

Address by Rizwan Haider

To mark the launching of Africa Love Foundation that took place on June 26, 2015 at Hotel NOVOTEL Cotonou

I would like to wish you all a warm welcome to this festive Africa Love Foundation launching. I greet you all most sincerely you who have agreed to attend this event which is so important for us, who dearly love Africa and Benin in particular.

I will briefly tell you a bit more the motivation behind this foundation, the first initiatives that we will be working on following this launching party and the spirit which presides over our activities without getting into too many details. A more detailed presentation will be made shortly after my speech by Yena R. Apithy.

First of all, why this Foundation?

We all live in an environment characterized by difficulties and shortcomings inherent to developing countries. There are already many initiatives and institutions that have in charge the responsibility to find solutions to these problems. Government initiatives, the efforts of international donors, NGOs, associations, churches and so on, all dedicated to improve our local environment throughout our continent Africa.

We wish to remain humble and within the scope of our limits so we will not even pretend to replace those organizations, but we will position ourselves in a complementary attitude with respect to them. Our idea, which is also your idea somewhere, is born of a desire to contribute positively to society. Fortunately for us, we are among those who have had the chance to evolve and move forward in their professional and private life.

Today the vast majority of people around us do not have that chance. The founders of AfricaLove Foundation are convinced that we who have been so lucky, we have a moral duty to help those in need. Of course the question is how? Our reflections have mostly focused on the difficulties which the African youth and more specifically Benin youth are faced with.

We all know that wherever we find ourselves on this planet, the youth make up the future of our society. The future of nations depends on the effective engagement of youth for development. Therefore we have decided to devote our efforts to help the youth. We understand that the task is enormous and our

abilities are modest. We will begin in a simple, practical and concrete way but we expect to make a difference.

Training, and employment are the greatest challenges of our youth. It is well known that our economies do not generate enough jobs for young graduates. But there is also a paradox: Employers often do not find qualified people. Schools no longer train young people adequately so they know how to face the realities of the job market ahead of them. The technology gap is widening every day. How to bring one's touch, one's key expertise to this sad phenomenon?

Here is the approach of Africa Love Foundation, set up practical solutions by putting all our energy and experience at the disposal of young people. To begin our actions, we plan to implement mentoring and guidance programs for young graduates in order to get them ready for their integration into working life and anticipate the expectations of employers. In this way, they will be ready for the challenges.

We will need YOU, current business and administration leaders to bring your expertise on this and open your doors to these young people that Africa Love Foundation will train. We intend to expose them to opportunities, challenges and especially to adopt a positive attitude, openness, to the sense of commitment and professionalism. Those who will demonstrate their ambition to succeed after these seminars and training courses will be offered the opportunity of internships in your companies, my dear friends.

This is where Africa Love Foundation will call on your cooperation, you business leaders in this room, working with Africa Love Foundation, according to your needs and possibilities; you can receive these young graduates selected, in internships, and why not, if they are right for you, for future jobs. We must break through this bubble of unemployment, this will benefit to all of us in the long run.

Secondly, Africa Love Foundation envisages the creation of a training center for young trainees. This could take the form of a direct partnership with institutions and schools so that regular programs will be set up with schools boards. These are, ladies and gentlemen, dear guests, in a few words the reason and the first projects of Africa Love Foundation.

We want you all to join our family, bring your stone to this beautiful building in construction. There are no membership fees to pay. We expect your ideas, suggestions, comments and of course your participation in Africa Love Foundation initiatives because we have a dream that will become a reality with

our joint efforts. Long live the passionate of Benin, Long live to the Youth, Long live Africa Love.

Finally, I can not conclude without thanking all those who have worked for the creation of Africa Love Foundation and the organization of this launching party. I wish you a wonderful evening.