



Africa Charts Bold Scientific Future at Accra Conference Hosted by Government of Ghana

Historic ARISE meeting marks 40 years of the African Academy of Sciences and launches Accra Declaration on science-driven development

Accra, Ghana | July 2–4, 2025 – In a defining moment for African science, the Government of Ghana hosted a high-level continental conference convened by the African Academy of Sciences (AAS) to mark its 40th anniversary and accelerate progress in science, technology, and innovation (STI) across Africa. Held at the Accra International Conference Centre, the three-day event drew presidents, ministers, scientists, and international partners for a landmark meeting signaling a new era for African-led research and global scientific collaboration.

Organized by the AAS and hosted by the Ghanaian government, the event was supported by the University of Ghana, the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), the AU Scientific, Technical and Research Commission (AU-ASRIC), and AfroChampions. Stakeholders including scientists, policymakers, government leaders, researchers, and donors gathered with a shared commitment to strengthening Africa's STI ecosystem and positioning the continent as a global scientific leader.

Opening the conference, Ghana's President H.E. John Dramani Mahama reaffirmed the nation's commitment to science and innovation, pledging USD 1.03 million to the ARISE programme and unveiling national STEM initiatives for secondary schools. "Africa must shape its destiny through homegrown science," President Mahama stated, urging governments to prioritize innovation in their national development strategies.

Former Nigerian President H.E. Chief Olusegun Obasanjo emphasized the urgency of scientific self-reliance, sharing personal stories of healthcare loss to advocate increased political commitment and investment in research. Highlighting his previous USD 5 million donation to the AAS towards advancing STI agenda in Africa, Chief Obasanjo urged current leaders to match or exceed such investments.

Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for Education, Hon. Julius Ogamba, represented H.E. Dr William Ruto, the president of the Republic of Kenya at the event. Hon Ogamba announced Kenya as the host for the next ARISE conference in May 2026. Also among the high-level Kenyan delegation was Prof Abdulrazak Shaukat, Principal Secretary for the State Department for Science, Research, and Innovation in Kenya. Prof Shaukat announced Kenya's commitment to supporting the ARISE programme with an additional USD 1 million contribution. Prof

Shaukat echoed this commitment by urging African countries to allocate at least 1% of their GDP to R&D by 2030 and champion support for emerging scientists.

The Accra Declaration

The conference culminated with the adoption of the Accra Declaration, a pan-African commitment to scientific excellence, equity, open science, and integrating indigenous knowledge. It urges governments and global partners to rally behind a unified science agenda, advocating Africa's STI priorities at international platforms such as the upcoming G20 Summit in November 2025 under South Africa's presidency.

In support of these ambitious goals, the European Union announced an additional €25 million for ARISE Phase II. Egypt also joined Ghana and Kenya in pledging USD 1 million toward the ARISE programme. Additionally, the AAS signed strategic agreements with renowned European research institutions, including the European Research Council, the French National Centre for Scientific Research and National Research Institute for Sustainable Development, aiming to bolster cross-continental knowledge exchange and collaboration.

African Science Diplomacy

The three-day conference established a clear and actionable roadmap for scientific advancement. Participants endorsed establishing an African Science Diplomacy Forum to harmonize Africa's stance on global issues like climate change, health, and technological equity. They called for increased investment in R&D, advocating for a dedicated African Science & Innovation Fund pooling resources from African governments, the private sector, and philanthropy.

Addressing talent development, leaders recommended pan-African postgraduate scholarships, joint laboratories, visa-free researcher mobility, and entrepreneurial training within STEM curricula. To bridge the gap between science and policy, they proposed creating regional Knowledge-to-Policy hubs, which would regularly perform "Evidence Impact Audits" to ensure research informs policymaking effectively.

Participants further committed to prioritizing digital transformation, advocating continental investments in artificial intelligence, quantum technology, and digital infrastructure, with an emphasis on ethical and inclusive practices. On climate action, they proposed the establishment of an African Climate Science Acceleration Programme to enhance predictive climate modeling, nature-based solutions, and clean-energy innovations tailored for the continent.

Among the immediate follow-up actions include submitting the Accra Declaration to the G20 Summit, operationalizing the African Science Diplomacy Forum, launching the African Science & Innovation Fund, rolling out capacity-building webinars for ARISE grantees, and preparing for the next ARISE conference in Kenya in 2026.

As the AAS celebrates four decades of fostering scientific progress in Africa, the Accra conference marked a pivotal moment for the continent's scientific sovereignty. It laid the groundwork for a future where African scientists lead global scientific discourse, underscoring the importance of self-reliance and global partnership in achieving scientific excellence.

"The future of Africa lies in the power of its ideas and the continent's ability to harness them," remarked Dr Peggy Oti-Boateng, Executive Director of the African Academy of Sciences. "With the bold vision forged in Accra, we have laid the foundation for Africa's scientific renaissance."

While closing the conference, Her Excellency, Prof Jane Naana Opoku-Agyemang, the Vice President of the Republic of Ghana, called on institutional actors, members of academia, industry, and civil society to be interested in research and sound sustainable initiatives. Prof Liza Korsten, the President of the AAS emphasize the need to collaborate, innovate, and lead, ensuring science truly serves the people of Africa and contributes profoundly to global prosperity.

"It is the first time ever in the level of my working this job since 2006 to find a meeting opened by a president and closed by a vice president of a country, and in this case, the Republic of Ghana", stated Dr Ahmed Hamdy, Chair of AU-ASRIC.