

The Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) is pleased to announce its initiative aimed at achieving the triple objective of promoting the study of the history of Africa, mobilising support for the discipline of History in African higher education, and networking African historians both for these purposes and as a worthy cause in its own right. Packaged under the label of **SOS African History**, the initiative is underpinned by the strongly held view of the CODESRIA membership that the current conjuncture in the development of Africa marks a moment when the continent is more than ever before in need of History and historians. Given the fact that across Africa, engagement with the history of the continent, the financing of historical research, and the teaching of History are severely endangered, the CODESRIA **SOS African History** initiative is designed to galvanise local and continental responses that could add up to stem and reverse the tide of decline that has been underway for at least two decades. As part of the initiative, the Council has, within its Strategic Plan 2007 – 2011, committed itself to, among other things, convening an annual thematic conference on critical themes in the history of Africa. (For more information about CODESRIA, its Strategic Plan 2007 – 2011, and its activities, see the Council's website www.codesria.org).

The inaugural conference within the CODESRIA initiative on African History is planned to hold in Nairobi, Kenya, from **13 – 15 August, 2008**. The theme around which it is proposed to organise the conference is: **Re-Reading the History and Historiography of Domination and Resistance in Africa**. The choice of this theme for the inaugural conference has been informed by a number of considerations, five of which are outlined in this conference announcement. The first of them is the centrality of the theme itself to the historical experiences of the peoples of Africa. Secondly, precisely because of the important place occupied by domination and resistance in the history of Africa, successive generations of African historians have engaged the issues in their work, producing a rich corpus of empirical and theoretical work that merits being re-read. Thirdly, there has for sometime now, emerged a revisionist historiography that has devoted itself to a re-interpretation of various aspects of the history of Africa's relations with Europe with a view to casting old relations of domination and subordination in new, better light. That revisionist historiography begs for well-considered African responses which African historians are best placed to offer. Fourthly, the revisionist historiography has, in a direct affront to the colonised, also fed into political discourses and decisions in parts of Europe aimed at recognising and celebrating an imperial past. Finally, in terms of the balance of power in the contemporary global order that is itself suffused with expressions of new hegemonies, the peoples of Africa are exposed to various sources of pressure that both threaten to unleash a new scramble for their continent and abridge their inde-

pendence.

In the face of the various challenges faced by Africa to its history, its present and its future as captured by the twin themes of domination and resistance, African historians are invited to engage in a critical re-reading of these important elements of the experiences of the peoples of the continent. In doing so, participants in the conference will be encouraged to explore historical and contemporary dimensions and experiences of domination for the questions they raise and the lessons they teach. Attention will be focused at the conference as much on the political, economic and military dimensions of domination and resistance as on the social, cultural and aesthetic aspects. Furthermore, revisionist historiographies on experiences of domination will be evaluated through a re-visiting of various histories of domination as experienced across Africa. Similarly, the organisation of resistance to domination will be assessed both in its historical expressions and with regard to the historiography developed around it. Perspectives aimed at historicizing contemporary experiences and threats of domination and resistance will be encouraged at the conference. Researchers working on the gendered dimensions of experiences of domination and resistance, a highly neglected aspect of the history and historiography of the topic, are strongly encouraged to submit presentations to the conference. The mobilisation and use of memories of domination and resistance both in history and in the contemporary period will also be examined.

Researchers with an active interest in African history who wish to be part of the conference are invited to send abstracts of the papers they wish to present to CODESRIA by a deadline of **16 May, 2008**. In choosing areas of focus and developing abstracts, potential conference participants are encouraged to focus on any aspects of the past and recent history of Africa that may be of interest to them. Authors of abstracts that are deemed suitable by CODESRIA for development into full papers will be notified of the outcome of the selection exercise by **31 May, 2008**. Full papers from those whose abstracts have been selected must reach the CODESRIA Secretariat by **18 July, 2008**. The participation costs of those whose papers are accepted for presentation at the conference will be covered fully or partially by CODESRIA. All abstracts and papers should be addressed to:

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