

NOMINEE FOR PRESIDENT: African Studies Association of Africa (ASAA)

Biosketch: Akosua Adomako Ampofo

Current Title/Position, Institution: Professor of African Studies, Institute of African Studies (IAS), University of Ghana, Legon

Earned Degrees:

BSc Architecture (1982), Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi

Post-graduate Diploma, Regional and Spatial Planning (SPRING, 1985), University of Dortmund, Dortmund

Master of Science, Development Planning & Management (1986), Kwame, Nkrumah University of Science & Technology, Kumasi

PhD Sociology (2000), Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN

Relevant experience:

My teaching, research and activist work address African Knowledge systems; Higher education; Identity Politics; Gender-based Violence; Women's work; Masculinities; and Gender Representations in Popular Culture. Recent publications include "Re-viewing Studies on Africa, #Black Lives Matter, and Envisioning the Future of African Studies" *African Studies Review* (59)2: 7-27 (2016). At the University of Ghana (UG) I have been the Director of the Institute of African Studies, the Head of the Centre for Gender Studies and Advocacy, the Coordinator of the Development and Women's Studies Programme, and a 2-time elected member of Council as well as served on almost every UG statutory Board. I also serve or have served on several boards and committees both locally and internationally, including Centres of African Studies (eg at University of the Free State, South Africa and the University of Pretoria). I also serve and have served on editorial boards, and as editor or reviewer of journals that focus on African Studies (eg. **Ghana Studies** and most recently **African Studies Review**). I am or have been an officer of professional associations such as currently Co-President of the Research Committee on Women and Gender of the International Sociological Association. I am a Fellow of the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Vision Statement

I believe my background, and broad set of skills and experiences, including 28 years as a teacher, researcher, administrator, and Higher Education practitioner, provide me with a strong understanding of the workings of the Higher Education sector and universities generally, as well as the challenges we face infusing an African-centred approach in our work. Having a site where we can-in Nkrumah's words at the opening of the IAS-study the peoples and cultures in African-centred ways, is what I hope ASAA will become. I

also see the ASAA as becoming a respected site to advocate for African "knowledge dissemination" and its valorisation.

My specific vision for the ASAA, that I would work actively to establish is constructed along 3 lines:

1) Institutional Credibility: I see the ASAA grow into a credible, effective and efficient body that is sought after as a professional home by Africanists on the continent, and in the Diaspora. I see ASAA being proactive in reaching out especially to potential members in typically under-represented/under-served sites such as less-common language areas, civil society and creative spaces outside the academy. We would also build strong links with sister organisations globally.

2) Decolonising the African Academy: I envision ASAA working actively with colleagues, and especially institutions such as CODESRIA and the AAU, around questions of curricular and epistemology to make them more Africa-centred. I also see ASAA working strategically within Higher Education Spaces to make them increasingly more amenable to an African agenda.

3) Professional development: ASAA becomes a site where colleagues, especially younger scholars, are supported in their research, teaching and public engagement. In line with this I envision ASAA providing a forum where we can support colleagues when it comes to issues of academic freedom, promotion and being a public intellectual without fear of reprisals (or providing support in the event of reprisals).

I see us using the conference, but also anticipate that we will create smaller opportunities between conferences, as well as publications and regional workshops in collaboration with our institutional partners to achieve all these.