

EDITORIAL

In this second issue, we bring you the events of the first day of the conference. Those include something about the school choir, welcoming remarks, Minister Gwarube's talk, issues from the first keynote address, 3 workshops and 9 papers. This issue concludes with the evening's festivities.

School Choir – Imbuing the conference with hope.



Harry Gwala Secondary School Choir performs during the official opening of the conference on 19 August 2024.

Welcome remarks: Prof Yunus Ballim, Chairperson of Umalusi Council

“You are now in the region of the world referred to as the Cradle of Humankind. So, to all of you, I say “Welcome Home!””



Introductions

Dr Mafu Rakometsi, Vice President of AEAA

“I extend gratitude to all keynote speakers, lead speakers, panel speakers, workshop and paper presenters for ensuring the success of this conference by preparing the approximately 130 papers.”



After delegates were welcomed by Prof Yunus Ballim and Dr Mafu S. Rakometsi, the 40th AEAA Conference was officially set into motion by South Africa's Minister of Basic Education, Ms Siviwe Gwarube, otherwise known as SivG.

#AEAA2024 #AEAAconference

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Official Opening: Minister of Basic Education



The Minister, Ms Siviwe Gwarube, congratulated Umalusi for returning the AEAA Family to South Africa, 21 years after staging a successful 13th AEAA Conference in 2003 during its formative years.

She then showed appreciation for the fact that the theme aligns with two of the five key priorities identified for South Africa's 7th Administration: (a) increasing efforts to improve access to and the quality of inclusive education for learners in our most vulnerable communities and for learners with special education needs; and (b) improving literacy and numeracy skills across all phases of schooling.

"I declare the conference officially opened."

The Minister challenged delegates to use the conference as a platform to think about how best to build an inclusive, safe and quality education systems in Africa and the world over. She concluded by affirming that the over 300 delegates from 30 countries across the world presented an invaluable opportunity to discuss issues of mutual interest, and forge strong cooperation and partnerships between South Africa and countries from the continent, something which would go a long way in the realisation of the ideals of Agenda 2063, the Africa We Want, which is characterised by amongst others, unity, inter-connectedness and interdependence.

Remarks Dr David Njengere, President of the AEAA



In his conference tone-setting address, Dr Njengere called on all delegates to "contextualise global issues to the African experience and concretise assessment experiences that bring out our strengths while presenting globally competitive qualifications".

The conference started in earnest with Prof Loyiso Jita delivering the first of the five keynote addresses.

Keynote Address: Prof Loyiso Jita

In his keynote address broadly titled “difficult dialogues on assessment”, Prof Loyiso Jita gave an historical account of dimensions of learning, commonly known as taxonomies. He traced the work of scholars on taxonomies and their implications for instructional planning and assessment. He then unpacked the challenges and complexities introduced by the multiple dimensions of learning in relation to learner assessment. He argued for the need to rethink educational assessments, particularly the large scale high-stakes national assessment in various countries in the context of quality and equity imperatives.



After the delivery of the keynote address, nine papers were presented focussing on different aspects of the theme. Like the thread in a tapestry, the phrase “new assessment modalities” has spun through and connected every one of the nine papers.



Photo of attendees in the plenary session

Interview session with the Minister of Basic Education, Ms Siviwe Gwarube



Cocktail event organised to welcome delegates

Conference delegates were greeted and refreshed with revitalising drinks that made them feel welcomed and valued. This was also an opportunity for delegates to foster new bonds and connections.

