



# Quest for Internet

In the 80th installment of our weekly series at [emeagwali.com](http://emeagwali.com), we reprint a news clipping from a gala of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in Washington, D.C.

## Gala Celebrates Africa's Wealth of Creativity

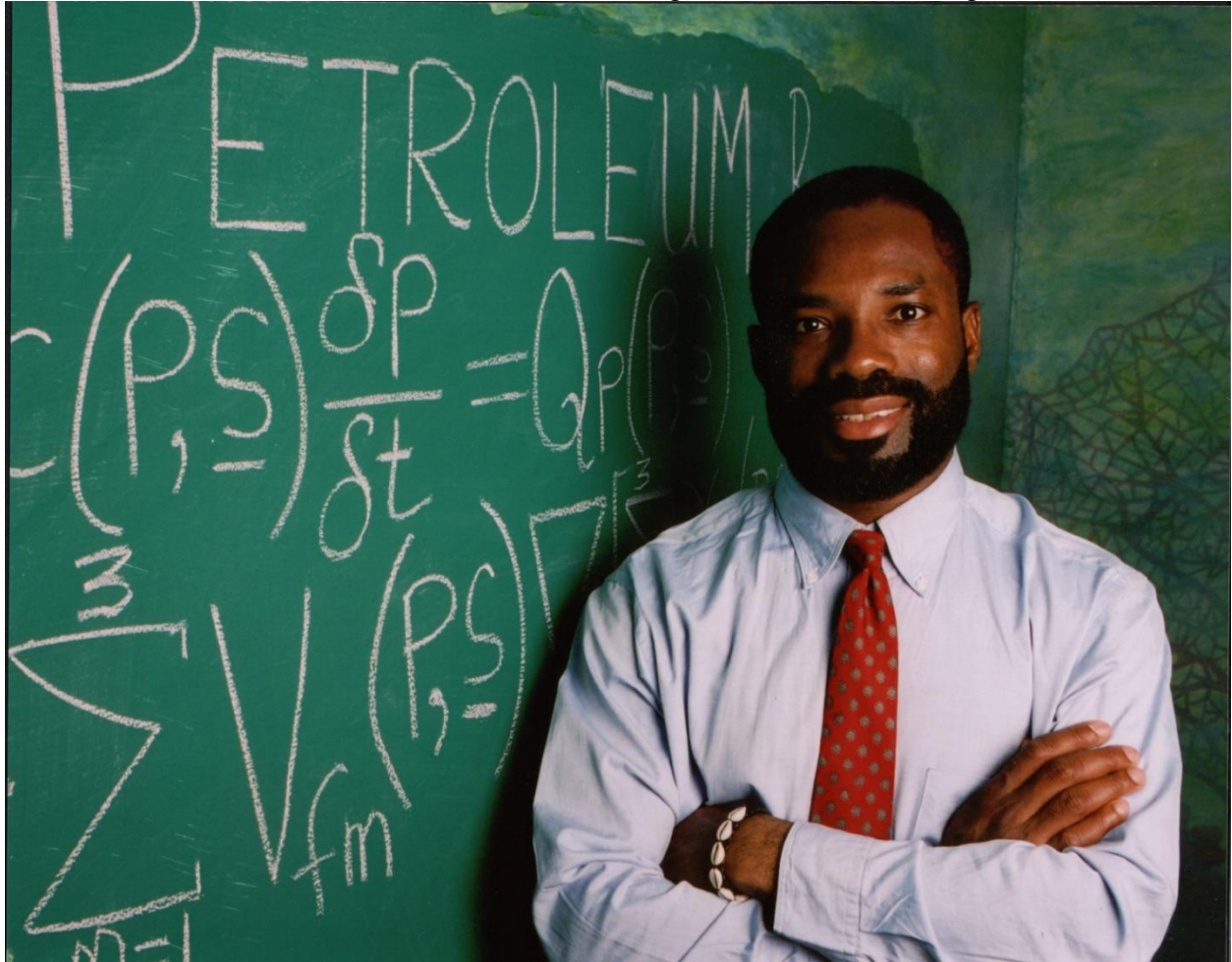
By **Njuguna Kabugi**, Washington Informer, Nov 12, 1998, V.35; N.3, p. 4

**T**HE common image of Africa in the West is one of poverty, war, hunger, overpopulation and refugee problems. But to many African business executives, the continent is vibrant, full of hope and opportunity.

"These are people who have a hope for the future. This is not the image of Africa we are used to seeing," said World Bank President James Wolfensohn at the Africa Business Day Forum Gala held in Washington last week. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund sponsored the forum.

The Gala, which featured an exciting evening of African music and haute couture and honors for six Africa-born scientists, was a culmination of three days of meetings for several hundred business executives from 45 African nations. The executives met to network with each other and

U.S. business executives and cultivate relations with government and banking officials.



"There are a lot of perceptions we have to dispel," said Joan Gurivas of the Namibia Chamber of Commerce. "The world needs to see the calibre of our business people," added Gurivas, who owns a public relations and advertising agency that has companies like Microsoft and Coca-Cola as clients. "We are doing very well in our countries but we now need to take the show on the road so that others can see what we offer," she added.

"We need to forge our destiny, get people to know each other to overcome cultural barriers," said James Mburu of Kenya. Mburu had spent the previous week networking with African American community organizations to increase trade and cultural ties between Africa and the U.S.

The first African Distinguished Science Awards were presented to: Philip Emeagwali, mathematician and engineer (Nigeria); Cheick Diarra, aeronautics engineer (Mali); Bartholomew Nnaji, robotics engineer (Nigeria); Mathias Fobi, surgeon (Cameroon); Francis Kofi Allotey, mathematician physicist (Ghana); Thomas Odhiambo, biologist (Kenya).

The splendor of African fashion artistry was woven throughout most of the evening, featuring the work of Federation of African Designers President Alphadi. Also on the program were some of the top designers from Algeria, Burkina-Faso, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Ethiopia, Ghana,

Guinea, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa.



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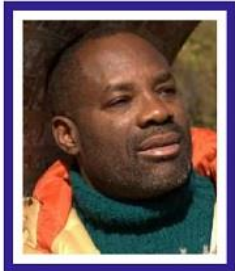
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