**ICOB@10 Convention Report**

**Residence Inn by Marriot**

**Toronto, Canada**

**July 25 to July 29, 2013**

ICOB Toronto hosted the 10th annual ICOB convention from July 25th to July 29th, 2013, in downtown Toronto, Canada where ICOB was formed 10 years before. Over 150 delegates were in attendance travelling from all corners of Canada, USA, United Kingdom and Uganda. Ms Lilliane Rumanyika Mugisha, welcomed the delegates to Toronto, Canada on behalf of the Toronto Organising Committee.

The Convention was officially opened on Friday July 26, 2013 by ICOB President, Mr Johnson Mujungu who spoke about ICOB’s journey over the past ten years. The Convention key note speech was given by Mr Phillip Odera, Chief Executive Officer, Stanbic Bank, Uganda Ltd. Mr Odera gave an inspiring speech sharing experiences and providing practical solutions to a profitable Kigezi.

The delegates were also honoured to have Retired Major General Mugisha Muntu, in attendance. Ret Maj Gen Muntu is the President of the Forum for Democratic Change. In his brief remarks, Ret Maj Gen Muntu encouraged delegates to be involved in issues surrounding good governance in Uganda if we aspire for positive change.

The discussions within the two days at the Convention focused on the following topics:

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|  | **Topic** | **Discussion led by:** |
| 1 | ICOB, the next ten years | Ms Charity Katarikawe Dr Muniini Mulera |
| 2 | The role of the Diaspora in the development of Kigezi | Mr Robert Kabushenga |
| 3 | Volunteerism and Giving Back to Kigezi | Ms. Muriel Alvares |
| 4 | A Sustainable Education Strategy | Prof Joy Kwesiga |
| 5 | Techno-Cultural Dilemma in relation to Kigezi | Mr Tony Ekodeu |
| 6 | Language and Culture for Children and Youth | Mrs Florence Mulera, Ms Jane Mulera, Ms Priska Kansiime |

After the two days of constructive discussions, the following resolutions were agreed upon by the delegates:

1. The ICOB website should be more interactive and to incorporate online payment options like PayPal. This will facilitate members and well-wishers to financially support ICOB projects. The target date is 90 days of the end of ICOB convention in Toronto.
2. Consider investing in money making projects to support the organization, such as farming.
3. Consider programs such as "Kilos for ICOB" to make a change in Kigezi. This will work through ICOB members in countries like USA, UK and Canada, collecting items such as books which would be transported by members during their regular travels to Uganda.
4. ICOB to consider partnering with:
	1. Political leaders to effect change in the Kigezi region.
	2. Kabale University, to transform lives through education and sports.
5. Identify four primary schools to implement the use of technology to facilitate primary education; this may include the use of Skype to provide free seminars.
6. Consider providing training in farming methods to locals;
7. Consider providing long distance learning opportunities;
8. Creation of ICOB sub-committees to handle different tasks of the organization;
9. Need for youth board members;
10. Volunteerism to be emphasized;

Elections were held on Saturday July 27th, 2014, and all the Board members were elected unopposed. Two Board positions remain open and are yet to be filled.

The organising Committee prepared a memorable weekend to celebrate ICOB’s 10th anniversary, with a cultural dinner dance held on Friday evening. This featured cultural performances and music, and a kikiga dance competition. Teams Canada, USA and United Kingdom competed in the kikiga dance upon which team USA emerged winners of the night. The highlight of the cultural night to mark ICOB’s 10th anniversary was the ICOB Board cutting the cake and popping of champagne. The guests enjoyed a wonderful late night celebration of culture and ICOB’s milestone.

A fundraising boat cruise gala was held on Saturday night with over 200 people aboard the “Spirit of Kigezi” sailing Lake Ontario. Delegates enjoyed a dinner dance and fundraising campaign in support of ICOB’s flagship, the Kigezi Education Fund (KEF). KEF supports vocational, business and technical training of young Banyakigezi.

The Convention concluded with an Ecumenical Church Service held at the hotel on Sunday morning, followed by a family barbeque picnic in the afternoon at Centre Island, Toronto. Overall, it was an opportune moment to take stock of ICOB’s 10 year journey, and to plan for a promising future. The ICOB@10 Convention was a great success.

Special thanks go out to the Toronto Organising Committee for their dedication and hard work towards the ICOB@10 Convention.  Thank you too, to all the delegates who were able to physically be present in Toronto, and to all the well wishers.

**Toronto Organising Committee**

Chairman Dr Muniini Mulera

Vice Chairperson Ms Schollah Kamusiime

Secretary Ms Doreen Babirye Kakuru

Treasurer Ms Lilliane Rumanyika Mugisha

Coordinator Mr Emmanuel Ndyanabo

Members: Mr Innocent Karuhanga

 Mrs Florence Mulera

 Mr Nkunda Kabateraine

 Dr Peter Bikangaga

 Ms Irene Kyompaire

 Mrs Judith Karuhanga

 Mrs Maureen Bikangaga

 Mr Rogers Beyongyera

 Rev Charles Olango

***'*Gatagata munonga *gateebirwe wa beene mbeho.'***

***Never forget the good customs and characteristics of the Bakiga, nor forget your own language.***