



**On the occasion of the African Union Day
The Union Celebrates the Outstanding Achievements
of Regional Women Scientists
9 September 2009, Addis Ababa Ethiopia**

On the 9th of September 2009, Africa commemorated the 10th anniversary of the African Union Day uniquely. On this day Africa celebrated the outstanding achievements of African Union Regional Women Scientists and Younger Researchers at National levels. The celebration took place in the African Union Headquarters with the presence of H.E. Ali Abdella Awadin Ambassador of the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Dean of the African Diplomatic core who represented H.E Colonel Muammar al-Gaddafi the AU President, , the HRST commissioner, H.E. Jean Pierre Ezin, Hon. Asman Kamama, a representative to the African Ministerial Council on Science and Technology (AMCOST III) Chair , H.E. Janez Potočnik, Commissioner for Science and Research in the European Commission along with a number of distinguished delegates from the African and European diplomatic core.

The competitions are in two thematic areas namely Basic Science, Technology and Innovation and Earth and Life Sciences sectors with a total amount of 1 million dollars per year.

It was clarified in the ceremony that the Regional Competitions were implemented by the Regional Economic Communities and Member States implemented the National Young Scientist Awards. The women scientists were presented with a cash prize of USD20, 000, a certificate and a trophy while the Younger researchers were awarded a prize of USD5, 000.

The Jury, after a thorough and rigorous evaluation process, selected the following Laureates as the 2009 AU regional award winners as the pride of Africa:

1. Eastern

- a) Prof. Mohee Romeela winner of Basic, Science Technology and Innovation Prize
- b) Prof. Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, winner of Earth and Life Sciences Prize

2. Northern

- (a) Prof. Dr. Botros Sanaa Sabet, winner of Earth and Life Sciences Prize

3. Southern

- (a) Dr. Lee-Anne McKinnell winner of Basic, Science Technology and Innovation Prize
- (b) Prof. Brenda Diana Wingfield winner of Earth and Life Sciences Prize



The Winners are in the front row

A brief profile of each winner by sector and region is as follows:

Eastern Region



Prof. Romeela Mohee,
(Basic Science, Technology & Innovation)

Prof. Romeela Mohee is the first female Professor in Engineering and the first female Dean of Faculty of Engineering in Mauritius. She has excellent worldwide reputation in the area of sustainable treatment of solid and hazardous wastes via composting and through her research on sound waste management practices, has developed low cost engineering solutions for the benefit of society. Her unique capacity of transferring high level research into simple applicable techniques is exceptional, and her community based projects have helped to improve the quality of life of people. Her Prize was handed to her by H.E. Ambassador Ali Abdella Awadin of the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the Representative, of H.E Colonel Muammar al-Gaddafi the AU President, and the Dean of the African Diplomatic Core.

Prof. Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, is the Deputy Vice Chancellor at the University of Mauritius. She holds a chair in organic chemistry and has published extensively in the field of traditional medicine. The first ever database



Prof. Ameenah Gurib-Fakim
(*Earth and Life Sciences*)

on medicinal and aromatic plants for Mauritius and for the south West Indian Ocean was created by Dr. **Ameenah**. She is a founding member of the Association of African Medicinal Plants Standards, She is co-editing, the African Herbal Pharmacopeia, publication, which will be vital for developing a business line around medicinal plants. Prof. Gurib-Fakim has received the prestigious L'Oreal-UNESCO Award for 'Women in Science' in 2007, the CTA/NEPAD/AGRA/RUFORUM for 'African Women in Science' April 09 as well as the National Economic and Social Council -Gov. of Mauritius in 2007. She was elevated to the Order of 'Commander of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean' by the Government of Mauritius – 2008 and in 2009, she was elevated to the Order of the 'Chevalier de l'Ordre des Palmes Academiques' par le Government de France. Her prize was presented by .Hon Osam Kamana, Duputy Minister for Higher Education, Science and Technology, Republic of Kenya and Chair of the African Ministerial Council of Science and Technology (AMCOST III).

Northern Region




Prof. Sanaa Botros
(*Earth and Life Sciences Sector*)

Prof. Botros got her PhD 1980 with a recommendation from the board to the University to sponsor the editing cost of her thesis and make it available to international Universities.

Prof. Botros has received a number of **AWARDS and HONORARIES. Among them are the following:**

- She was Included as one of the Distinguished Leadership in the 4th International Directory of Distinguished Leadership, 1992 by the American Biographical Institute, North Carolina, U.S.A.
- She was awarded the STATE AWARD in Medical Sciences (Pharmacology) by the Academy Of Scientific Research And Technology, Egypt, 1997.
- She received the Keystone Symposia Global Health Travel Award sponsored by the International Center for Tropical Disease Research.
- Meritorious Certificate and Cuirass Syndicate from the Egyptian Medical Syndicate 1998 on Physician day.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arab Women Organization Award for Science and Technology in Biological Sciences 2008 <p>Her Prize was presented by H.E. Commissioner Janez Potočnik for <i>Science and Technology (European Commission)</i></p>
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Southern Region	
 <p>Dr. Brenda Diana Wingfield (<i>Earth and Life Sciences</i>)</p>	<p>Dr. Brenda Diana Wingfield started her academic career when she accepted a position in the Dept of Microbiology at the University of the Orange Free State in 1989. During her stay in Bloemfontein she developed a research programme with a focus on the Molecular Phylogeny and Taxonomy of Tree Pathogenic fungi. She is currently the Programme Leader of the DST / NRF Centre of Excellence in Tree Health Biotechnology.</p> <p>Due to other pressing commitments, Dr. Wingfield could not attend and her prize was received by the H.E. the Ambassador of the High Commission of the Republic of South Africa, in Addis Ababa. It was presented by Madame Aida Opoku-Mensah, <i>Director of ICT, Science and Technology Division, UNECA</i></p>
 <p>Dr. Lee-Anne McKinnell (<i>Basic Science, Technology and Innovation</i>)</p>	<p>Dr. Lee-Anne McKinnell is the manger of the space physics group at the Hermanus Magnetic Observatory and a Research Associate of Rhodes University in the Republic of South Africa. She works in close collaboration with Nigeria and Zambia, and presently she is supervising a number of postgraduate students from different African countries. She is involved in capacity building programs for Africa in area of space science and technology.</p> <p>The Commissioner of Human Resources, Science and Technology , Prof. J. P. Ezin presented her prize.</p>



Jury committee for the 2009 AU award
nominate
at Work, 25 -26 August 2009-08-31

The Regional Jury Committee 2009 at work.
The Jury was composed of the following members from extreme left:

- a) Prof. Abdoulaye Dia, Professor of University Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar (NASAC)
- b) Dr. Rispa N. Oduwo, Chief Science Secretary National Council for S&T Ministry of Higher Education, Science & Technology (from AMCOST Chair),
- c) Prof. Francis J. Mula, Associate Professor, University of Nairobi (AAS)
- d) Dr. Mohamed El-Faham, Director, Centre for Special Studies & Programs (from TWAS Arab Regional Office)

Note: The Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology, served as the Secretariat for the Jury while the representatives of SADC and CEN-SAD were observers.

LAUNCH OF THE 2010 EDITION OF THE AU SCIENTIFIC AWARDS

After the Awards ceremony, the Commissioner of Human Resources, Science and Technology Prof. J. P. Ezin launched the 2010 Edition of the AU Scientific Awards. *(Details are in the AU website).*

LAUNCH FP7- AFRICA 2010 CALL

H.E. Commissioner J. P. Potočník, the guest of honour, launched the FP7-Africa 2010 Call for research on Health, Food Security, Agriculture and fisheries, and Biotechnology; and Environment (including climate change). The Call has a total amount of 63 million Euros and is being implemented in the broader framework of the EU-Africa Joint Strategy and Action Plan of the 2007 Lisbon Summit. *Full Details are on the EC website. More details may be obtained from the Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology.*