

Report of the 2nd Congress OF THE EKANG OF NORTH AMERICA

CEKA 2024



FROM DECEMBER 5 TO 8

W A S H I N G T O N D C



**DOUBLE TREE HILTON WASHINGTON DC
NORHT GAITHERSBURG**



**CULTURAL
ENCOUNTERS**



**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**



**EXHIBITION
FAIR**



**GALA
FUNDRAISING**

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A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE EKANG ASSOCIATIONS FEDERATION



By
Asuzoa Junior MEKINDA MEKINDA
Président of CEKA



“ I am particularly pleased to introduce the report of the 2nd edition of the Congress of Ekang of North America (CEKA 2024) held from December 5th to 8th, 2024, in Washington, D.C., USA. This edition was organized by the federation of Ekang associations, Ekang Bese Y’Amerka (EBYA), born from the desire of Ekang community members to network and foster synergy between associations, to carry out projects contributing to building a more united and prosperous Ekang community.

This major cultural gathering, held at the Double Tree Hotel, featured a remarkable program of activities that were highly appreciated by participants and guests.

Between the visit to the Capitol, the cultural evening, the exhibition fair, the general assembly, and the gala evening, CEKA 2024 saw the participation of dignitaries, elites, and guests from all over the world.

It was a moment of reunion rich in opportunities, networking, and business, but also, and above all, the launch of the project to build the first Ekang Cultural Center of America, “Nda Ekang Y’Amerka,” through a fundraising activity that was a resounding success.

I would like to acknowledge all the efforts made by the organizing committee led by President Alfred Nomo, the various associations of the federation, members of the Executive Board, and the close team that worked hard alongside me, particularly the Task Force. Nothing presented today would have been possible or achievable without your support and patience. I am grateful to each one of you.

I am proud of the progress made but also of the prospects and projections for our great community. Today, more than ever, we continue our entry into history in the most beautiful way. We are writing it in our own way with joy and pride ■”

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A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

“**A**s President of the organizing committee for the 2nd edition of CEKA 2024, it was a pleasure to coordinate the various committees that greatly contributed to the success of our major cultural gathering.

I would like to take a moment to thank all the heads of the committees and working groups, as well as the members who accompanied me in this important mission.

I would also like to thank the members of the EBYA Executive Board, and particularly the President of the federation, Junior MEKINDA MEKINDA, for the trust he placed in me to chair the CEKA 2024 organizing committee ■

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“**We have achieved something unprecedented, and we can all be proud of it.**

The Ekang community in North America continues its rise to the top of the world.

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By

Alfred NOMO*President of the Organizing Committee CEKA 2024*

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PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT

A - INTRODUCTION

Following the success of the first edition of the Congress of Ekang of North America (CEKA) in 2023 in Houston, Texas, the second edition of the Congress was held from December 5th to 8th, 2024, at the Double Tree by Hilton Hotel in Washington, D.C. The event brought together nearly 500 participants from the United States, Canada, France, Cameroon, Gabon, and Equatorial Guinea. Among the personalities present were:

- His Excellency Henri Etoundi Essomba, Ambassador of Cameroon to the United States ;
- Mr. Pierre Zambo, Patriarch and President of the Association of Traders of the Yaoundé Central Market and sponsor of CEKA 2024 ;
- His Majesty Gabriel Sylvain Esoa Etoga, Superior Chief of the Batchenga ;
- Mr. Kouam Kamogne, President of the All Bamiléké Convention 2025 ;
- Mr. Kouma Jean Cottin, Cultural Counselor at the Embassy of Cameroon in the United States ;
- Traditional authorities, representatives of Cameroonian diaspora organizations, Cameroonian and American investors and businessmen ;
- Presidents and Vice-Presidents of Ekang associations and supporting associations ;
- A highly appreciated presence of CRTV led by journalist Sévérin Aléga Mbélé ;
- Delegations of Ekang from Canada, Europe, Cameroon, Gabon, and Equatorial Guinea ;
- Seven renowned Cameroonian, Gabonese, and Equatorial Guinean artists: Ntond'obe le mâle, Vanister Enama, Calvino, Edoudoua Non Glacé, Annie Mba, Josita la bombe, who animated the cultural and gala evenings, captivating the audience with their various performances ■

B - ACTIVITIES

Under the theme “**THE CHALLENGES OF THE RENAISSANCE OF THE EKANG PEOPLE FOR THEIR SOCIO - POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SURVIVAL**,” the 2024 congress aimed to consolidate the unity of the Ekang and overcome the preconceived ideas associated with this group. For four (4) days and in a hybrid format (in person and remotely), participants took part in various programmed activities:



This was followed at the end of the day by the **grand cultural evening**, punctuated by the presence of the Ambassador of Cameroon to the United States of America, H.E. Henri Essomba Etoundi, who, in his speech, thanked everyone for their efforts to unite the members of the Ekang community. Several other speeches were delivered, notably by the President of the EBYA federation, Junior Mekinda Mekinda, H.M. Sylvain Essoa Etoga, Superior Chief of the Batchenga, and the President of the CEKA 2024 Organizing Committee, Alfred Nomo.

The evening continued with the presentation of the various member associations of the EBYA federation through the appearance of their members, a dance competition between the associations, and a performance by the very famous artist Calvino.



round tables, art exhibitions, cultural performances, and recreational activities. The first day of this cultural meeting focused on the arrival of attendees from around the world and their installation at the Double Tree by Hilton Hotel. More than a hundred rooms had been reserved for this purpose, much to the delight of the guests who were able to enjoy the majestic spaces and amenities offered by the hotel.

The second day was marked by a visit to the emblematic Capitol and a guided tour of Washington, D.C. A pleasant and enjoyable moment for the participants.



The third day was devoted initially to the **fair** for the presentation of various products and services by entrepreneurs present at the Congress, whether Ekang or members of other communities.

“About twenty entrepreneurs and associations were able to exhibit their products and services to the participants, who were satisfied according to the various testimonials captured.”



Subsequently, a **conference** was organized on Ekang cosmogonies, identities, and cultural pluralities. The discussions highlighted the importance of a renewed unity of the Ekang, and emphasis was placed on the promotion of peace, unity, living together, and socio-economic development.



The Ekang Associative Federalism of the United States, Canada, and Mexico, like a phoenix rising from its ashes, represents a unitary vision shared by the majority of Ekang associations and supported by President Junior MEKINDA MEKINDA, who will be at the head of the federation for the next two years in an uncontested election during the general assembly.

The day ended with a beautiful **Gala evening** with elegantly and chicly dressed guests, an opening speech by the CEKA 2024 PCO accompanied by the CEKA 2023 PCO, performances by the various guest artists (Ntond'obe le mâle, Calvino, Edoudoua Non Glacé, Annie Mba, Josita la bombe, Vanister Enama), the induction of the elected President of the EBYA federation, and a fundraising activity for the project to build the first Ekang Cultural Center of America, "Nda Ekang Y'America."



The fourth and final day was punctuated by the **departure of several guests from the hotel** and a lovely reception (after CEKA) offered at the home of a sister and worthy Ekang daughter residing in Maryland.

CEKA 2024 received **media coverage** provided by **CRTV**, represented by journalist Séverin Aléga Mbélé, who made several reports broadcast on the 8:30 p.m. news in Cameroon and on several other programs of the Cameroonian national channel■

C - PERSPECTIVES AND NEXT STEPS

This inclusive and participatory congress is part of a strategic perspective, the objective being to promote a peaceful, fraternal, and democratic climate, respectful of living together and national unity. Each participant contributed to revitalizing the Ekang diaspora. The challenges remain significant, but success will depend on the Ekang people's adherence to this unifying project. The congress took place in a convivial and fraternal atmosphere. Current forecasts announce that the next congress will be held in August 2025, with a location to be determined in the coming days■

D - CONCLUSION

The congress made it possible to explore the issues related to Ekang culture and people in the current Cameroonian socio-cultural context, marked by growing antagonisms. The Ekang diaspora in the United States is made up of many groups whose perspectives on ethnic identity vary. Their main objectives seem to be a better understanding of the Ekang people and culture, as well as contributing to the socio-economic development of their community of origin. Estimated at more than 3,000 people, the Ekang diaspora in North America (United States, Mexico, and Canada) seeks to strengthen fraternal ties, solidarity, and unity among its members.

The current membership of nine (9) Ekang associations in the EBYA federation, including Nkul Ekang Y'America, whose current President is André Junior Mekinda Mekinda, Elat Beti Houston led by Patriarch Noah Jacques Mbama, Oyili Beti Atlanta, chaired by Paul William Nanga Nanga, Nkul Beti Columbus headed by President Alfred Wesley Nomo, Nkul Beti Minnesota, whose president is Marie Jeanne Embolo Abena, Nkul Beti Chicago, with President Damasse Mvogo, Oyili Beti DMV, led by Dr. Marinette Zibi, Cesca USA, and Soleil Levant, whose president is Gertrude Elanga, illustrates this desire for unity, solidarity, and collaboration.

The Ekang community of North America is known for its dynamism and its impact on social and economic aspects both here and in Cameroon. Initiatives such as the Nda Ekang project and the fundraising initiated for this purpose during CEKA 2024 for the construction of an Ekang cultural center in the United States, and the social and educational assistance provided to Ekang communities in Cameroon, bear witness to this commitment■

*For
EBYA, The general secretary,*

Kristian G. AFANA

