



## **Empowerment And The Mankon People**

**Keynote Address - MACUDA-USA 2007**

**By**

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Mr. President, thank you for the kind introduction. Mr. President, the Executive of MACUDA-USA, fellow Mankon citizens resident in the United States you are all welcomed to this august gathering of our people in the United States of America.

Boh mbuꞑꞑ h Mankon Angwafo: Mah ghah astahtuiꞑꞑ woehnꞑꞑ oh!  
Boh mbuꞑꞑ h Mankon Ndefru: Mah ghah astahtuiꞑꞑ woehnꞑꞑ oh!  
Boh mbuꞑꞑ h Mankon: Mah ghah astahtuiꞑꞑ woehnꞑꞑ oh!

I will really like to speak to you in Mankon, but I am sure only people like Muntaw Adebang, the princesses, and my palace relatives can understand the palace muhbakoꞑꞑ h I speak. So, I will speak to you in English. I will also like to dedicate this speech to the memory of my dad, Prince Joseph Fruasaha Ndefru, III, alias NDOMU for his self-less service to Mankon.

When I was called upon to present the keynote address in MACUDA-USA2007 I concluded it must have been a mistake. Who can even think of me as worth anything, let alone speak to the Mankon people. I never responded. Three subsequent messages were left, to which I did not respond. Finally, Tata Muma got in touch with me to confirm my acceptance. Without going into the details, I finally accepted to deliver the talk. The question was the topic. I was told to come up with a topic of my choosing. Two weeks later I was asked to speak on Empowerment and the Mankon people. Less than a month to the Convention I got an email asking me to talk on EMPOWERMENT AND MACUDA-USA.

I consider it an honor to me, my immediate family, the Ndefru family all over, and the Palace of Mankon to be given this unique opportunity to address my people. If I do a good job in this talk credit it to me. However, if I goof charge it to the palace for not doing a good job bringing me up.

Before I continue, I wish to introduce you to David and Paula Block my very close friends and members of the board of our organization (Nurses for International Development, Inc.) that I happen to be its president. They have done so much for Mankon and its people they will not stay behind for me to come here alone. They are really Mankon people born in the USA (Mankon Muhkarah). They have our people at heart. Please, give them a hand. This is your brother and sister. Please, show them Mankon hospitality. David will assist me with the projection of the Power Point. Now on the topic:

According to the World Bank: Empowerment is a process of increasing the capacity of an individuals or groups to;

- Make Choices
- Take action
- Build collective assets
- Improve efficiency and fairness

This is academic. My presentation of empowerment will be nonacademic. It will be more personal. In this light, **Empowerment and MACUDA-USA** is seen as the organizationꞑꞑ s ability to:

- ꞑꞑFreely encourage and nurture Mankon people in all areas of human endeavor;
- ꞑꞑCreate an enabling environment for economic and social well being; and
- ꞑꞑSeek the greater good of the majority of the tribe.

**Empowerment and Mankon History.** This is not a new phenomenon to Mankon. Our leaders; Fon Ndefru, III and Fon Angwafo, III embody the spirit of empowerment.

**Fon Ndefru, III** mobilized and personally supervised the population in construction and maintenance of roads all over Mankon, some leading to nowhere. Thanks to him we have the main lifeline linking the station to the main Mankon city, commercial avenue, just any major and minor streets in Mankon can be credited to him. Similarly, although very illiterate, my grandfather organized and ensured that his people set up a fund for educating any Mankon child that desired an education. He taxed families to contribute toward the Education Fund with each family having a contribution card. Families were systematically sanctioned if they failed to make their contributions toward that fund. With such contributions investments were undertaken to generate even more money to educate our children. His capacity to mobilize his people extended to farming. No adult resident in Mankon fondom had any reason not to go and cultivate special farms on the specific days assigned for collective labor to grow food for the fon to feed his people as the need arose. Bottom line: he brought the good out of the Mankon people.

**Fon Angwafo, III** has followed the foot steps of his dad. He specialized in Agriculture in college and has not failed his people with his exemplary agricultural skills seen all over Mankon. His plantations, livestock, you name them are highly professionally managed and manicured. He is the Fon of the Green Revolution. He spares no energy in seeing his people advance. He has an agricultural legacy in Mankon that is equal to none in the entire province. He has tried to work with all Mankon elites all over, going down to their levels to make sure they work in the interest of the tribe. He goes down to the level of the common man to see what is in their interest. Bottom line: he brings the good out of the Mankon people.

With these examples we are proud that the empowerment concept is not a new invention in Mankon. What is new in the concept, is what we in the USA can do **NOW** to build on what our leaders have worked on and are working on so hard with minimal resources? What can we in the USA do to invigorate, rejuvenate, serve as a catalyst to Mankon people in Mankon in ways never thought of before? What can we do different to let our leadership and those who have gone before, be proud to say, ;°Our dreams are being realized.;± **How can we transform our American-savvy into a Mankon-savvy?** How can we move Mankon to a higher dimension unparalleled in Mankon history? How can we show our leadership that we appreciate all they have done and are doing and that we are now ready to take it over from here-onwards? To contextually place the notion of empowerment within MACUDA-USA, these questions, and others must be fully addressed. How can we bring the good out of the Mankon people? What is our vision for Mankon;~'s future? This is our challenge. If we succeed in addressing these questions, we would have empowered the Mankon people, and God forbid, vice versa.

**The question of Leadership:** Travis Smiley noted that ;°You are the leader you have been looking for;± Put differently, We are the leaders Mankon has been looking for. Every single Mankon resident in the USA is a leader. It is not easy to get to the USA. Hence, MACUDA-USA **can be** and **should be** the leadership our people need and deserve. This is our mandate because **we were born so**. Denying this truism is denying the essence of who each Mankon person is. It will be a self-deception. No Mankon person can take this lightly. Our Mankonity lies on this thesis.

What stands in our way in doing that which is right and proper for the greater good of our people? The answer is **FEAR:**

Fear that prevents us from even trying  
Fear that leads us to think ; i°What can one person or group do?;±  
Fear that takes our eyes off the good that we can do.  
The aquoetereh Mankon; h (Mankon pride) is today buried in a sea of fear. Imagine where we would have been if our forefathers were buried in such fear.

Do not be afraid John Paul II (June 2, 1979) told his people on his first visit to Poland. He was a catalyst for the populist solidarity movement in Poland. He was a source of inspiration, hope, and ultimately lead to the success of millions in that country. We are lucky, he also visited Mankon, and kissed the Mankon soil. He even spoke in Mankon. Need we still be afraid? The true Mankon person fears no one. Look at our language: wuo saha; keh? wuo sah; mangieh, nu; h saha; keh? We have to overcome fear. We have to stop thinking about fear, especially because The Lord said so, ;±Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand;±. Isaiah 41:10. Fear saps our will power and leaves us feeling depleted and hopeless.

Stop thinking about what you don; t want.

Focus on what you do want.

Let go of the past. I was happy when I was advised by the committee to stay off of failings of the past. I surely was not going to get there anyway. We have to move forward.

Move forward using the greatest antidote of fear---**Love**

There is no fear in love, because perfect love casts out fear

1 John 4:18.

**LOVE EMPOWERS US TO**

**THINK BIG**

**BELIEVE WE CAN**

**ACT** as my grandfather did to make roads and education a reality, and feeding our people. Act as my father is doing all over Mankon today.

**REMEMBER:** Love is not just a feeling. **LOVE IS ACTION.**

Actio Sequitur Esse, (action follows nature/essence);<sup>a</sup>that which makes Mankon Mankon; contextually, actio sequitur Mankonis amat (love of Mankon is measured in action).

**DO YOU LOVE MANKON?** I say!, **DO YOU LOVE MANKON?**

If your answer is Yes, prove it.

Love empowers us to:

Create an organization like MACUDA-USA;

An organization that strives to

-encourage rural people to become self-reliant

-promote economic and cultural development

-Encourage Mankon people to meet the enormous challenges of the future, and

-provide the leadership and support they need to succeed.

**NOTE!** The love mentioned here is love beyond the immediate and distant families. It is love for those Mankon people in the remote parts of Mankon or even in the city who can get no help because there is no

one else to stand up for them. It is the love that each Mankon person can say: **we take care of our own.** I cannot say I love Mankon, and not care about a Mankon person in distress.

The talk on Empowerment for MACUDA-USA only makes sense if it applies to this set of people in Mankon. I know you will agree with me that it will be a waste of time for me to stand here and start telling you that you need to be empowered to take care of your families or members of your families. This is taken as a given. Empowerment sets in when it goes over and beyond this level. That's what I'm talking about.

## **THE POWER OF A VISION**

Where there is no vision, the people perish; Proverbs 29-18

### **MACUDA-USA IS THAT VISION!**

MACUDA-USA can change the future of Mankon people!

MACUDA-USA can empower Mankon people to move forward!

MACUDA-USA has to assume the leadership.

Existing in the USA is not and cannot be a small thing. The leadership of MACUDA worldwide must come from MACUDA-USA.

The USA is both the economic and political capital of the world. MACUDA-USA has to assume its role befitting the environment in which it is located (*les grands ne sont pas petits*).

MACUDA-USA has to be a model for MACUDA-CAMEROON, MACUDA-AFRICA, MACUDA-EUROPE, MACUDA-LATIN AMERICA, MACUDA-AUSTRALIA, MACUDA-CANADA. The vision for the future is wide open. Mankon is the political capital of Cameroon; the birthplace of both the CPDM and the SDF. Let us give birth to a model MACUDA-USA to play the role befitting our place of origin. I'll tell you a little story:

When my daughter sent me an email and signed it: Princess of Mankon, My heart skipped a beat when I read it. I was overwhelmed for days. Then I remembered a young man in Mankon some years back on a Saturday's program he called Radio Ndzu'mahbugh. He was a thriller; stole the hearts of everyone, even those that felt Mankon names should not be applied on the streets our forefathers dug for us. This means one does not have to be rich to have an impact on Mankon. You just have to be you and share that Mankonity in you with others. They will finally come around.

Our vision should be to make every Mankon person proud and ready to express and show it; young and old anywhere in the world.

### **AN OPPORTUNITY EXISTS NOW**

NY Times article last fall had an article by Nicholas Kristof of a woman in labor in a hospital in Cameroon and the husband made a plea to the doctor **My Baby is Dead, Save My Wife**. The family struggled to come up with 100,000 Frs. CFA borrowed left, right and center to save the woman's life, but the doctor was gone and the woman died. Each one of you sitting here has at least 10 stories like this, if not worse to tell.

What we should be talking about is not just saving a live but saving lives.

It is too costly and time consuming to train doctors.

The question is: How do we meet the medical care needs of our people and minimize lots of meaningless deaths in our society?

## **FAITH AND ACTION**

For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without action is dead; James 2:26.

▶ No one cares how much you know until they know how much you care

▶ Until you act, no one knows you care.

▶ MACUDA-USA will prove that it is an organization that not only talks the talk, but does the walking.

**ASSIGNMENT:** For starters: All Mankon residents in the USA should **each** write a check or money order to the National Treasurer of MACUDA-USA of \$100 (one hundred dollars) reaching that office by the end of the month of August, 2007. In the portion that says FOR: (write) **I LOVE MANKON**. The word I Love may be replaced with a heart in any color, preferably red. This is outside the constitutional requirements of membership. It is a simple sign and pledge of all Mankon residents in the United States: one simple step, but a great step for Mankon. Show that we are each ready to turn the corner.

MACUDA-USA should create a task force to address issues of health care, education and others in Mankon.

I am also presenting to you our organization, Nurses for International Development, Inc. (NID); an organization that has opened a college in Mankon:

### **Mankon International College of health Sciences (MICHS)**

MICHS goal is to train 300 medical health care professionals applying state of the art equipment and personnel in Cameroon and the United States of America.

Integrate the graduates into rural and urban areas in Mankon

Improve the health of our people. Empower Mankon people to **THINK BIG**, to **BELIEVE THEY CAN**, and to change their future through **ACTION**

**MICHS WILL BE VIRTUALLY LAUNCHED TODAY BEFORE YOU ALL**

There is the saying in Mankon that when a child is in the womb, it is the property of the mother. Once the child is born, it becomes the property of the community. Today, my American colleagues and myself representing the board members (10) of NID is presenting Mankon International College of Health Sciences (MICHS) to the Mankon people. David and the wife have never been to Africa, and surely not to Mankon, but came to know about MICHS slightly over a year ago. They have supported in cash over \$4000 and put in a phenomenal of hours to help the effort succeed. These are truly brothers and sisters of Mankon people (Mankon-mukarah). You all here have reason to thank them and show them that their efforts mean something to you all. What you do individually and collectively to push make this school a success will directly be telling them that they have not been wasting their time and money. It will be an encouragement for them to do more. This is one of the challenges for MACUDA-USA.

### **Now, WHAT CAN MACUDA-USA DO TO MICHS?**

Transform MICHS into a veritable Mankon institution with most students being of Mankon origin.

Introduce all branches of MACUDA-USA and beyond to what MICHS has done.

Introduce them to the website: [www.nid-michs.org](http://www.nid-michs.org)

Encourage families, and friends in Mankon and Cameroon as a whole looking for a brighter future to contact MICHS

Sponsor one or more scholarships

Sponsor a classroom

Volunteer to help in the school at home or the organization in the USA by working with NID, Inc. Board of Directors

Professionals should team up and sponsor students or MICHS projects.  
Help NID maximize an anonymous donor offering us a matching gift of \$6000 if we come up with \$12,000.  
**NOTE: There is nothing in MICHS that is an individual's benefit.**

I urge you to THINK BIG,  
Go with your Heart  
Be the change in Mankon Community

While we go on to cut the tape opening MICHS, you will all take note on the screen for key information on your college, a Mankon college. Promote the Mankon name through this college. Reach us at any time.  
Thank you very much for listening.

LONG LIVE MACUDA-USA, LONG LIVE MANKON,  
LONG LIVE EVERYONE, GOD BLESS YOU ALL

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON MICHS  
MICHS-MANKON, CAMEROON. NGOMGHAM  
P.O. BOX 83  
MANKON, BAMENDA, NWP, CAMEROON  
EMAIL: [michs@nid-michs.org](mailto:michs@nid-michs.org). WEBSITE: [www.nid-michs.org](http://www.nid-michs.org)

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