

My Quest for an Internet

In this, the 32nd installment of our weekly series at emeagwali.com, we present Part 8 of Philip Emeagwali's lecture on reversing the brain drain of scientists and technologists from developing nations to the United States. It was delivered in Geneva, Switzerland on April 26, 2010.

How Can Brain Gain Alleviate Poverty?

by Philip Emeagwali

emeagwali.com

Technology rules. How did America develop its nuclear weapons? The answer is brain gain from Europe. It was Albert Einstein and refugee scientists who fled from Europe to America that helped America develop its atomic bomb.

In human history ... a nation that is second to none in science was second to none in economic power.



2 How Can Brain Gain Alleviate Poverty?

How will Nigeria acquire and control the petroleum technology it needs to dig a hole in the ground to recover its own oil and save 40 percent royalty payment to foreign oil companies? The answer, in part, will be brain gain from its **Diaspora** in Europe and in America.



In Nigeria, militants and politicians fight for control of 60 percent of oil revenue, instead of for control of the technology that will yield double the nation's revenue. [Original Caption: Nigerian militants in open-hulled boats attacked an oil rig of Royal Dutch Shell more than 100km from land. Photo by BBC]



How did America land a man on the moon? The answer is brain gain of rocket scientists captured at the end of the Second World War. Refugee rocket scientists like Robert Goddard transferred the technological capital from Germany to the United States that enabled Neil Armstrong

to walk on the moon.

The United States became a superpower by converting Europe's brain drain into its brain gain. Nigeria could become an economic powerhouse by reversing its brain drain and turning it into brain gain.

European brain drain became American brain gain and made America stronger.

England profited from brain gain as a result of the Catholic oppression in Europe, which exiled all Europe's free thinkers. Some of those free thinkers fled to the Netherlands, making that nation stronger for a while, before the British Empire eclipsed it.

Technology will allow Nigeria to do more with less, without depleting its natural resources, but with a greater demand for and reliance on technology.

Scientific discoveries lead to technological inventions and are the foundations of knowledge: the new knowledge that must precede the development of new products, services, industries, jobs and new wealth.

In human history, technological development and economic growth proceed together and a nation that is second to none in science was second to none in economic power.

The grand challenge for African scientists is to make discoveries and inventions that can be domesticated and diffused into the continent's economy.

3 How Can Brain Gain Alleviate Poverty?



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

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Below are lecture companion photos taken on April 26, 2010 at Intercontinental Geneve, Switzerland. The captions were as provided by the conference planner.



Gov. Uduaghan and lead speaker, Prof. Philip Emeagwali, Nigerian-born world acclaimed-computer programmer and inventor of the internet.

4 How Can Brain Gain Alleviate Poverty?



Gov. Uduaghan watches as Prof. Emeagwali displays a memorabilia on Delta State presented to him after his captivating address in Geneva, Switzerland.



Mrs. Moremi Soyinka-Onijala, Special Assistant to the President on Migration at the launching of the European hub of the Delta Diaspora Direct (D3) programme in Geneva, Switzerland.



5 How Can Brain Gain Alleviate Poverty?

A cross-section of Delta Diasporans at the launching of the European hub of the Delta Diaspora Direct (D3) programme in Geneva, Switzerland.



Mr. Gordon Bristol, Nigeria Ambassador to France in a warm handshake with Prof. Emeagwali during the launching of the European hub of the Delta Diaspora Direct (D3) programme in Geneva, Switzerland.



A cross-section of diplomats and guests listen to a presentation with rapt attention during the launching of the European hub of the Delta Diaspora Direct (D3) programme in Geneva, Switzerland.

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Mr. Bernard Okumagba, Commissioner for Economic Planning with Dr. Lucky Akaruese of the University of Port Harcourt listening to a presentation with rapt attention during the launching of the European hub of the Delta Diaspora Direct (D3) programme in Geneva, Switzerland.



Emeagwali captures the attention of the audience with his riveting presentation during the launching of the European hub of the Delta Diaspora Direct (D3) programme in Geneva, Switzerland.



7 How Can Brain Gain Alleviate Poverty?

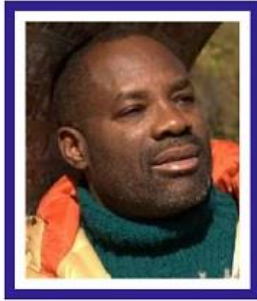
Amb. Torn York Chor, Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations, Geneva, Gov. Uduaghan, and Dr. Martins Uhomoibhi, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nigeria Ambassador to Switzerland and Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Geneva, who was chairman of the event.



Prof. Emeagwali (right) displays a souvenir of the True Face of Delta presented to him by Gov. Uduaghan at the Delta Diaspora Direct (D3) summit held in Geneva, Switzerland



Mr. Simon Ighofose, a Deltan Diasporan in the UK, Mr. Sam Omatseye, Chairman, Editorial Board of The Nation Newspaper, Mr. Okumagba, Prof. Emeagwali, Mr. Oma Djebah, Mr. Eddy Odivwri, Member, Editorial Board of Thisday Newspaper, and Dr. Akaruese.



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