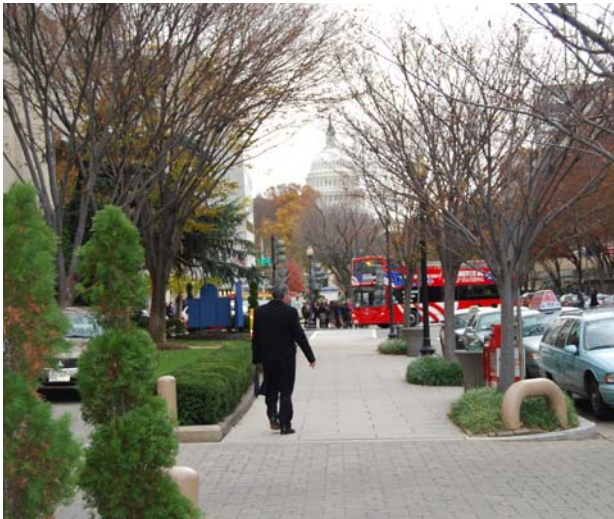


CORPORATE COUNCIL ON AFRICA HEALTH FORUM



The Capitol from the front of the conference hotel.



Washington at dawn from the hotel's 12th floor.

Health Forum 2008

The Corporate Council on Africa invited professionals from Africa, the United States, and all around the world, to participate in a 2-day Health Forum in a downtown Washington, DC hotel with a magnificent view of the Capitol from 20 to 21 November 2008.

The forum included 4 plenary platform sessions (both mornings, afternoons), 12 workshop sessions, 4 coffee networking sessions, 2 lunch networking sessions, and a networking evening reception.

Quite simply, the whole forum was wonderful, definitely the highlight in a bleak, cold November when the warmth of Africa seemed to pull itself away from me as far as it could. The forum participants were some journalists, some students, but mostly movers and shakers in Africa: hospital builders, program builders; business CEOs who brought with them the vitality and heat of a continent that is rising.

I met a CEO who lives in the United States who decided to build a hospital in his village in Africa, and



The hotel lobby facing front, above, facing back, below, and further back facing front, left below.



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Networking at the cocktail party. The 2 young ladies facing forward are students.



did. And trained 5 professionals in medicine, including one all the way through hospital administration so that he can come back and run the hospital, and knows what hospitals can be. This village previously did not have a physician anywhere close, but now it does, a whole hospital full of health professionals who are moving back the age of death in the village.

I met a senior manager who is not just talking about building health systems in East Africa, but is doing it, and his work daily improves the quality of lives.

I met a women's doctor from South Africa who decided that what Africa needed was a drug distribution network built on the premise that no bribes would ever be paid. And has done it.

AFRICAN PRIVATE HEALTH CARE: A GROWING INVESTMENT SECTOR

The opening Plenary Session was moderated by economist Guy Ellena PhD, who has had a long career at the International Finance Corporation. He is Director of the Health and Education Department where he oversees investments in global health. His 3 speakers were all direct hits: brilliant, hard-work-

ing and passionate about African health. MJoTA has made initial contact with all 3, and hopes to publish interviews on each.

The first opening plenary speaker, Jeffrey Sturchio PhD, is Vice President of Corporate Responsibility, Merck & Co, Inc. and President, the Merck Foundation. He spoke of the need and availability of HIV/AIDS therapies in Africa. A statement prepared for a HIV/AIDS Roundtable Discussion during a United Nations High-Level Meeting on *Universal Access to Affordable HIV/AIDS Diagnostics, Prevention and Treatment: In Search of Sustainable Solutions* can be downloaded from the Merck website, <http://www.merck.com>.

The second speaker was Debrework Zewdie PhD, an immunologist (Univ London) and former Senior MacArthur Fellow at Harvard University's School of Population and Development Studies. She directs the World Bank's Global HIV/AIDS Program. She can be heard on a panel discussing the push for free AIDS drugs in Africa in 2001, <http://www.charlottesville.com/view/interview/3202>

His third speaker is a Nigerian living in Nashville, Tennessee who was trained in medicine in Nigeria, and is now a licensed cardiologist in the United States. Ernest Madu MD is the Founder of the Heart Institute of West Africa and, on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, the Heart Institute of the Caribbean in Kingston, Jamaica. His US companies are Echo Doctors Of America LLC and International Healthcare Services Ltd.

Dr Madu is the professional for whom this journal was created to celebrate: hard working, brilliant, well-educated, visionary African health and science professionals who make things happen. You will see a lot more about Dr Madu in MJoTA.

At the plenary session, Dr Madu talked about cardiovascular disease, which has been identified by the CDC as the most frequent cause of death in America. He is concerned that this is the most frequent cause of death in Africa in adults in their 40s and 50s, their most productive years. He eloquently made the case that the fasted spiral into poverty for children is by killing the parents by ignoring cardiovascular disease. Dr Madu can be heard talking about the acute need for resources for cardiovascular healthcare throughout the countries of Africa on YouTube, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IN88m18zpSg>.

MJoTA will be publishing articles during the year based on the workshops and plenary sessions at the African Health Forum. The first article, on pharmaceutical manufacturers in Africa, follows this.

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