



association cotonnière africaine
african cotton association

PRESS RELEASE

The African Cotton Association (ACA) held its 7th Annual Congress from 12 to 14 March 2009 at Naura Springs Hotel in Arusha, Tanzania. The main theme of the meeting was: **“The Global financial crisis and the future of African cotton”**.

Almost 150 people took part in this gathering. They came from all over the world (Africa, Asia, America, Europe and Australia). The event was marked by the participation of a great number of people from the cotton communities of East Africa (Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Malawi, etc.) and Southern Africa (South African Republic, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, etc.). Many international dealers, bankers, freight companies and forwarding agents also came to Arusha for the meeting.

ACA’s Annual Congress in Arusha, which followed those in Bamako (2003), Dakar (2004), Ouagadougou (2005), Cairo (2006), Accra (2007) and Lusaka (2008), recorded the most diversified attendance in ACA’s history. This demonstrates clear progress in the establishment of the association at the continental level, as these meetings have become a major event on the world cotton agenda.

On March 12, 2009, after the opening ceremony presided over by His Excellency Stephen Masatu Wassira, Minister of Agriculture, Food Security and Cooperatives of Tanzania, whose introductory address presented an in-depth review of the cotton sector in Tanzania and clearly delineated the issues affecting the industry in Africa, the traditional technical seminar focused on the main theme of ACA’s 7th Annual Congress: **“The Global financial crisis and the future of African cotton”**.

Papers were presented on the following issues:

- **“Cotton market perspectives and fundamentals”**, by **Mrs Armelle GRUERE**, statistician at the International Cotton Advisory Committee
- **“Market analysis in today’s crisis”** by **Mr Mike EDWARDS**, Director of Cotton Outlook
- **“Comparative study of cotton seed price fixing systems”** by **Mr Gérald ESTUR**, independent consultant.
- **“Oleaginous sector: constraints and challenges”** by **Mrs Bintou DIALLO**, chairperson of the « Association Interprofessionnelle des Filières Oléagineuses » within WAEMU.
- **“Actions carried out by ACA to promote African Cotton Quality”** by **Mr Joel KY**, head classifying agent at SOFITEX (Burkina Faso) and chairman of ACA’s Quality Commission.
- **“African cotton instrumental measures”** by **Mr Axel DRIELING** of “BREMEN Fibre Institute”

The papers allowed the participants to exchange views and information on the difficulties of African cotton sector.

All participants agreed that the current financial and economic crisis has seriously affected all cotton sector stakeholders (growers, ginnners, dealers, mill owners, banks, freight companies...). A broad consensus was reached on the need to make every effort to save the cotton sector, which is the driving force of agriculture and the economy of many countries on our continent.

The 8th Annual General Assembly was held on March 13, 2009. After the review and adoption of the annual report and the financial report of 2008, it approved and adopted the plan of action and the budget for 2009. It then renewed the mandate of the executive committee, for which the following members were elected:

- **Chairman:** *Mr Ahmed Bachir DIOP*, MD of SODEFITEX (Senegal);
- **1st Deputy Chairman:** *Mr Mohamed Abdin ALI*, MD of Sudan Cotton Company Ltd (Sudan);
- **2nd Deputy Chairman:** *Mr Tiéna COULIBALY*, CMD of CMDT (Mali);
- **Treasurer:** *Mr Georges OSIEKU*, Financial Director of Ghana Cotton Company (Ghana);
- **Rapporteur:** *Mrs Johanna ADOTEVI*, Sales Director of Ivoire Coton (Côte d'Ivoire).

On behalf of the new executive committee, the Chairman paid tribute to Chairmen **Celestin TIENDREBEOGO** and **Ibrahim MALLOUM** for the invaluable services they have rendered to African cotton, and committed to making every effort to consolidate the progress achieved and meet new challenges.

ACA's 7th Annual Congress closed with the traditional gala dinner which allowed those in attendance to discover various facets of Tanzania's rich culture. The participants warmly thanked the Tanzanian authorities, the organising committee and especially committee chairman **Dr Joe KABISSA** and **Mrs Roselyne MARIKI** for the smooth organisation of the Congress and their great hospitality.

Finally, the General Assembly selected Cameroon as host country for ACA's 8th Congress in March 2010.