

1 Innovation is Africa's New Frontier

Philip Emeagwali



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My Quest for an internet

In this, the 35th installment of our weekly series at emeagwali.com, we present Part 11 of Philip Emeagwali's lecture on "Africa's New Frontier: Creativity and Innovation." It was delivered in Geneva, Switzerland on April 26, 2010.

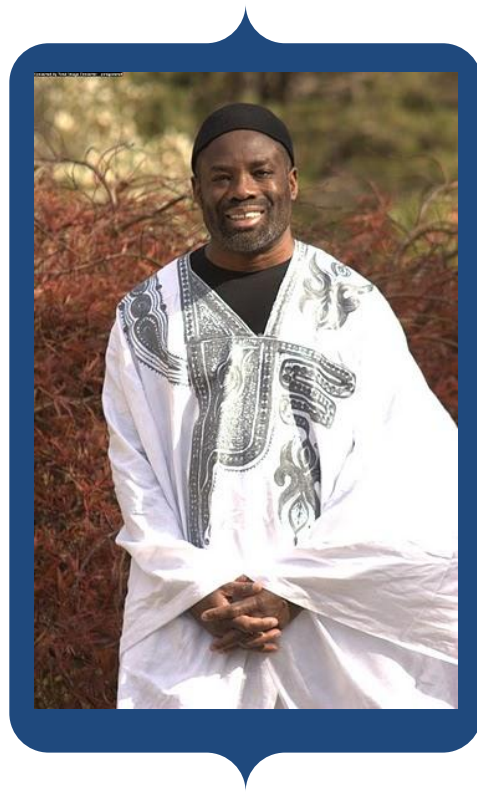
Innovation is Africa's New Frontier

by [Philip Emeagwali](http://emeagwali.com)

emeagwali.com

The lecture [video](#) is posted at emeagwali.com.

Why are we Nigerians having this conference on how innovation and technology can be used to develop our economy?



We've realized that our petroleum was formed millions of years ago, at a time our ancestors crawled on

Philip Smeagoli

four legs. We've seen the oil wells we sunk 50 years ago dried up. We know it's our scientific discoveries and technological inventions that will increase humanity's intellectual capital by creating new knowledge, new products, and new wealth and move Nigeria forward into a top twenty economy.

Africa can alleviate poverty by forcing the frontiers of science, pushing back the boundaries of what's possible with technology, climbing the branches of the tree of knowledge, and embarking on a journey with an uncertain outcome.

We cannot bring change without taking risks and without challenging the status quo. Great discoveries and great inventions cannot be made without the risk of great failures.

Africa must cross the technological frontier to conquer

tomorrow's challenges. Europe alleviated its poverty by through technological innovation, and taking risks in their search for new lands and oceans.

At a time it was believed that the world was flat and sailors were afraid to sail across the Atlantic Ocean, a young man was invited to join an expedition. He refused and ridiculed their ships as too tiny and not hardy and argued that the Earth was not round. One morning, he stood on shore and bid a fearless sailor named Christopher Columbus safe journey.

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

emeagwali.com   



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Philip Emeagwali



Date: 9/1/2006, 5:43 pm, GMT +6
Name: Emem Udott <196.201.154.164>
Location: Akwa Ibom, Nigeria
Number: 74

Prof Philip Emeagwali

Philip Smeagwali

you have been the greatest and no 1 on my list of great role model.you are one of most wonderful thing that has happen to Africa and to me as a Nigerian.I believe you will not fail us.dont allow any thing to distract you from finishing on top.big up my big Brother.

Date: 8/29/2006, 3:12 am, GMT +6

Name: SYLVIA
ODAGWE. <83.229.100.10>

Location: NIGERIA

Number: 73

SUCCESS HAS MANY RELATIVES,
AND I AM PROUD TO BE
ASSOCIATED WITH YOU.THANKS FOR
MAKING AFRICANS PROUD.BIG
UPS.RIDE ON BRO.

Date: 8/25/2006, 6:52 pm, GMT +6

Philip Smeagwali

Name: onu philip <64.201.33.242>

Location: Enugu

Number: 72

You are the man of our time. When i think of you, i see a light that is leading the good people of Nigeria. keep making us proud.

Date: 8/24/2006, 9:51 pm, GMT +6

Name: PHILIP BABAJIDE
EDU <81.199.62.203>

Location: ABUJA

Number: 71

I FEEL PROUD TO BE A NIGERIAN
ONCE MORE,
PLEASE DO NOT BACK US HELP
NIGERIA AND NIGERIAN TO
ACHIEVE GOOD IT LEVEL

Philip Emeagwali

Date: 8/24/2006, 1:00 am, GMT +6
Name: Williams Ukonu <195.93.21.134>
Location: London
Number: 70

If words alone could adequately state with exactitude the dexterity of the light you have shined on your african brothers, then the job would have been done before me. i feel that of the greatest of all is the joy that resonates in our hearts just by the mention of the technological messiah- Philip Emeagwali; the hero in whom Africa, African and the world are well pleased. Respect bro!

Date: 8/23/2006, 7:24 pm, GMT +6
Name: Brian Keith
Ford <199.173.225.28>
Location: Montgomery, Alabama

Philip Smeagwali

Number: 69

1. WOW!

Date: 8/23/2006, 8:42 am, GMT +6

Name: Faunee <68.48.32.222>

Location: Silver Spring

Number: 68

On Wednesday, Happy Birthday - God has blessed you with many skills and abilities. Thank you for realizing and pursuing your purpose in life....and for the internet!!!

Date: 8/21/2006, 7:56 pm, GMT +6

Name: Cathy <24.209.245.142>

Location: Cincinnati Ohio USA

Number: 67

Philip Smeagwali

I am a European American woman stunned with growing understanding of the harm we have done to our global soul through the suffocation of our African brothers and sisters. Thank you for your web site illuminating another resilient, strong and beautiful African whose light shines on. Please ancestors of Africa.. persevere.

Date: 8/20/2006, 8:26 pm, GMT +6

Name: Ike Chidolue <24.174.78.96>

Location: Houston, Texas

Number: 66

Dear Sir,

Your site has become a bible of some sort to some of us. It inspires us in our quest to re-discover old truths. One of which is the truth about the place of the Blackman in science & technology. And as an Igbo man,

Philip Smeagwali

the history and the journey so far for us as Igbos.

Sir, I was honored to receive a phone call from you in 2005, and the only exhilarating experience I can compare the encounter of that day to, is the way I felt in Jan 2001 when I was granted a student's visa to the United States.

Knowing fully well that the nature of your work and the towering responsibilities only allows you enough time to return only 2 to 3 calls per week, and these calls are chosen randomly.

Sir, it's an honor to be associated to you, either remotely or anyhow.

I feel Inspired, Informed and Involved with your works and the light that you and other great African over-achievers have lit in our hearts and minds.

Shine on sir, shine on and make the mountains a plain for us the up and coming. Shine on, sir, and make the valleys a level ground for those yet un-born. Shine on Sir, and give a human face to the Blackman, a face filled with the light and the force of knowledge and wisdom. Such that

Philip Smeagwali

whenever these people of a different skin color, that believe that nothing good can come out of Black-Africa, as they stare into your face, the rays of light & the heat of knowledge coming from you, will melt away their doubtful minds.

Shine on sir, and let the heat from your mind heat up our on minds as well, that we being activated by this light will jointly cause a glorious light to reside in Black Africa.

I look forward with bubbling interest, to yet another direct encounter with you.

I remain respectfully yours

Ike Chidolue

aiksmart@gmail.com

Date: 8/20/2006, 6:48 pm, GMT +6

Name: Victor Oduneye <86.140.3.15>

Location: London

Number: 65

Like a tree that falls in the forest and

Philip Smeagwali

there is no one to here its mighty thunder,
many lights like you are dimmed by
extraordinary circumstances that
frustrates Africa and African. May the
circumstances that lead to you beacon
shining brightly despite pretence by some
not to see your light (cos is the wrong
colour) be a guide and an inspiration to
human beings around the world.

An extract from another great African
Bob Marley: "Emancipate yourselves from
mental slavery None but ourselves can free
our minds".

Date: 8/18/2006, 11:49 am, GMT +6

Name: Wilson Mazimba <41.222.248.24>

Location: Nairobi

Number: 64

This is incredible. Great African minds are
deliberately forgotten. This man is a pride

Philip Emeagwali

to Africa and African governments must use African minds

Date: 8/18/2006, 2:04 pm, GMT +6

Name: Fredrick Denham <72.67.192.242>

Location: USA

Number: 63

Dr. Emeagwali, I was truly inspired to find your story. I am an African American, and did graduate work in computer science at a MAJOR American University. Yet I never heard of you or your contributions until stumbling on your website. I find this sad but not surprising. In any event, I will share your story with my sons and nieces. May God continue to bless you and you carry forth your mission!

fedenham@yahoo.com

Date: 8/19/2006, 11:08 pm, GMT +6

Philip Smeagwali

Name: Igandan
Olasunkanmi <216.139.189.66>

Location: Lagos Nigeria

Number: 62

Putting this great man on our Postage stamp is never enough, he has really made us proud. I think he should be on one of our currencies. Big bother we are really praying for you that God should take you higher .

Date: 8/17/2006, 6:46 pm, GMT +6

Name: francis o oghuma <81.23.204.28>

Location: 9ja

Number: 61

he is a great Man and a source of inspiration to the african youths and i

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know he is coming out stronger with
greater ideas and projects!
cubestreet media team!

Date: 8/15/2006, 8:19 pm, GMT +6

Name: CHIBUIKE AGHADI -
chibuikeaghad1967@yahoo.com <64.201.33.9
7>

Location:
MAIDUGURI, BORNO STATE, NIGERIA

Number: 60

EDUCATION IS THE BEST EQUALIZER - AFTER
ALL GOD GAVE US THE SAME BRAIN.

Who is this Great Man- Emeagwali Chukwura- He is
the King of the Black Race - AFRICA He is a
discoverer, He is a single voice of POOR MAN -
AFRICA. He saved us from Shame, Intimidation and
discrimination. Now Africans can go to places and
show their intellectuality with the rest of
WORLD. Now Africans Have the platform and a Brain

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Machine- The Whole World will now believe our identity, History placed us in wrong position, but today your series of feats and inventions has regained our right position in the modern History.

Your Site made me Happy and Sad at the same time- Your collections of Biafra News and Documentations creates an unflagging Revival within me which no Time can efface.

CHIBUIKE AGHADI or
chibuikeaghad1967@yahoo.com

Date: 8/13/2006, 1:37 am, GMT +6

Name: Mianna <69.172.236.176>

Location: USA

Number: 59

You are a bless not just to Black, or Black men but to the human race. So few of my People have be giving this task, but it was a blessing that you were born w/ your destiny to be fulfilled.

Philip Smeagwali

May the most high be with you always

***In Spanish!!!

Usted no es un bendice apenas a hombres
Negros o Negros pero a la raza humana.

Así que pocas de mis Personas tienen es
dar esta tarea, pero era una bendición que
usted nació W/su destino para ser
cumplido.

Pueda el la mayoría del está alto con usted
siempre

Date: 8/12/2006, 5:55 pm, GMT +6

Name: okafor onyedika <80.78.18.64>

Location: onitsha

Number: 58

u a just wonderful emeagwali

Date: 8/12/2006, 6:41 pm, GMT +6

Name: BABATUNDE RIDWAN
AYINDE <81.199.144.59>

Philip Smeagwali

Location: LAGOS

Number: 57

GOD will continue to assist on whatever u lay ur hand. Because we are all proud of u. u great., thanks

Date: 8/7/2006, 8:39 pm, GMT +6

Name: Oladele
Samuel <209.159.175.194>

Location: Lagos, Nigeria

Number: 56

I feel very proud to discover a Nigerian that is recognised as a genius all over the world. This goes to show that Africa is not all about negatives...

Date: 8/1/2006, 3:56 pm, GMT +6

Philip Smeagwali

Name: GizaChew
Shiferaw <213.55.92.49>

Location: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Number: 55

We do have a lot of African heros. Let's contribute our best to make our continent a better place to live in. We all are experiencing being alone and sad because our beloved ones run away seeking for a better life. Who knows, one day Africa will be the best place to live in. But it all depends on our courage, not westerners or... I love you all.

Date: 7/29/2006, 9:01 pm, GMT +6

Name: Emma Agu <172.164.95.194>

Location: New York

Number: 54

Philip Smeagwali

Phill is a rare gem.
He is one brilliant African
who has done so much to
promote a better image for a
battered continent called
Africa. Phillip is one of a kind

Date: 7/24/2006, 5:22 pm, GMT +6

Name: Ncheta Ewuzie <81.23.204.77>

Location: Nnewi, Anambra state

Number: 53

Hello Philip, Thank you on what you are
doing to help Nigeria and Africa stem this
brain tsunami in our continent. You are
indeed a great man. I pray for your kind to
be more in world. 2348035083034

Date: 7/22/2006, 4:06 am, GMT +6

Name: Emeka Nwafor <196.204.241.93>

Philip Smeagwali

Location: Cairo Rgypt

Number: 52

Well i really wish to be a computer wizard
Can any help me out

Date: 7/17/2006, 5:55 am, GMT +6

Name: Sam <70.247.119.108>

Location: Arlington, TX

Number: 51

Under appreciated, undervalued compared
to if Philip were to be white, any other
minority other than black of African
descent. However I prophesize that the
best is yet to come from him, just wait,

Date: 7/14/2006, 3:54 pm, GMT +6

Name: maurice <62.56.146.157>

Philip Smeagwali

Location: enugu

Number: 50

what is the biafran aim of developments on the coming election ?

Date: 7/12/2006, 4:06 pm, GMT +6

Name: Lewis Okomayin <212.165.159.34>

Location: Lagos Nigeria

Number: 49

When I stumbled on the name Emeagwali and the incredible achievements glued to that name, my whole life became flushed with renewed joy and hope that it is well with Africans in general and Nigerians in particular.

Date: 7/6/2006, 1:06 pm, GMT +6

Philip Smeagwali

Name: Akanbi Mobolaji
Saheed <134.146.0.6>

Location: Portharcourt Nigeria

Number: 48

Uncle Phil,

As I read through your site, tears of Joy rolled down my eyes and I said to myself, there is 'light in the tunnel'. Despite all the negative feelings people had about Africa, You have stand out to make us Proud. I prayed for God guidance and protection towards you and your family. Long Live Federal Republic of Nigeria

Date: 7/5/2006, 3:16 pm, GMT +6

Name: Nana <71.34.75.46>

Location: Ghana

Number: 47

Philip Smeagwali

I don't see you as a genius or even as a scientist. I see you as a statement of truth; that Africa can not be written off yet. You've made us all proud even in Ghana. May He who granted you your many tallents grant others as such. God bless Africa and thank you for inspiring a frustrated continent. Aye be ama oman.

Date: 7/4/2006, 9:27 pm, GMT +6

Name: Ikeazor ANIETO <80.78.18.64>

Location: onitsha , anambra stae.

Number: 46

i luv u but GOD LOVES U MOST. MAKE IMPACT 2 UR MOTHERLAND NIGERIA. THINK NIGERIA. THANKS CALL ME 234 806 387 1875.

Date: 6/30/2006, 5:15 pm, GMT +6

Name: Oke <81.199.173.250>

Philip Emeagwali

Location: nigeria

Number: 45

Great men are not easily to come are across, but if you can trace the history of one down then you are working towards greatness. cos success can be emulated. just like the word of God... You inspire

Date: 6/30/2006, 2:37 am, GMT +6

Name: MOHAMED
KISHIMBA <64.113.144.89>

Location: DAR-ES-SALAAM

Number: 44

Mr.Philip Emeagwali-

You are one of the most wonderful things that had happened to Africa;you touch every soul with your intellectual inventions and your deeply clarification of todays

Philip Smeagoli

technology.

We all as Africans support you in every way- you are the living proof of why Africans we have to embrace the education and make some gigantic changes in our beautiful continent where we are from.