograph with the chair, Commissioner, director

Excellences, we seize this opportunity to thank the European Union for making this award possible by providing financial support since 2010;

Finally, Chair with your permission, allow me to invite **one of the awardees of the continental** to say a word on behalf of the winners of the 2020 African Union Kwame Nkrumah Award for Scientific Excellence Regional and Continental Prize.

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End of the ceremony meeting