

**Press Release No: 12 /2021**

**September 13, 2021**

**Venue: Lusaka, Zambia**

**Uganda's Daniela Odong scoops ECOSOCC's Young Africans Writing Contest (YAWC) top prize;**

**Amb. Susan Sikaneta awarded the ECOSOCC Stalwarts Award**



Daniela Odong, a 17-year-old from Uganda's Mt St Mary's College, Namagunga has scooped the first prize of the African Union Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) Secretariat Young Africans Writing Contest (YAWC).

Daniela's essay titled 'A blueprint for the future' was announced winner at the YAWC 2021 Awards Ceremony held on the 9<sup>th</sup> of September, African Union Day.

The Young Africans Writing Contest (YAWC), themed 'My Africa, My Future' was launched on Africa Day, May 25<sup>th</sup> 2021. Entries for the YAWC opened on the same day and closed at midnight 25<sup>th</sup>, July 2021 CAT.

Over 850 entries were received from across Africa and were assessed by an independent jury to determine the top continental contestants.

Daniela won herself a fully sponsored educational trip to the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, a laptop, an African Union Winner's Plaque and an African Union Gift Bag.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> prizes went to Touoyem Ngouegheu Joyce Fortuna from Cameroon and Wisunzintumwa Jean Paul from Burundi. They both won laptops, African Union Winner's Plaques and African Union Gift Bags.

Also commended were: Githungo Mwangi (Kenya) for being the only participant who submitted an essay in Swahili; Manases Ucuahamba (Angola) for his essay submission in Portuguese and Princess Amarachi Okeoma-Ihunwo (Nigeria) for being the youngest eligible participant at 9 years old. Her essay was entitled 'The Africa of my dreams: Musings of a 9-year old'.

Five AU Member States with the highest number of entrants in the contest, i.e. Nigeria, Uganda, Zambia, Kenya and Malawi were awarded.

The top ten essays plus the jury's recommended essays were published in a special booklet titled 'My Africa My Future,' which was launched by the Head of ECOSOCC Secretariat, William Carew, to commemorate the AU Day 2021. Copies of the booklet will be distributed to all AU Member States.

The top 10 winners are: 1. Odong Daniela (Uganda); 2. Touoyem Joyce Fortuna; 3. Wisunzintumwa Jean Paul (Burundi); 4. Kholoud Kamel (Algeria) 5. Samuel Machora (Kenya); 6. Prince Bishogo (Congo); 7. Aden Abdirazak (Djibouti); 8. Verla Precious (Cameroon); 9. Orhorhaghe Prosper (Nigeria); 10. Ramloll Chavinee (Mauritius).



Meanwhile, in commemoration of the AU Day, ECOSOCC awarded former Zambian Ambassador to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the AU and the Economic Commission for Africa, Ambassador. Susan Sikaneta (ODS) with the first ECOSOCC Stalwarts Award, for her immense contribution and support to the ECOSOCC Secretariat and its relocation to

Lusaka, Zambia.

Amb. Sikaneta thanked the Secretariat for the honor and dedicated the award to the first President of the Republic of Zambia, H.E, the late Kenneth Kaunda for his efforts to liberate southern Africa from colonial rule, and for being one of the founding fathers of the then OAU. She pledged to continue supporting the ECOSOCC Secretariat.

Head of the ECOSOCC Secretariat, William Carew, commended all the participants saying, they impressively demonstrated their intellectual grasp of the diverse economic and socio-political issues affecting the continent.

“ECOSOCC as a people-driven organ of the AU, commits itself to building more partnerships and sustaining the contest as an annual platform to encourage young Africans to continuously express their vision for the Africa they want,” he said.

The YAWC 2021 Awards Ceremony was officiated by the Dean of the African Group of Ambassadors, H.E Mrs. Konji Maloba Chantal, who is also the Democratic Republic of Congo's Ambassador to Zambia.

H.E Chantal commended the ECOSOCC Secretariat for the YAWC initiative and pledged the support of the African Group of Ambassadors to continue to uplift and encourage young Africans in building the Africa they want to see and live in.

Other dignitaries included Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Zambia Permanent Secretary Amb. Chalwe Lombe represented by Assistant Director for Political Affairs, Ms. Patricia Kondolo, ACCESS Bank Zambia, Managing Director Ms. Joana Bannerman, represented by the Executive Director-Business Development, Olusegun Kuteyi and members of the Diplomatic Corps in Zambia.

#

#### **About ECOSOCC**

The Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) was established in July 2004 as an Advisory Organ composed of different social and professional groups of AU Member States. The mandate of ECOSOCC is to contribute, through advice, to the effective translation of the objectives, principles and policies of the African Union into concrete programmes, as well as the evaluation of these programmes.

Learn more at: <https://www.auecosocc.org>:

Facebook: African Union ECOSOCC; Twitter: @AU\_ECOSOCC

#### **For media inquiries, please contact:**

Ms. Carol Jilombo | Senior Communications Officer | AU ECOSOCC Secretariat, Lusaka, Zambia  
E-mail: [Jilomboc@africa-union.org](mailto:Jilomboc@africa-union.org)