

NABSW COMPREHENSIVE COMMITTEE REPORT  
FOR ANNUAL REPORT - 2016

COMMITTEE NAME: **International Relations Committee (IRC)**

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON (S) - **Cheikh Mbacke, Ph.D., (ABD), ACSW**

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS - **Angela Jenkins, Baba Kubwa Kweku (Willie Davis), Angela Yarde, and Onaje Muid**

REPORTING PERIOD - **Annual Report – 2016**

DESCRIPTION OF THE COMMITTEE/TASK FORCE

**The International Relations Committee shall be responsible for establishing ties and relation with Black people throughout the world. It will recommend to the Steering Committee such actions, programs, and steps it deems necessary to bring about a stronger bond of cooperation and unity with Embassies, social justice, trade and educational missions of African, Caribbean and South American countries with sizeable Black populations. All efforts will be designed in keeping with our Code of Ethics.**

COMMITTEE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

**The goals of the most recently revised IRC Work Plan includes:**

**Establishing formal contacts throughout the African Diaspora, Maintaining, supporting, and monitoring relationships throughout the Africa Diaspora for on-going contact and longevity of positive relationships,**

**The IRC Objectives are:**

- **To facilitate relationships with countries (which acknowledge their African ancestry) throughout the Caribbean, Continental Americas, and Continental Africa,**
- **To monitor events and communicate needs when African Diaspora crisis occurs,**
- **To serve as liaison to provide support to the proposed locations and increase NABSW's membership and service areas, and**
- **To develop and build upon relationships among people throughout the African Diaspora.**

2. COMMITTEE INFORMATION, PROJECTS, EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

- **Progress will be monitored via identifying and reestablishing contacts with countries previously visited by the IEC, database creation, and monthly updates to committee webpage. The IRC will collaborate with the Crisis Preparedness, IEC, and Membership committees.**
- **The IRC continued work on a process to enable NABSW and the IRC to receive, manage, and respond to international inquiries in a more effective and timely manner.**
- **The IRC Chair was in discussion with the President regarding international chapters, and individual membership. That work remains in process.**
- **The IRC finalized and coordinated the IRC gathering during the October 2016 SCM in Washington. Mel Foote, President and CEO, of Constituency for Africa (CFA) participated as the luncheon speaker and has agreed to move planning forward on work with NABSW through the IRC.**

- The IRC assisted with identifying contacts in Ghana for the 2017 IEC and connected it with Rosa Whitaker, now living in Accra, who was formerly U.S. Trade Representative for Africa and is widely known as the “Mother of the African Growth and Opportunity Act” (AGOA). The IEC was also connected with the Honorable Ekwow Spio-Garbrah, most recently Ghana’s Minister of Trade, and former Ghanaian Ambassador to Washington, and current Ghanaian Ambassador, Erieka Bennett. His Excellency Henry Smith, Ghana’s Ambassador to Washington, was also a suggested contact.
- The IRC collaborated with U.S. contacts for Friends of the Congo for 2017 activities recognizing the Assassination of Patrice Lumumba.

### 3. PROJECTED ACTION FOR 2017

- IRC efforts to establish contacts with U.S. Ambassador to African Diaspora countries, human services agencies, and NGO’s continue through utilization of IRC contacts initiated for the IEC.
- The IRC is in the early planning stage for the development, inclusion, and recommendation of themes, events, speakers, and activities with International, Pan-African, and/or the African Diaspora as a specific national conference focus.
- In addition to following the IRC Work Plan, efforts will include expanding committee involvement relative to the following two (2) bullet points in 2017.
- In 2015, the United Nations declared 2015 to 2024 as the Decade for People of African Descent, with the aim of upholding the principles of recognition, justice and development. On February 23, 2017, the IRC was represented at an organizing conference entitled ‘Actualizing The United Nations Decade for People of African Descent: The Human Services Professions’ Organizing Challenge for Health Equity in Social Work, Psychology and Addiction Fields’ which was hosted by The New School for Social Research’s Concentration in Mental Health and Substance Abuse Counseling. This event was the first step in organizing a strategy to challenge health professions, their associated institutions, and the communities they serve to create an over-arching social justice accountability platform and strategy to realize health equity in social work, psychology, and addiction.
- On April 5, 2017, the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent meeting at the United Nations in Geneva will include an open civil society meeting. For those of us who will not be in Geneva, a live webcast of the meeting will be available.

### 4. COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS, COMMENTS AND/OR SUGGESTIONS FOR NATIONAL CONSIDERATION:

- The IRC recommends the development of an IRC FAQ for the website for informational purposes.

  
Signature

March 20, 2017  
Date Report Submitted