

## AUGUST 2023

***“Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.”*** Isaiah 60:1-3 (SEV)

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for your generous and unyielding giving, it is invaluable for us to develop the network and build capacity. You will see from what follows in this newsletter that we need many resources to respond to the enthusiasm of a younger generation who want to become involved in Advocates International.

On August 29, 2007, while I was chairing the Board of Advocates Africa, I, together with my husband, daughter, and a couple of other people, climbed to the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro – the highest mountain peak in Africa. The purpose of the climb was to, when we summited, speak prophetically over Africa, and proclaim Scriptures. The abovementioned Scripture from Isaiah 60 was one of those which we proclaimed.



The past two weeks have for me been an exhilarating experience seeing those proclamations become true! Indeed, Africa has risen and is shining, and the glory of the Lord is rising upon the continent!

At the 2008 Global Convocation of Advocates International, the late Honorable Kenneth Starr gave a presentation about the demographical trends of the major religions in the world. He concluded by saying that, soon, Christianity would be firmly seated in the global South and that Europe and North America would have to go seeking for answers to the truth from the global South. The evidence of this prediction was apparent to me in the past two weeks!

At the end of July, I attended the 15<sup>th</sup> biennial Convocation of Advocates Africa in Entebbe, Uganda. Other than the excellent program and first-rate speakers, I was thrilled to meet the remarkable law students from Uganda, Kenya, and Rwanda! Their passion for God and enthusiasm for the work of Advocates Africa were an inspiration for me!



I was delighted that our office manager, Ligia Vallejo, board chairman Jeff Brauch and chair of our Global Council, Mark Mudri, could also be at the Convocation.

You might know that the persecution of Christians in the Sudan has been and continues to be some of the worst in the world! In the 24 years which Advocates Africa has existed, we have never had a delegate from Sudan or South Sudan – until this year! I was overjoyed when Rose Jackson and Waiwai Gabriel Marx attended. Rose touched our hearts with her determination to attend when she travelled for more than 20 hours with her two small children on a bus that broke down along the way from Juba to Kampala. Rose, Waiwai and I are planning the launch of a Christian Lawyers fellowship in South Sudan early next year.

One of the highlights of the Convocation was the testimony of Yolande Korkie, a South African who with her husband Pierre, had been abducted by Al Qaeda in Yemen in 2013. Yolande was released after 228 days but sadly, 558 days after they had been kidnapped, Pierre was killed by his kidnappers. There wasn't a dry eye in the house as Yolande accounted how she had chosen to forgive those who kidnapped them and killed Pierre. She encouraged all of us to love Muslim people unconditionally. Yolande now leads an organization called the Crisis Response Network who facilitates assistance for victims of natural disasters and wars.

This provided the perfect backdrop to launch **the Daniel Project in Africa**. The Daniel Project aspires to identify and train lawyers in Africa to combat religious persecution in their own and neighboring countries. There was so much interest from those attending – now we must find the champions everywhere in Africa and put the strategy into action!

It was heartening to have John Langlois, past Chairman of our Board, in Entebbe! John led an excellent devotional on the life of the apostle Barnabas. Barnabas did justice to his name (meaning "son of encouragement") by being a faithful friend, a committed encourager, a forgiving brother, and one who gave generously to help the poor. John reminded us that Billy Graham would not have been the great evangelist he was if he didn't have good Sunday school teachers. He urged us to never cease to be encouragers. Over the years, John himself has indeed been an encourager to so many of us in the AI network!

Without a doubt, Advocates Africa (AA) grows stronger and more vibrant all the time! A distinctive characteristic of the network is that the founding generation has remained involved and continues to mentor and inspire the next generations. To put some structure to this, the four past presidents of AA have been appointed as senators to the newly found senate. These include Justice Mike Chibita, Professor Bankole Sodipo, Pastor Sunny Akani and me.

I am so proud of the new AA board which was elected – each one of them are dynamic, successful lawyers but devoted to God and passionate to further the work of AA in Africa. The new board is President Kimathi Kamencu (Kenya), Vice President Safari Gahizi (Rwanda), Secretary General Mesfin Ethsunamo (Ethiopia), Assistant Secretary General Pako Thato Moakofhi (Botswana), Treasurer Kezia Kenneth Azuma (Ghana), Members Anne Muhairwe (Uganda), Eno Akpan (Nigeria) and Komi Devotsu (Togo). Lawyers of Hope in Rwanda, as hosts of the 2025 Convocation, will appoint two more board members of their choice.



In my June and July newsletters I wrote about the escalation of violent persecution of Christians in Africa and how religious extremism is consistently on the increase. Nigeria is the country in the world where extreme persecution is the 5<sup>th</sup> worst. With the Daniel Project being launched, it was apt for me to attend the annual conference of the Christian Lawyers Fellowship of Nigeria (Clasfon) which took place in Port Harcourt. Clasfon, with its more than 12 000 members and 57 branches, is the largest Christian lawyers' fellowship in the world and keeps growing its numbers! Again, it was noticeable that the founders and veterans of Clasfon have remained involved. The conference was attended by 960 lawyers - time and time again during the conference I got emotional as these lawyers worshipped the Lord with complete fervour!



The first two Nigerian Christian lawyers who ever attended an Advocates Africa conference were Dr Ananim Akpabio and Alozie Echeonwu who came to Jinja in Uganda in 2001. It was special for me to take a photograph with them 22 years later and reminisce about how far we have come in Africa with advance God's Kingdom agenda in the legal profession!



There is much interest amongst the Clasfon members to become involved in the Daniel Project! The priority is to design training material for these lawyers and activists who make themselves available to be the Daniels in Nigeria. I was honoured to meet with Abishag S - a brave young woman who has devoted her law practice to securing the release of the young girls who are abducted by the extremists. She uses her knowledge of Sharia law to achieve justice for these girls.

Please pray for me as I speak shortly at the KILN / Kenyan Christian Lawyers Fellowship conference in Naivasha in Kenya. I have been asked to relate how, after Apartheid, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa contributed to the healing of our nation.

Let us not neglect our prayers for the persecuted Christian worldwide – they rely on us!

Warmly in Christ

Teresa Conradie

President and CEO, Advocates International



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