



*From the Desk of Tilden J. LeMelle*



*Aleah Bacquie and Salih Booker*

July 2000

Dear Friends,

It is with great pleasure that I announce the appointment of Salih Booker as the interim Executive Director of The Africa Fund, succeeding Jennifer Davis who served in this role from 1981 until this March.

Jennifer and I have known Salih for many years. In 1978, when he was a student anti-apartheid leader at Wesleyan University, he spent a summer working in our office. He has a long record of advocacy for Africa where he has both lived and traveled widely. He was a legislative assistant for TransAfrica and then worked as a professional staff member of the House Subcommittee on Africa during the height of the campaign for sanctions against South Africa. He was a program officer for the Ford Foundation based in Nairobi in the late 1980s. In the early 90s he lived in Harare and worked throughout Southern Africa as a consultant for African and U.S. NGOs, and he authored the UN Development Program's first two Development Cooperation Reports on South Africa. He has been published widely in U.S. and international newspapers and journals and appears regularly on radio and television to discuss African issues. He has worked in and visited nearly 30 of Africa's 54 countries and lived in three African countries for a decade. Until the end of last year he was Senior Fellow and Director of the Africa Studies Program at the Council on Foreign Relations. From 1995 until his recent appointment he was a Trustee of The Africa Fund.

Salih is joined by Associate Director Aleah Bacquie. Aleah has deep personal roots in both the religious and civil rights communities in the U.S. and also has extensive experience working with churches in Southern Africa. She worked for the South African Council of Churches for a dramatic year leading up to the first democratic elections in 1994 and was often involved in direct reconciliation work within congregations. At the same time she was responsible for international communications, which led to her appointment as a media officer for South Africa's Independent Electoral Commission. Prior to her service in South Africa, Aleah was the organizer for the American Committee on Africa's network of African American congregations beginning in 1990. Most recently she served as Director of Social Justice Ministries at The Riverside Church in New York. She joined the staff of The Africa Fund in May of last year and has directed the Faith Communities program since then.

I know we can count on these two outstanding individuals to continue our work supporting African freedom and development.

