



## **AFRICAN UNION SAFGRAD**

### **Golden Jubilee of OAU/AU: AU-SAFGRAD and Burkina Faso Play their parts!**

**Baptism of a main crossroads as African Union Place, Mobilization of two thousand people for country-cross running in the streets of the capital city, Series of conferences animated by some eminent university professors around the theme « Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance », Round table in prime time on National television broadcasted by satellite to the four corners of the world..., Certainly, the « Land of the Uprights » has set the bar very high to launch the ceremonies for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of OAU/AU.**

The launching of the activities was solemnly done this Monday 20 May 2013 in Ouaga 2000 Banqueting Hall by H.E. The Prime Minister of Burkina Faso, Luc Adolphe TIAO in presence of most members of his government including the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation H.E. Mr Djibril BASSOLE. Many guests including mainly officials, traditional authorities, AU-SAFGRAD staff, African communities living in Burkina Faso as well as many journalists. Among the distinguished guests, was the Diplomatic Corps, mainly composed of Ambassadors of AU State Members.

African Union Coordinator, Dr Ahmed ELMKASS was sitting at the presidium. First to take the floor he emphasized the stakes of OAU/AU golden Jubilee celebration. He notably recalled the decision taken by African leaders in Addis Ababa in 2012 to make of 2013 the year of the fiftieth anniversary. He returned back on the visionary role of the founding Fathers among which Kwame NKRUMAH, Haile SELASIE, Gamal Abdel NASSER... and Maurice YAMEOGO, first President of Upper Volta, now known as Burkina Faso.

After him, the Prime Minister of Burkina Faso and the State Minister BASSOLE came back on the meaning of the event. They recalled the major role played by their country, headed by the President of Burkina Faso, in the process of African integration. Once the various speeches were delivered, therefore, could sound the AU anthem followed by the Ditanè, the national anthem of the country. Then, the flame of peace was lightened by the Prime Minister TIAO under the cheers of an enthusiastic audience.

But the core of the celebrations was undoubtedly the baptism of the new public square of the African Union. Thus, after the United Nations roundabout, people should now get used to African Union (AU) square. The Pan-African organization from now on, gives its name to an important crossroads at the intersection of two major roads including the one leading to the future major International Airport of the country referred to as Donsin Airport. Another important public place located in Bobo Dioulasso, the second city of the country will be baptized in June. In front of the City Council and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Coordinator of AU-SAFGRAD, Dr. Ahmed ELMKASS saluted, in the name of the Commission and African Union the important role played by Burkina Faso in the advent of a united, prosperous and peaceful Africa as wished by the founding Fathers in their meeting in Addis Ababa in 1963.

On the other hand, other activities not less important are already secured. Among them a large public conference organized by AU-SAFGRAD on 25 May 2013, targeting the youth and animated by a panel of half a dozen high-level personalities including university professors and women from the civil society. A great gala night called "African Night" is also planned for this Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> May in a large theatre of the capital city.

The capital of Burkina Faso, which is hosting three offices of the African Union among which AU-SAFGRAD established in Ouagadougou for more than 35 years, wants to definitely and fully play its part in this year of the celebration of the OAU/AU Golden Jubilee.

### **THE CELEBRATION PHOTO ALBUM**



H.E. Prime Minister of Burkina Faso receiving the torch from the hands of two children to light the flame of peace marking then the official start of the festivities of the fiftieth anniversary.



H.E. Prime Minister with the State Minister H.E. Mr BASSOLE and the Coordinator of the AUSAFGGRAD during the execution of AU and Burkina Faso anthems.



The Coordinator of the AU-SAFGRAD, Dr. Ahmed ELMEKASS, thanking the people and the Government of Burkina Faso.



Prof. of history SALO from the University of Ouagadougou, delivering the inaugural lecture.



H.E. State Minister Bassole, surrounded by AU Coordinator, Dr Ahmed ELMEKASS, and the Mayor of the locality.



Thousands of people ran in the streets of Ouagadougou to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the OAU/AU