

15th National Convention of Ubium Development Association in USA (UDA)
JULY 8-10, 2016
NEWARK AIRPORT MARRIOTT HOTEL, NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

INTERIM CONVENTION COMMUNIQUE

The 15th National Convention of Ubium Development Association in USA (UDA) was held at the Newark Airport Marriott Hotel, Newark, New Jersey from July 8-10, 2016.

The theme of the Convention was “Engaging the Ubium Diaspora: Partnership, Civic Participation, and Community Development.”

The Convention was chaired by Itata Itata, Esq., Co-Chair. The Convention Chairman, Senator Effiong Bob, Pro-Chancellor and Chairman, Governing Council, University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria, was unable to attend in person, but in his written address, he appealed to members of Ubium Diaspora to work together as a group, instead of individually, to provide scholarship to deserving sons and daughter of Ubium. He also proposed a skill acquisition center in Ubium, an idea which was noted for follow up in partnership with the Senator.

1. The Convention noted with appreciation the support expressed by the Keynote Speaker, Iniekong Charles Udonwa, who could not attend in person but pledged his support. Goodwill messages were sent by Governor Chris Christie of the State of New Jersey and Hon. Otobong Edemidiong, Chairman of Nsit-Ubium Local Government Council Transitional Committee.

2. During the business session and open forum, the Convention reviewed the progress made since the last national convention in College Park, Maryland in 2014, noting:

- The completion of UDA Rural Water Supply Project in 20 designated communities, including one location jointly sponsored by UDA and an indigene, has addressed lack of access to safe drinking water and

inadequate sanitation which hitherto impaired health among rural residents, especially children and the poor

- The completion of the first phase of UDA Community Empowerment Program (UCEP) under the supervision of UDA Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and the equipping of 89 poor youth and women with the entrepreneurial training, including 35 micro-finance loans beneficiaries, to undertake their own business

3. In accordance with its theme, the Convention expressed commitment to the unity of Ubium, considered, and ratified a resolution on an amendment to the UDA Constitution that includes an expulsion clause for any member whose conduct undermines the values, norms, group life, and internal cohesion and unity of Ubium and UDA.

4. The Convention also conducted Board of Directors elections and elected three new members, namely Ibok Esema, Archibong Okono , Anietie Edohoukwa to three year terms to fill the vacancies created by Harry Edohoukwa, Dr. Enamidem Ibok, and Michael Udoh, whose term expired at the close of the 2016 National Convention. The new board members were sworn in by the UDA National Legal Counsel, Dr. Samuel Esema.

5. Young people interested in their future and career goals participated actively in the convention during the Convention Youth Forum.

Princess Imayen Ibanga of NBC News HQ, New York, NY, who addressed the youth on civic youth engagement, was warmly received and her suggestions on what our youth should consider to further their careers and future growth were well received and noted.

6. Also, the Convention discussed a report on health care and a paper on the theme of the convention presented respectively by two invited speakers, Asuquo N. Inyang, MD, of WellSpan York Hospital, York, PA, and Victor R. Uko, , JP, Principal Partner and CEO of V. Uko & Associates, Lagos.

7. Regarding health care and the plight of dilapidated condition of health care centers in Ubium, previously brought to the attention of government, the Convention discussed the report on medical missions presented by Asuquo N. Inyang, MD, FRCS, FWACS, AFMCS, FASE, of WellSpan York Hospital, York, PA, and agreed to conduct medical mission, in partnership with Dr. Inyang, to medically under-served communities in Ubium effective immediately.

Accordingly, the Convention expressed appreciation for Dr. Inyang's support of primary health care service in Ubium and authorized the National President of UDA to constitute a planning committee comprising of key representatives from the homeland and Ubium Diaspora. The committee will advise on how to expand Dr. Inyang's medical mission to medically under-served communities in Ubium.

8. The report and contributions of members of the home delegation were discussed with particular emphasis on the deteriorating condition of rural roads in Ubium and the importance of giving young people an opportunity to further their education in situations where they cannot afford the cost.

On roads and infrastructure, the Convention appealed to the Executive Governor of Akwa Ibom State to direct as appropriate to facilitate the rehabilitation of rural roads in Ubium, pointing out that the rural roads connect communities, provide access to services, and are vital to tourism and the growth of the Akwa Ibom economy.

On education, the Convention noted the appeal by the home delegation for projects that support youth development and education through financial assistance in the next phase of UDA programs.

The 15th UDA National Convention Dinner was attended by over 200 participants and guests, including the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Akwa Ibom State Association of Nigeria in USA (AKISAN), who put up a brief appearance in support of Ubium. Others in attendance included the

National President of AKISAN., National President of Eket Development Congress, President of Nto-Annang Foundation, New York & New Jersey Chapter, the President of Nka Iban in New York, President of AKISAN, New Jersey Chapter, representative of Ati-Annang USA, leading medical practitioners of Akwa Ibom origin from New York and New Jersey, as well as neighboring states.

The Royal Father of the Day and Clan Head of Ubium, His Royal Highness, Etebom Ukpong Noah Udoewah, who was in attendance, identified areas UDA and members of Ubium Diaspora could work in collaboration with the homeland. Expressing appreciation for the opportunity to meet with members of his constituency in the Diaspora and for the successful hosting of the 15th National Convention, he announced that traditional ceremonies like the pouring of libation were banned in Ubium upon his assumption of office.

The National President of UDA, E. Samuel Essien, who was re-elected to a second presidential term of three years, expressed appreciation to Senator Effiong Bob, Ini-Ekong Charles Udonwa, Itata Itata, His Royal Highness, Etebom Udoewah, special guests Architect Ime Ekpo, Prof. Eno Grace Nta, Chief Basse Ema, JP, Johnson Ukpong, Aniefiok William, the invited speakers Dr. Asuquo Inyang and Elder Victor Uko, special guests and supporters, as well as the presidents, officers, and members of all the groups who travelled long distances, notably the large delegation from Dallas, to support Ubium Development Association in USA. He thanked Elder Nse Ekefre for his support, sponsors of the Convention program booklet, and paid tribute to the work of the UDA Community Advisory Committee (CAC), whose commitment to the success of the first phase of Ubium Community Empowerment Program (UCEP) was noted during the business session of the Convention.

Before adjournment, it was tentatively agreed that the next convention be held at Dallas, Texas, July 13-15, 2018.

Signed

**Chairman
2016 National**

Ubium Development Association USA, Inc.
P. O. Box 1370
New York, NY 10276
<http://www.ubiumusa.org/contact-ubium-usa/>