

INVITATION TO PRESS CONFERENCE

**Excellent Africa.
Promoting the science South of the Sahara**

Tuesday, 9 December 2014, at 11.00 a.m.

**Embassy of the Republic of South Africa
Tiergartenstr. 18, 10785 Berlin**

BACKGROUND

Africa is one of the economically fastest growing regions world-wide. Despite the fact that the development of the continent bears large regional differences, the share of young people in the overall population and therefore future university graduates is equally high.

At the universities the focus is often on the so-called MINT subjects (Mathematics, Information Technology, Natural Sciences and Engineering), even though African scientists emphasize the outstanding importance of humanities and social sciences. The Gerda Henkel Foundation with its Lisa Maskell Fellowship Programme therefore wants to strengthen the higher education landscape to prevent the emigration of qualified social scientists. A second focus of the scholarship programme lies on the region South East Asia.

In celebration of the 100th birthday of foundation founder Lisa Maskell, the Gerda Henkel Foundation is launching the largest international funding initiative of its almost 40 years of history for postgraduates: With 2.5 million Euros, the Lisa Maskell Fellowship Programme will fund young scientists in the humanities in Africa and South East Asia. The Foundation will provide funds for 100 stipend years in a course of five years.

PANEL

His Excellency Makhenkesi Arnold Stofile, Ambassador of the Republic of South Africa, will say the greeting words at the beginning of the press conference.

With regard to the Africa focus, 25 postgraduates will complete their PhD at the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa in the coming five years. The fellowship holders come mainly from the following countries: Ethiopia, Botswana, Ghana, Cameroon, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Zambia, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda.

Dr. Michael Hanssler, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Gerda Henkel Foundation, will be talking about the Lisa Maskell Fellowships and the idea of a south-south cooperation.

Talking about the current situation of science and research in Africa will be **Prof. Dr. Prince Kum`a Ndumbe III**. The political scientist and author has conducted research and taught for years in Germany. In the 1980s he founded AfricAvenir – a cultural centre that is represented amongst others in Douala (Cameroon) as well as in Berlin.

Dr. Cindy Lee Steenekamp, Director of the Graduate School of Arts and Social Sciences at the Stellenbosch University (South Africa), explains the work of the Graduate School, the center of the PhD programme in the framework of the PANGea (Partnership for Africa's Next Generation of Academics) and coordinates the Lisa Maskell Fellowships in Africa.

An insight into her research project will be given by **Neema Eliphaz Laizer**: The fellowship receiver analyses in her doctoral thesis how women of the Maasai are portrayed in the works of African (with and without Maasai background) and European authors.

The conference will be held in German and English, a translation into both languages is available.

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ACCREDITATION

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- Please register me for the **Press Conference “Excellent Africa”** on **Tuesday, 9 December 2014, at 11.00 a.m.**
- I will take photographs / make film recordings / audio recordings (please specify)
- I would like to interview the following participants:

name of media / column: _____

freelancer? yes no

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