Trip to Abuja- Nigeria this summer for the Leon Sullivan Conference-Summit VII

July 14-21, 2006

http://www.thesullivanfoundation.org/summit/

Africa needs partners who can bring skills, expertise and resources to the problems and challenges it faces and defines.

It is through these partnerships that Africa can realize its full potential.

The event, which had as its overall theme "Africa: A Continent of Opportunities -- Building Partnership for Success," brought together Africans from all parts of the diaspora to focus on the role that private enterprise can play and is playing to enhance Africa’s long-term economic growth and development. The one-week summit jointly hosted by the Nigerian Presidency brought together a number of international dignitaries including, President Bill Clinton, Paul Wolfowitz (World Bank President) and several African presidents such as President Kikwete of Tanzania, President Kagame of Rwanda, and President Wade of Senegal. U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Alphonso Jackson led the U.S. delegation representing President Bush.

Here is what President Clinton had to say at the summit:

Former President Clinton told African leaders Monday that they need to strengthen their governments so that they can address long-standing problems of hunger and disease. Clinton spoke at a summit bringing African political and business leaders together with their U.S. counterparts in search of partnerships to lift the world’s poorest continent. “We can’t stop the spread of AIDS without building the capacity of government,” Clinton said. He also used the meeting to push cooperation agreements with African countries under which his foundation plans to provide HIV/AIDS drugs to Africans at low costs.
Here are some photos of Abuja, Nigeria’s 10 year old state-of-the art capital city

Skyline view of Abuja City (FCT)

Driving into Abuja downtown – Aso Rock view

As an avid researcher of ‘democratic development’ especially in Africa, the Nigerian parliament (picture below) was a site that I visited regularly, too. I spoke to many prominent Senators and Congressmen/women on the burgeoning though tenuous Nigerian democracy.

Nigerian Parliament
(includes Senate and House of Congress,
Nigeria is the only democracy in Africa that adopts an American Presidential System)

In addition to conferencing on African development and researching the Nigerian democracy, I visited the following key and possible MSU-Nigeria exchange institutions: (Please visit the sites below). At each institution, I met key personnel, including the vice chancellor of the university of Abuja, Professor Nuhu Yaqub, the Director General of Nepad Nigeria Dr. Asika, and the chief information officer at ECOWAS secretariat. At this very initial stage of contact, each institution showed strong enthusiasm at the prospects of partnering with Michigan State University.
NEPAD (the New Partnership for African Development)

http://www.nepadnigeria.org/

ECOWAS headquarters
http://www.ecowas.int/

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP)
http://www.ng.undp.org/index.php

Sincerely,

R. Kiki Edozie