



Press Release

APRA Inaugurates Advisory Group

The African Public Relations Association (APRA) has inaugurated an Advisory Group to work with the Executive Council Members to give the association a voice in the continent and across the globe.

APRA is the umbrella body for the practice of Public Relations in Africa with over 17 member national PR associations and 5 affiliations within Africa and across the globe.

The advisory group made up of academics and professionals representing all regions in Africa include Mr. Ekwow Spio-Garbrah, a former Ambassador to the United States of America and Minister of Communications in Ghana who will serve as Honorary Counsel to the association and chairman of the APRA Advisory group representing West Africa Region.

Other members of the advisory group include: Mr. Victor Sibeko, Past President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Public Relations Institute of Southern Africa (PRISA) representing Southern Africa; Dr. Wilfred Marube, President, Public Relations Society of Kenya (PRSK); Mr. Henry Rugamba , Managing Partner, Songa Communications both representing East Africa; Mr. Kamal Taibi, Founder and CEO, Stratêus Group representing North Africa; Dr. Michelle Mekeme, Senior Lecturer, Advanced School of Mass Communication (ASMAC - State University of Yaoundé) Cameroun representing Central Africa and Mr. Kwame Senou, Senior Vice President, Opinion & Public representing West Africa while Miss Taiye Tunkarimu will serve as Secretary to the Advisory Group.

The inauguration ceremony was conducted via zoom application where all members of the team officially met and pledged their allegiance to the association.

Vice President of APRA, Robyn de Villiers introduced the group members and commended them for voluntarily accepting to join council members in improving APRA's relevance amongst key stakeholders in the continent and the globe.

In his statement, President of the association, Mr Yomi Badejo-Okusanya stated that he has trust in the capacity of the appointed persons and tasked the group to push the 'One Africa' agenda and come up with a plan to drive APRA's engagement in governance and economy.

The Honorary Counsel in acceptance of the role stated "I am honoured to play a role in APRA and collaborate with other likeminded professionals in Africa. I pledge to work assiduously with all to achieve the goals of APRA". while members of the group each gave a word to appreciate the association for taking the step to establish the group and pledged to serve it to the best of their abilities for the period of two years as indicated by the President.

Secretary General of APRA, Jane Gitau gave the vote of thanks and added that the Advisory Group further shows the inclusiveness we have always desired as an association.

Signed

Taiye Tunkarimu
Secretary – APRA Advisory Group

Office of the Secretary General

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APRA Advisory Team

Honorary Counsel



Ekwow Spio-Garbrah

Ekwow Spio-Garbrah is one of Africa's most pre-eminent and accomplished communications professionals.

He has had over 40 years of experience in diplomacy, government, banking, business, advertising and marketing, corporate communications, telecommunication/ICT development, and politics. He has worked in some of the most recognized development institutions

in the world, including the World Bank Group and the African Development Bank. He was a member of the Governing Council of UNESCO in Paris, Chairman of the Ghana National Commission on UNESCO, and the CEO for 8 years at the London-based Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation.

At the age of 40, President Rawlings selected him to become Ghana's youngest Ambassador to the United States, where he excelled with unparalleled zeal and creativity.

He subsequently served the people of Ghana as Minister of Communications, Minister of Education, Minister for Mines and Energy, Minister for Trade and Industry. In his public service career, Spio-Garbrah distinguished himself for his honesty, integrity, hard work, creativity, and problem-solving skills. He is especially notable in Ghana for creating the Ghana Education Trust Fund which has utilized billions of dollars in VAT revenues to assist the educational sector.

Exceptional for his precocity, he graduated with the top of his class from the University of Ghana at the age 19, and topped his class at the Graduate School of Journalism and Communication in the same

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University. He began his early career in Ghana's advertising industry, rose to become the General Manager of the second largest advertising agency at age 24, before proceeding to the USA for further studies. Upon graduating with Distinction with an MA in International Affairs from Ohio University, he landed a prestigious job in the International Department in New York City with Hill and Knowlton Inc, then the world's leading PR firm as its first and only African employee. H&K had at the time more than 900 professionals based in 44 offices in 33 countries. At H&K, he was amongst a dedicated team which exclusively specialized in counseling international clients of the firm. These included Credit Agricole, then the world's largest bank; the Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Corporation (now HSBC); Rabobank Nederland, and the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Other clients included the Governments of Indonesia, the Netherlands, Austria and Turkey.

In 1988, Spio-Garbrah was recruited by the International Finance Corporation to join their headquarters staff in Washington DC as a Corporate Relations Officer, from where he was appointed in 1991, as Head of Communications at the African Development Bank in Abidjan.

He has been passionate about effective board governance, while serving on several Boards, including the boards of Telkom South Africa, Vodacom and Anglo-Gold Ashanti. He also was Chairman of Ghana's National Communications Authority, the VAT Service Board, Ghana Free Zones Authority and the Brand Ghana Council. He has been an African Regional Advisor to Ericsson, the Swiss-based 4G Africa/Yoomee, and Fusion Telecoms of the USA.

He served as CEO of Action Chapel International and was the President of its Dominion University College.

In recent years, Spio-Garbrah has promoted access to improved health, education, and ICT for Africans through NGOs, such as the African Business Centre for Developing Education (ABCDE),

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Committee Members



Victor Sibeko, CPRP, FPRISA, M.Inst.D, is a Chartered Public Relations Practitioner (CPRP) and Fellow of Public Relations Institute of Southern Africa (FPRISA), the highest honour in the profession. Bestowed an "Ambassador-at-Large" by PRISA for having distinguished himself with exceptional leadership qualities and professionalism. Sibeko is a member of the esteemed Institute of Directors (IOD) and serve in various organizations boards.

Sibeko is a professional with a unique combination of strategic business experience in leadership; strategic management, business administration, operational and tactical management; bringing to the fore the ability to combine Business Development, Stakeholder Management & Liaison, Relationship Marketing and Customer Relationship Management and Integrated Public Relations Management.

Sibeko is the current Chief Executive officer (CEO) of the Public Relations Institute of Southern Africa (PRISA). He is the past President of the Public Relations Institute of Southern Africa (PRISA), Co-founder and honorary member of Public Relations & Communication Professionals Association of Mauritius PRCPA-M and Public Relations Association of Mozambique (ADERP). On the continental front, Sibeko is no stranger to what was then the Federation of Public Relations Association (FAPRA) now known as African Public Relations Associations (APRA).

Professional Goals Sibeko aspire to make a meaningful contribution in developing and implementing real world class solutions for real world class challenges in strategic management practice holistically. His professional career span over 30 years employment in various organizations at senior management level as Communication Manager, Corporate Development Manager, Customer Relationship Manager.

Sibeko is a Guest Lecturer and corporate training facilitator as well as a sought after speaker. He also facilitates strategy development, implementation, integrated Public Relations, Marketing Communication, Crisis Management, etc. He has spoken at various conferences, seminars both locally and internationally.

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Kwame Senou, MAPRA, MPRCA



Founder and Senior Vice-President at Opinion & Public, a public relations firm affiliate to BCW and based in Ivory-Coast, **Kwame Senou** has been in Communications, Advertising and PR for the last 14 years. Before joining the agency universe, he has worked as journalist in print and online media. He has worked in various capacities in agencies, such as strategic communications, media relations, paid media, advertising, branding, events, content production.

Kwame's skills lie in audience research, audience understanding, design and implementation of strategy for both online and offline communications. He has a large experience in the Francophone Africa, with large corporations, public sector and Non-Profit. He has, over his career, worked with all the major marketing services, global conglomerates.

Kwame is a Republic of Benin's citizen from a Ghanaian origin. He holds Business and Private Law master's degree as well as corporate strategy and business leadership executive education certificates. Kwame Senou is a full member of African Public Relations Association (APRA) and Public Relations and Communication Association (PRCA)

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/qwames> | <https://twitter.com/qwames>

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Henry Rugamba



Henry Rugamba is a seasoned PR professional with over two decades in PR and marketing communications working in Uganda and Rwanda where he was Host of Popular TV Talk Show 'Tuesday Forum'.

He honed his skills at British American Tobacco and more recently at Umeme Uganda's leading Electricity Distribution Company.

While at BAT Henry was exposed to the 'Best in Class' media training sessions which enabled him to effectively articulate issues around tobacco and health and built his media management skills

Once described as 'the guy you want in the room during a crisis' Henry was instrumental in building Umeme's brand and bringing key stakeholders and customers to the table of consensus.

Henry is the Managing Partner of Songa Communications a PR and Marketing Communications Agency serving clients like Umeme, UBL, Eskom Uganda Hima Cement, Ministry of Water and Environment, Actis, and dfcu Bank

A Past Captain of Uganda Golf Club and a Past President of the Public Relations Association of Uganda, Henry also devotes his time to non-and not for profit organisations like Hospice Uganda where he serves on the Board of Directors and The Rotary Club of Kampala where he has served in various capacity is President Nominee 2021/22

Henry is Married to Rosette Chantal and they have 3 children.

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Kamal TAIBI

Founder & CEO - Stratëus Group



Kamal TAIBI founded Stratëus Group, one of the leading firms in public relations, public affairs and strategic communications in North Africa, in 2010. According to The Holmes Report's EMEA Consultancy Report Card, "Stratëus Group has quickly established itself as one of the most capable and thoughtful independent firms in the fast-growing North Africa region".

Leading an international team of specialists active - and on the ground - in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Mauritania, Senegal and other leading markets in North and West Africa, Kamal has used his experience of over fifteen years in public affairs, public relations and communications to build an organization that has become synonymous with excellence and prestige.

Throughout these years in the industry, Kamal advised leading multinationals and large local organizations in sectors such as telecoms, finance, automotive, energy, mining and pharmaceuticals on diverse strategic issues. He also initiated and helped set up four industry coalitions to communicate more effectively.

Kamal also advised the Government on communications issues related to transition in relation to Budget and other issues. In 2013 he has served as communications counsel to Morocco's Minister of Economy and Finances.

He has been called to speak on the communications industry in many occasions and places around the world, from London to Cape Town and from Hong Kong to Miami and Washington, DC. He has been active member of the steering committee to establish the MENA branch of PRCA, the leading global public relations organization. He is now an active Board Member of PRCA Mena.

In Morocco, Kamal serves as a Board member of the Moroccan Commerce and Services Federation and Vice-President of Services Commission at the CGEM (the Moroccan Employers General Confederation), and a founding member of Tanmia.ma – helping local NGOs with the use of ICT.

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Dr Michèle Mekeme



With an experience of more than 10 years in teaching both in Cameroon and Central Africa region, **Michele Mekeme** is a Senior Lecturer at the Advanced School of Mass Communication (State University of Yaoundé-Cameroon).

As past president of the national PR Association, she gave a new impetus to the Association and boosted PR students to put in place their own associations.

Over the years, Michèle developed her existing knowledge and skills in various fields as corporate communication, PR, internal communication, corporate social responsibility, C4D.

As Senior Consultant, Michele Mekeme led several researches and communication campaigns for public and private organizations in Cameroon and in some francophone countries.

Michèle Mekeme is an active member of several Non-Profit Organizations, works as a volunteer in orphanages, loves to travel and always planning next trip. She speaks French, English and Russian (fluently).

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Dr. Wilfred Marube, MPRSK



Wilfred Marube has an experience of over a decade in public relations and communication management as a practitioner, facilitator, trainer and scholar. Wilfred has a PhD in communication studies with professional qualifications in public relations and marketing.

Dr Marube has been involved in many projects among them development of strategic plans, communication strategies, communication audits, change management communication and training programmes.

Currently, Wilfred is the President of Public Relations Society of Kenya and the CEO of Kenya Export Promotion and Branding Agency. He is also a member of the Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management Board and serves as the Delegate-at-Large for Africa.

Some of Dr. Marube's published works include:

Communication initiatives for the improvement of infrastructure: A study of water and sanitation programmes in informal settlements in Kenya

Has the Kenyan Public Relations and Communication Management Industry Come of Age?

A normative reflection on the practice of public relations and or corporate communication in Kenya

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