

Gender

Promote growth in Africa

• AWDF urges organisations

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THE Executive Director of African Women's Development Fund (AWDF), Ms Theodosia Sowa,

has charged civil society organisations across Africa to use their initiatives to help develop the continent.

She said such organisations should not be seen as money-making ventures but rather be used to project and promote the growth of Africa.

Ms Sowa made the statement at the opening of a two-day regional conference organised by the International Society for Third-sector Research (ISTR) in Accra last Tuesday.

The conference was on the theme: "Civil Society and a Renascent Africa: A Stock-taking".

Commendation

Ms Sowa lauded civil

society organisation that had made massive contributions to the formulation of national policies for the development of their countries.

She said the fight against HIV and AIDS, domestic violence, child rights conventions and the passage of many pieces of legislation were achievements which needed to be lauded, and urged them to be accountable and stop repeating other country's models and uphold ethical standards.

Speaking on the theme, Ms Sowa said a renascent Africa should not only be on economic growth but also on a real definition of power relations.

"It is about power relations between the rich and the poor, it is about power relations between the global north and the global south, it is about systems where

Quick Read

The International Society for Third-Sector Research (ISTR) is holding its regional conference in Accra with a call on civil society organisations to use their initiatives to help develop Africa.

political power ends in the hands of the elite rather than ending up in the hands of the masses," she further explained.

According to her, values, principles and other cultural practices of Africans must not be left to die, so civil societies must help sustain them.

Sustaining political reforms

The acting Director of the Institute of African Studies of the University of Ghana, Professor Francis Dadoo, said civil society organisations were expected to sustain political reforms and prevent political decay that undermined Africa's development, and charged



• Ms Theodosia Sowa

them to continue with that effort.

The Executive Director of West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI), Nana Asantewa Afadzina, said the conference was to evaluate the performance of civil society organisations in Africa.

It would also be used to equip members on modern trends in advocacy.

There would be papers

delivered on civil society in Africa as a conduit for development through the promotion of peace, state-civil society relations in the era of neo-liberal reforms, the role of civil society organisations in strengthening the impact of community-based volunteering in Korogochu, Nairobi, among other such topics.