

Philip Emeagwali

# My Quest for an Internet

In this, the 35th installment of our weekly series at [emeagwali.com](http://emeagwali.com), we present Part 11 of Philip Emeagwali's lecture on "Africa's New Frontier: Creativity and Innovation." This article was transcribed from his lecture delivered in Geneva, Switzerland on April 26, 2010.

## Innovation is Africa's New Frontier

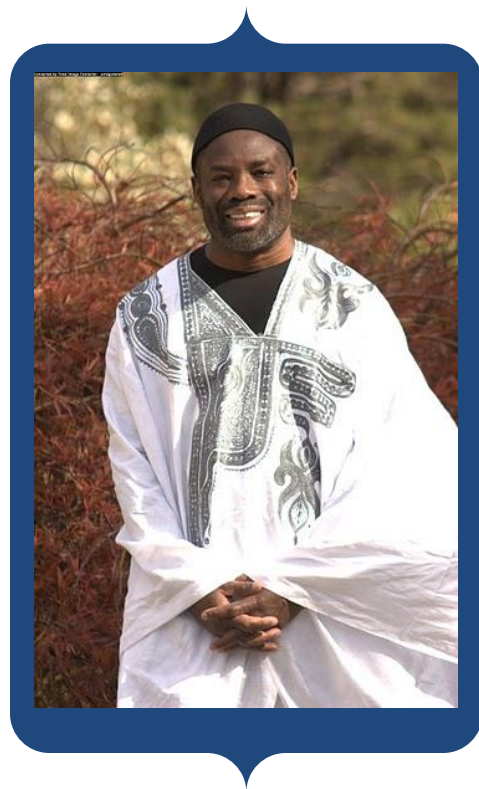
by [Philip Emeagwali](http://emeagwali.com)

[emeagwali.com](http://emeagwali.com)

The lecture [video](#) is posted at [emeagwali.com](http://emeagwali.com).

Why are we Nigerians having this conference on how innovation and technology can be used to develop our economy?

We've realized that our petroleum was formed millions of years ago, at a time our ancestors crawled on four legs. We've seen the oil wells we sunk 50 years ago dried up. We know it's our scientific discoveries and technological inventions that will increase humanity's intellectual capital [by creating new knowledge, new products, and new wealth and move Nigeria forward into a top twenty economy.](#)



[Africa can alleviate poverty by forcing the frontiers of science, pushing back the boundaries of what's possible with technology, climbing the branches of the tree of knowledge, and embarking on a journey with an uncertain outcome.](#)

[We cannot bring change without taking risks and without challenging the status quo. Great discoveries and great](#)

## 2 Innovation is Africa's New Frontier

*Philip Smeagoli*

inventions cannot be made without the risk of great failures.

Africa must cross the technological frontier to conquer tomorrow's challenges. Europe alleviated its poverty by through technological innovation, and taking risks in their search for new lands and oceans.

At a time it was believed that the world was flat and sailors were afraid to sail across the Atlantic Ocean, a young man was invited to join an expedition. He

refused and ridiculed their ships as too tiny and not hardy and argued that the Earth was not round. One morning, he stood on shore and bid a fearless sailor named Christopher Columbus safe journey.

The [video](#) of this speech is posted at [emeagwali.com](#).



You Tube

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*Philip Emeagwali*

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**Date:** 9/1/2006, 5:43 pm, GMT +6  
**Name:** Emem Udott <196.201.154.164>  
**Location:** Akwa Ibom, Nigeria  
**Number:** 74

Prof Philip Emeagwali  
you have been the greatest and no 1 on my  
list of great role model. you are one of most  
wonderful thing that has happen to Africa  
and to me as a Nigerian. I believe you will  
not fail us. dont allow any thing to distract  
you from finishing on top. big up my big  
Brother.

**Date:** 8/29/2006, 3:12 am, GMT +6  
**Name:** SYLVIA  
ODAGWE. <83.229.100.10>  
**Location:** NIGERIA  
**Number:** 73

*Philip Smeagwali*

SUCCESS HAS MANY RELATIVES,  
AND I AM PROUD TO BE  
ASSOCIATED WITH YOU. THANKS FOR  
MAKING AFRICANS PROUD. BIG  
UPS. RIDE ON BRO.

Date: 8/25/2006, 6:52 pm, GMT +6

Name: onu philip <64.201.33.242>

Location: Enugu

Number: 72

You are the man of our time. When i think  
of you, i see a light that is leading the good  
people of Nigeria. keep making us proud.

Date: 8/24/2006, 9:51 pm, GMT +6

Name: PHILIP BABAJIDE  
EDU <81.199.62.203>

Location: ABUJA

Number: 71

*Philip Emeagwali*

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I FEEL PROUD TO BE A NIGERIAN  
ONCE MORE,  
PLEASE DO NOT BACK US HELP  
NIGERIA AND NIGERIAN TO  
ACHIEVE GOOD IT LEVEL

**Date:** 8/24/2006, 1:00 am, GMT +6

**Name:** Williams Ukonu <195.93.21.134>

**Location:** London

**Number:** 70

If words alone could adequately state with exactitude the dexterity of the light you have shined on your african brothers, then the job would have been done before me. i feel that of the greatest of all is the joy that resonates in our hearts just by the mention of the technological messiah- Philip Emeagwali; the hero in whom Africa, African and the world are well

*Philip Smeagwali*

pleased. Respect bro!

**Date:** 8/23/2006, 7:24 pm, GMT +6

**Name:** Brian Keith  
Ford <199.173.225.28>

**Location:** Montgomery, Alabama

**Number:** 69

1. WOW!

**Date:** 8/23/2006, 8:42 am, GMT +6

**Name:** Faunee <68.48.32.222>

**Location:** Silver Spring

**Number:** 68

On Wednesday, Happy Birthday - God has blessed you with many skills and abilities. Thank you for realizing and pursuing your purpose in life....and for the internet!!!

*Philip Smeagwali*

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**Date:** 8/21/2006, 7:56 pm, GMT +6

**Name:** Cathy <24.209.245.142>

**Location:** Cincinnati Ohio USA

**Number:** 67

I am a European American woman stunned with growing understanding of the harm we have done to our global soul through the suffocation of our African brothers and sisters. Thank you for your web site illuminating another resilient, strong and beautiful African whose light shines on. Please ancestors of Africa.. persevere.

**Date:** 8/20/2006, 8:26 pm, GMT +6

**Name:** Ike Chidolue <24.174.78.96>

**Location:** Houston, Texas

**Number:** 66

*Philip Smeagwali*

Dear Sir,

Your site has become a bible of some sort to some of us. It inspires us in our quest to re-discover old truths. One of which is the truth about the place of the Blackman in science & technology. And as an Igbo man, the history and & the journey so far for us as Igbos.

Sir, I was honored to receive a phone call from you in 2005, & the only exhilarating experience I can compare the encounter of that day to, is the way I felt in Jan 2001 when I was granted a students visa to the United States.

Knowing fully well that the nature of your work and the towering responsibilities only allows you enough time to return only 2 to 3 calls per week, and these calls are chosen randomly.

Sir, it's an honor to be associated to you, either remotely or anyhow.

I feel Inspired, Informed & Involved with your works and the light that you and other great African over-achievers have lit in our hearts & minds.

Shine on sir, shine on and make the



*Philip Smeagoli*

mountains a plain for us the up and coming. Shine on, sir, and make the valleys a level ground for those yet un-born. Shine on Sir, and give a human face to the Blackman, a face filled with the light & the force of knowledge and wisdom. Such that whenever these people of a different skin color, that believe that nothing good can come out of Black-Africa, as they stare into your face, the rays of light & the heat of knowledge coming from you, will melt away their doubtful minds.

Shine on sir, and let the heat from your mind heat up our on minds as well, that we being activated by this light will jointly cause a glorious light to reside in Black Africa.

I look forward with bubbling interest, to yet another direct encounter with you.

I remain respectfully yours

Ike Chidolue

[aiksmart@gmail.com](mailto:aiksmart@gmail.com)

**Date:** 8/20/2006, 6:48 pm, GMT +6

**Name:** Victor Oduneye <86.140.3.15>

**Location:** London

*Philip Smeagwali*

**Number:** 65

Like a tree that falls in the forest and there is no one to here its mighty thunder, many lights like you are dimmed by extraordinary circumstances that frustrates Africa and African. May the circumstances that lead to you beacon shining brightly despite pretence by some not to see your light (cos is the wrong colour) be a guide and an inspiration to human beings around the world.

An extract from another great African Bob Marley: "Emancipate yourselves from mental slavery None but ourselves can free our minds".

**Date:** 8/18/2006, 11:49 am, GMT +6

**Name:** Wilson Mazimba <41.222.248.24>

**Location:** Nairobi

**Number:** 64

*Philip Smeagwali*

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This is incredible. Great African minds are deliberately forgotten. This man is a pride to Africa and African governments must use African minds

Date: 8/18/2006, 2:04 pm, GMT +6

Name: Fredrick Denham <72.67.192.242>

Location: USA

Number: 63

Dr. Emeagwali, I was truly inspired to find your story. I am an African American, and did graduate work in computer science at a MAJOR American University. Yet I never heard of you or your contributions until stumbling on your website. I find this sad but not surprising. In any event, I will share your story with my sons and nieces. May God continue to bless you and you carry forth your mission!

*Philip Smeagwali*

[fedenham@yahoo.com](mailto:fedenham@yahoo.com)

**Date:** 8/19/2006, 11:08 pm, GMT +6

**Name:** Igandan  
Olasunkanmi <216.139.189.66>

**Location:** Lagos Nigeria

**Number:** 62

Putting this great man on our Postage stamp is never enough, he has really made us proud. I think he should be on one of our currencies. Big bother we are really praying for you that God should take you higher .

**Date:** 8/17/2006, 6:46 pm, GMT +6

**Name:** francis o oghuma <81.23.204.28>

**Location:** 9ja

**Number:** 61

*Philip Emeagwali*

he is a great Man and a source of inspiration to the african youths and i know he is coming out stronger with greater ideas and projects!  
cubestreet media team!

**Date:** 8/15/2006, 8:19 pm, GMT +6

**Name:** CHIBUIKE AGHADI -  
chibuikeaghadi1967@yahoo.com <64.201.33.97>

**Location:** MAIDUGURI, BORNO STATE, NIGERIA

**Number:** 60

EDUCATION IS THE BEST EQUALIZER - AFTER ALL GOD GAVE US THE SAME BRAIN.

Who is this Great Man- Emeagwali Chukwura- He is the King of the Black Race - AFRICA He is a discoverer, He is a single voice of POOR MAN - AFRICA. He saved us from Shame, Intimidation and discrimination. Now Africans can go to places and show their intellectuality with the rest of

*Philip Smeagwali*

WORLD.Now Africans Have the platform and a Brain Machine- The Whole World will now believe our identity, History placed us in wrong position, but today your series of feats and inventions has regained our right position in the mordern History.

Your Site made me Happy and Sad at the same time- Your collections of Biafra News and Documentations creates an unflagging Revival within me which no Time can efface.

CHIBUIKE AGHADI or  
[chibuikeaghadi1967@yahoo.com](mailto:chibuikeaghadi1967@yahoo.com)

Date: 8/13/2006, 1:37 am, GMT +6

Name: Mianna <69.172.236.176>

Location: USA

Number: 59

You are a bless not just to Black, or Black men but to the human race. So few of my People have be giving this task, but it was a blessing that you were born w/ your destiny

*Philip Smeagwali*

to be fulfilled.

May the most high be with you always

\*\*\*In Spanish!!!

Usted no es un bendice apenas a hombres  
Negros o Negros pero a la raza humana.

Así que pocas de mis Personas tienen es  
dar esta tarea, pero era una bendición que  
usted nacía W/su destino para ser  
cumplido.

Pueda el la mayoría del está alto con usted  
siempre

**Date:** 8/12/2006, 5:55 pm, GMT +6

**Name:** okafor onyedika <80.78.18.64>

**Location:** onitsha

**Number:** 58

u a just wonderful emeagwali

**Date:** 8/12/2006, 6:41 pm, GMT +6

**Name:** BABATUNDE RIDWAN

*Philip Smeagwali*

AYINDE <81.199.144.59>

Location: LAGOS

Number: 57

GOD will continue to assist on whatever u lay ur hand. Because we are all proud of u. u great., thanks

Date: 8/7/2006, 8:39 pm, GMT +6

Name: Oladele

Samuel <209.159.175.194>

Location: Lagos, Nigeria

Number: 56

I feel very proud to discover a Nigerian that is recognised as a genius all over the world. This goes to show that Africa is not all about negatives...

Date: 8/1/2006, 3:56 pm, GMT +6



*Philip Smeagwali*

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**Name:** Gizachew  
Shiferaw <213.55.92.49>

**Location:** Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

**Number:** 55

We do have a lot of African heros. Let's contribute our best to make our continent a better place to live in. We all are experiencing being alone and sad because our beloved ones run away seeking for a better life. Who knows, one day Africa will be the best place to live in. But it all depends on our courage, not westerners or... I love you all.

**Date:** 7/29/2006, 9:01 pm, GMT +6

**Name:** Emma Agu <172.164.95.194>

**Location:** New York

**Number:** 54

*Philip Smeagwali*

Phill is a rare gem.  
He is one brilliant African  
who has done so much to  
promote a better image for a  
battered continent called  
Africa. Phillip is one of a kind

**Date:** 7/24/2006, 5:22 pm, GMT +6

**Name:** Ncheta Ewuzie <81.23.204.77>

**Location:** Nnewi, Anambra state

**Number:** 53

Hello Philip, Thank you on what you are  
doing to help Nigeria and Africa stem this  
brain tsunami in our continent. You are  
indeed a great man. I pray for your kind to  
be more in world. 2348035083034

**Date:** 7/22/2006, 4:06 am, GMT +6

**Name:** Emeka Nwafor <196.204.241.93>

**Location:** Cairo Rgypt

*Philip Smeagwali*

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**Number:** 52

Well i really wish to be a computer wizard  
can any help me out

**Date:** 7/17/2006, 5:55 am, GMT +6

**Name:** Sam <70.247.119.108>

**Location:** Arlington, TX

**Number:** 51

Under appreciated, undervalued compared  
to if Philip were to be white, any other  
minority other than black of African  
descent. However I prophesize that the  
best is yet to come from him, just wait,

**Date:** 7/14/2006, 3:54 pm, GMT +6

**Name:** maurice <62.56.146.157>

**Location:** enugu

*Philip Emeagwali*

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**Number:** 50

what is the biafran aim of developments on the coming election ?

**Date:** 7/12/2006, 4:06 pm, GMT +6

**Name:** Lewis Okomayin <212.165.159.34>

**Location:** Lagos Nigeria

**Number:** 49

When I stumbled on the name Emeagwali and the incredible achievements glued to that name, my whole life became flushed with renewed joy and hope that it is well with Africans in general and Nigerians in particular.

**Date:** 7/6/2006, 1:06 pm, GMT +6

**Name:** Akanbi Mobolaji  
Saheed <134.146.0.6>

*Philip Smeagwali*

**Location:** Portharcourt Nigeria

**Number:** 48

Uncle Phil,

As I read through your site, tears of Joy rolled down my eyes and I said to myself, there is 'light in the tunnel'. Despite all the negative feelings people had about Africa, You have stand out to make us Proud. I prayed for God guidance and protection towards you and your family. Long Live Federal Republic of Nigeria

**Date:** 7/5/2006, 3:16 pm, GMT +6

**Name:** Nana <71.34.75.46>

**Location:** Ghana

**Number:** 47

I don't see you as a genius or even as a scientist. I see you as a statement of truth;

*Philip Smeagwali*

that Africa can not be written off yet.  
You've made us all proud even in Ghana.  
May He who granted you your many  
talents grant others as such. God bless  
Africa and thank you for inspiring a  
frustrated continent. Aye be ama oman.

**Date:** 7/4/2006, 9:27 pm, GMT +6

**Name:** Ikeazor ANIETO <80.78.18.64>

**Location:** onitsha , anambra stae.

**Number:** 46

i luv u but GOD LOVES U MOST. MAKE  
IMPACT 2 UR MOTHERLAND  
NIGERIA. THINK NIGERIA. THANKS  
CALL ME 234 806 387 1875.

**Date:** 6/30/2006, 5:15 pm, GMT +6

**Name:** Oke <81.199.173.250>

**Location:** nigeria

*Philip Emeagwali*

Number: 45

Great men are not easily to come are across, but if you can trace the history of one down then you are working towards greatness. cos success can be emulated. just like the word of God... You inspire

Date: 6/30/2006, 2:37 am, GMT +6

Name: MOHAMED  
KISHIMBA <64.113.144.89>

Location: DAR-ES-SALAAM

Number: 44

Mr.Philip Emeagwali-

You are one of the most wonderful things that had happened to Africa;you touch every soul with your intellectual inventions and your deeply Clarification of todays technology.

We all as AfrCans support you in every way-

*Philip Smeagwali*

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you are the living proof of why Africans we have to embrace the education and make some gigantic changes in our beautiful continent where we are from.