



**Recommendations of the workshop on Scientific Diasporas
'From Brain drain to Brain gain'
organised by the Foundation 'The Sharing of Knowledge'
in Geneva on the 12th and 13th of January 2009-02-22**

THE PRESENT CONTEXT

A scientific diaspora is a community of researchers living and working outside their country of origin. **Participants of the workshop re-emphasised that freedom of movement and the possibility to pursue research in a country where a researcher can reach his or her full potential constitute fundamental rights.** They noted that a diaspora can act as an essential vector of innovation and development for the country of origin. Whether on the medium or the long term, they could see no disadvantage ensuing from any alleged 'Brain drain': rather, they saw a gain of productivity and an acceleration of innovation, provided only that the living and working conditions in the country of origin are satisfactory. In this respect, sub-Saharan Africa is desperately short of infrastructure (especially internet and computational networks) to take proper advantage of its diaspora. The existence of a diaspora needs to be recognised no longer as a problem, but rather as a positive phenomenon, linked to world development as well as to the development of the country of origin. One should also recognise the benefits a diaspora brings to the development of the host country, which, in return, should take measures to ease immigration formalities. Members of a diaspora should no longer feel guilty for what is a natural trend, and should gain confidence in the adventure they have undertaken. From this general context, the following conclusions have been drawn:

OUR SIX RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **A new type of visa** better adapted to the requirements of researchers should be introduced.
2. The diaspora should be **associated with the evaluation** of research and researchers in its country of origin and should participate in the formulation of its developmental strategy.
3. **Permanent mechanisms** for the support of scientific collaboration between the country of origin and its expatriate researchers should be set up, such as research grants, guest- and associate-professorships.
4. The existing competence of the diaspora to improve the cohesion of **international centres** such as CERN and the ICTP should be better made use of.
5. Access to broadband internet and computational networks should be improved and made more affordable in the country of origin.
6. Researchers from the diaspora should **develop their own recognised societies** so as to negotiate directly with the authorities of host countries the various aspects (civil or financial) which concern them.