



## *Conference Report*

---

### **FUWA Conference Lagos (Nigeria), 16-19 July 2009**

*Written by Prof. Clara I. Ikekeonwu*

The Federation of University Women of Africa (FUWA) held a conference on the theme “Girl-Child Education in Africa” in Lagos, Nigeria 16-19 July 2009. The conference drew participants from within and outside Africa.

FUWA received goodwill messages from IFUW and her NFAs. Specifically we note the messages from the IFUW President, Louise Croot; Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW); the South African Association of Graduate Women (SAAGW) and Australian Federation of University Women (AFUW). FUWA is indeed very appreciative of these wonderful gestures that constituted tremendous support for us.

Shirley Randell, Vice President and member of Board of IFUW, represented the IFUW President and also presented papers. Willemyn van der Meer, President of the University Women of Europe (UWE) represented the Association at the conference.

Papers presented covered various areas of Girl-child education, especially as they relate to Africa. It is hoped that selected papers from the conference would be published.

A seven-point communiqué issued at the end of the conference, called on, among other things, the African governments to invest more in education, especially girl-child education. This, since the social malaise, such as maternal and infant mortality, Vesico Vaginal Fistula (VVF) and HIV/AIDS, can be drastically reduced if not completely eradicated when the girl-child, apparently tomorrow’s wife and mother, is given a firm formal education.

The conference also decried the ills of human trafficking, kidnapping and rape which affect the girl-child adversely and recommended that culprits of these social ills be severely punished. The conference also called on African governments to work conscientiously towards the removal of constitutional barriers to women empowerment and include women in constitution drafting.

A major highlight of the conference was the presentation of an award to the Wife of the Governor of Lagos State, Mrs. Abimbola Fashola in recognition of her outstanding contribution to girl-child education in Nigeria. Also, at the conference, a new branch - the Lekki branch of NAUW was formally inaugurated.

The opening ceremony had Rose Bwire, President Ugandan Association (UAUW) as Chair and the Keynote address was by Prof. Grace Offorma, Dean, Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria Nsukka Nigeria.

---

**International Federation of University Women**

**Fédération Internationale des Femmes Diplômées des Universités**

10, rue du Lac, CH-1207 Geneva, Switzerland; Tel: (+41 22) 731 23 80; Fax: (+41 22) 738 04 40

E-mail: [ifuw@ifuw.org](mailto:ifuw@ifuw.org) Website: <http://www.ifuw.org>