

Newsletter

Dear colleagues,

At the beginning of 2024, we hope that peace will return in all the countries of the world, whether in Ukraine, Gaza and Africa, and also that men, women and especially leaders can manage to discuss. Often wars come from injustices that have never been settled, from the will of power of some, and also from aspirations for freedom.

In this sometimes-difficult context, the modest role of USF is to help train responsible humans so that their country can develop harmoniously in a concern for peace and well-being of its inhabitants.

Recall that since 2009, with more than 10,000 correspondents around the world, USF can help you in the constitution of new student training, in the improvement of your relations with the socio-economic circles of your country, in the employability of students, in the definition of research directions, in the training of researchers, in the prospecting of original teachings, etc. Just contact us and immediately a project manager will be your interlocutor and will seek the (or colleagues) competent for your project. Do not hesitate to contact us!

In France, a law called "asylum and migration" was recently voted which is very controversial because it contains harmful provisions for foreign students. Like many academics and institutions, USF is vigilant on the fate that will be reserved for this law because it must be validated or invalidated by the Constitutional Council by the end of January 2024.

In this issue, we will present the report of the visit of the USF president, Professor Emeritus Jean Ruffier, to Ivory Coast and its consequences. Then, we will resume the text of our colleague Bernard Landais on the brilliant success of CAMES which is a sign of hope for the future of Africa. Finally, we echo the announcement of a university of Guinea for the research of its future rector.

Wishing a great year 2024.

Prof. Robert Laurini, Editor of the USF-AWB Newsletter. ■

USF mission in Ivory Coast (November 2023)

This mission is my first in sub-Saharan Africa. I am quite competent on the problems of industrial development in Latin America, China and even the Maghreb. As the new president of USF, it was important for me to feel for this part of the world where many of our interventions take place. I will first talk about what I did in Bouaké and then in Abidjan. I

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will make an update on the migration of young people to France, and I will conclude on what I learned from Ivorians about life.



Allassane Ouattara University in Bouaké

It is a public university. The presidency, but also the teaching staff, are very keen on external speakers because they feel a little isolated, or even neglected by the capital. Less autonomous than private universities, they can hardly afford a plane ticket from France and it is important to sign an agreement more adapted to their administrative possibilities. But their desire for cooperation is such that they tend to get away from each other. But their desire for cooperation is such that they tend to stick to the proposals that USF makes to them.

I gave a conference on what Ivory Coast can get out of China's industrial take-off. More than 15 teachers and nearly 200 students will attend. I explain to them how the regime has allowed small private bosses to develop a little anarchically, while following them closely, both to reproduce what worked and eventually to clean up the mess. Then I talked about corruption, which should not be seen as the main enemy of development, because small private companies would otherwise have little access to those who give the permits (or accept non-compliance with certain regulations). I answered more than half an hour of non-stop questions (basically, we didn't think the Chinese were so disorganized in their factories, we imagined them to be more hardworking and disciplined). The rest of the questions are about the adaptation of the Chinese in Ivory Coast. Auditors are very interested in my method of conducting surveys on and with companies. This method consists of putting together a multi-national team and interviewing all hierarchical levels, looking with each level to find out what may be the best strategy to do better. Among other things, this method makes it possible to improve the links between business and university.



A private university, RUSTA in Ivory Coast

This university brought me in and paid for

most of this mission. We talked to the management but mainly prepared for future missions. In terms of need, the university maintains a journal in management sciences and organizational problems. It is looking for an assistant editor-in-chief, preferably French. It is also looking for an academic from Europe or North Africa willing to take a sabbatical year at RUSTA in Abidjan. For further information, please contact rusta.ustci@gmail.com.

Meeting with Pierre Therme (Embassy of France)

His first diagnosis is that Ivory Coast does not have universities at the level of its economic power and that this hinders its development. He understands that young people want to leave because really a lot of gates are closed (reserved for the nomenclatura). In addition, there is no reliable entity for ranking or evaluating public or private universities. This makes the training offer particularly obscure. He himself wanted to support a request for certification of a strategic professional Bachelor program. Despite the strength of the case, this request has dragged on and it is unclear whether it will be granted. Much more dubious formations with political support were able to be satisfied very quickly.

For him, what is most lacking are professional Bachelor programs in touch with the country's economic activity. Industrialists would be prepared to finance in exchange for participation in the definition of syllabi.

A recent reform, that of the creation of thematic universities, can really promote employment and economic development. He notes that these universities are run by younger, well-trained professors (generally in France).

About migrants to France

My wife interviewed a lot of drivers, as well as shopkeepers, to convince them not to send their children to Europe. With strong arguments (25% mortality in the desert and the sea, 95% torture and ill-treatment, widespread rape). Her interlocutors find it hard to believe her because this aspect of the crossing to Europe apparently unknown to them, there is a blackout, the young people only tell them what works so they have the impression of a country of opportunities. When she says that smugglers are criminals, you can see the astonishment on the faces of her interlocutors. The flow is not about to dry up anytime soon. And yet, the same young

people we see cheerful and enterprising in Ivory Coast find themselves demolished and globally unhappy in France. They have more money, but a much more painful life and multiple traumas that will weigh on them for a long time.

And yet this flow is completely anti-development: the villages gather around 7000€ for each child sent. This money must come back in the form of an annuity. If they were invested in training and helping the same young person settle in, they would be more involved in improving the local economy.

To conclude

In this mission, I would have learned more than taught. I learned about the weight of university hierarchies in both the private and public sectors. Decisions are taken at the top, which paralyzes the initiative of teachers, as well as students, and above all makes decisions longer and opaquer. Fortunately, there is the tradition of the palaver which allows Africans to solve a number of problems among themselves. That said, Ivory Coast is an active, growing country, and quite open to the French in particular.

For further information and debates, please contact Professor Jean Ruffier, <jean.ruffier@usf-awb.net>. ■

Education: Cames, an African success story

Every two years, the African and Malagasy Council for Higher Education (CAMES²) organizes the Cames competition in different disciplines to get habilitation for full professorship. Hailing from 18 French-speaking African countries, the winners are often part of their country's political elite. Here is the report of our colleague, Bernard Landais, Professor Emeritus of Economics at the University of South Brittany, volunteer at the University in Bamako and Libreville, and member of the juries of the Cames competition in economic sciences in 2013, 2015 and 2017. This article was previously published by *Jeune Afrique*³ magazine on December 7, 2023.

² <https://www.lecames.org/>

³ <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/>



For the past two months, the Cames Competitive Examination for Associate Professors in the Disciplines of Legal, Political, Economic and Management Sciences (SJPEG) has been held in Yaoundé. For more than forty years, all the elites of the SJPEG faculties of the 18 French-speaking countries that make up the Cames zone have gone through this competition.

I had the privilege of participating four times in these rather solemn recruitment procedures, in Congo, Togo and Cameroon.

Area of cooperation

The Cames organization is unique in the world. It is a space for cooperation between almost all the French-speaking countries south of the Sahara. Every two years, the SJPEG competition alternates with the medical competition, which is held in even-numbered years. In addition, Cames manages the promotion of academics to the rank of associate professors or promotions "by seniority".



The political and social role of Cames is even more important as the proportion of young people on the continent – and those who go through higher education – continues to grow. It is therefore essential to provide all States in the area with a competent teaching corps who are also capable of advancing research. There are probably already as many good French-

speaking economists south of the Sahara as there are in France, and this is also increasingly true for legal disciplines.

CAMES: the results of thirty years of decentralized cooperation

The Cames is historically linked to the French presence, mainly by the language, but also by the maintenance of old French recruitment procedures. The competitive examination for higher education was formerly practiced in France in all disciplines of the former faculties of law and economics. The formula chosen by Cames is no longer really that of a competition, despite the term used, but rather that of an exam, where the bar is set more or less high depending on the discipline and the year. Each Member State assumes for itself the consequences, including financial consequences, of the results obtained.

Beyond the political vicissitudes

In fact, university cooperation as practiced by Cames is a factor of peace and progress. This year, for example, the coup d'état in Niger and serious threats of war have put many countries on alert. However, the 2023 competition was planned to take place in Niamey. When the coup d'état occurred in July, the Cames competition was quickly able to count on the benevolent and active hospitality of Cameroon, in the "neutral land" of Central Africa. Candidates came from all over, from Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali, forming the "military bloc", but also from Ivory Coast, Senegal and Benin, the dominant countries of the West African "democratic bloc". In Yaoundé, the members of the juries came together fraternally to "run the shop" and nothing came to tarnish the meeting of this great university "international".

Each country comes to the competition with its own candidates and needs, and usually leaves with winners who will integrate at the highest level into their higher education institutions.

Community of Culture and Understanding

The French who participate in these programs continue the great tradition of cooperation. Just like the military mentioned by General Frédéric Blachon in his recent interventions, these actors on the ground retain the trust and friendship of the French people, well beyond the political vicissitudes of the moment.

Since independence, there has been no shortage of quarrels and coups d'état in Africa, some of which were fomented or supported by the French government itself. There has also been no shortage of returns to grace and reconciliations. Nothing is irreparable, and fortunately, when we see how united African academic elites can be. French-speaking Africans have sometimes tried all sorts of alliances with countries such as China, the United States or Russia, with more or less good and more or less constant intentions. Usually, they have bitten their fingers, because a community of culture and trust, such as the one that binds Africa to Africa, is a France is what matters most in the long term.

Because it is rooted in a widely shared culture, the academic cooperation of Africans among themselves and with French professors is an example of what economic development should be in Africa, in France and throughout the world.

For further information and debates, please contact Professor Bernard Landais, <landais-bernard@wanadoo.fr>. ■

Notice of recruitment of a rector for Aguibou Barry University, Conakry - Guinea

Presentation - Background and Rationale

Created in 2013 by Order No. 4638/MESRS/CAB of September 16, 2013, the Higher Institute of Computer Science and Management - University of New Technologies (ISIM-UNT), became by Order No. 2019/086/MESRS/CAB of 30/01/2019, Aguibou Barry University (UAB).

It delivers Bachelor programs, state diplomas and is authorized by the National Agency for Quality Assurance (ANAQ).

The recruitment of a new rector for UAB is crucial to strengthen academic and institutional leadership, foster excellence in higher education, and promote innovative research.

In response to the rapid growth of the university and the current challenges in the education sector, the new rector will be responsible for:

1. Define a strategic vision,
2. Roll out master's programs,
3. Guiding academic policies,
4. Optimize institutional management

5. Develop partnerships
6. Coordinate all activities of the university.



Primary Responsibilities

1. Academic Leadership:
 - Define the academic vision of the university and develop strategies for its implementation.
 - Oversee academic policies and programs, ensure the quality of teaching and research.
2. Institutional Management:
 - Lead the day-to-day operations of the university.
 - Manage human, financial and material resources effectively.
3. External Relations:
 - Establish and maintain relationships with academic partners, government agencies, business, industry, and civil society.
 - Represent the university in academic and professional forums.
4. Strategic Development:
 - Contribute to strategic planning and institutional development.
 - Identify and promote new initiatives to drive growth and innovation.
5. Governance:
 - Work closely with the Board of Directors and governance bodies.
 - Ensure compliance with institutional policies and legal standards.

Qualifications

1. Minimum level PhD in Humanities, Management, Business Administration, Law, Technology and other related fields.
2. Management experience in the higher education sector of at least 5 years.
3. Proven experience in managing complex educational institutions.
4. In-depth knowledge of educational trends and research.
5. Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
6. Ability to mobilize resources and develop

- partnerships.
7. Excellent French language speaking and writing.

Working conditions

- Type of contract: Permanent contract, with a 6-month trial period
- Location: Conakry - Republic of Guinea
- Compensation: To be negotiated based on experience and qualifications.
- Start date: September 1, 2024.

Recruitment Process

1. Applications must be sent in French to the address fondatrice@isim-uab.com or scolarite@isim-uab.com by the deadline 31 January 2024.
 2. Selection of candidates for interviews.
 3. Interviews with the search committee.
 4. Final evaluation and selection of the successful candidate. ■
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