

Press information, 11<sup>th</sup> March 2008

# Miss Africa Denmark 2008 !

## Role model and culture ambassador for Africa in Denmark

The participants have been found and in June we will for the third time crown a Danish Miss Africa.



The event “Miss Africa Denmark” is **not** a beauty contest in traditional terms, but a competition where the judges has to find a winner who has personality, charisma and important issues and concerns about Africa at heart. The show has strong focus on showcasing talents from the participants and each of them will be giving a speech on an Africa related topic of their own choice. The event will be displaying African and European fashion, but bikinis and swimsuits has deliberately been left out.

The elected “Miss Africa” shall be able to act as a culture ambassador, disseminate knowledge about Africa and be a “bridgebuilder” between Danish and African culture. But foremost she has to be a role model and rallying point for women from all over the African continent living in Denmark. At their first meeting in the beginning of March, the participants sat down to discuss different African topics and to pinpoint what it means to be role model for others. They were also interested in finding the similarities and differences between the many different African cultures.

Everyone involved with the project is working voluntarily and all profit will be donated to the organisation “Save the Children” for a specific project in the Gulu-region of Uganda. The winner will be ambassador for the project, which aims to build and maintain a playground, and to give space to creativity and play for former child-soldiers and abused children in a rehabilitation camp.

## More than a pageant

The overall purpose of the Miss Africa Denmark event is to gather all interested Africans, Danes and other friends of Africa in a celebration of the beauty and rich diversity of African culture. African culture has a lot to offer – also here in the Nordic countries. The event has become an annual celebration bringing everybody together. The event gathered around 800 people last year and is expected to be even bigger in 2008.

The event-organisers aims to highlight the positive stories from Africa and emphasize the resources and opportunities. They also want to put a focus on the Africans living in Denmark. Sadly it still comes as a surprise to many, that the majority of Africans in Denmark are actually studying or working and doing very well.

Throughout the past two years our winners has been interviewed several times in Danish newspapers, TV and radio as representatives for the African community in Denmark. Recent interviews with the editors of the major Danish women's magazines, revealed that none of them ever uses coloured models on their front covers. The editors think that their readers can not identify with women of colour. Why not, we ask and we certainly hope that Miss Africa Denmark can help breaking more prejudices.

## Preparations

An open invitation has been sent out to African women between 18 and 28 residing in Denmark. After our audition in February a group of 12 was chosen to participate in the show. A lot of commitment is demanded from the participants and in the coming months they will be busy preparing themselves for the show. They will have to meet with coaches, choreographers, stage directors, stylists, photographers, journalists and much more. The participants from last year were completely exhausted after the show, but all agreed that the new inspiration and friendships were well worth the hard work.



## Miss Africa Denmark 2007

The winner in 2007 was Saba Kiros born in Eritrea. 19-year old Saba is a student at the Copenhagen Business School, but also finds time to fill out her role as Miss Africa at different cultural and charity events. In November she served as the host when singer Angelique Kidjo gave a sold out concert in Copenhagen and she has become a frequent guest in the Danish TV-station "Canal Africa".

Several of the other participants have also been involved in activities and charity work since the show last May. Once picking up the atmosphere of voluntary work for a specific cause, they couldn't let it go again. A series of radio interviews are being prepared for national Danish radio. Four of the participants has attended a radio-workshop and will be the ones holding the microphones and choosing the topics.



## The 2008 event

The show this year will take place **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2008** at Vega, which is one of the most popular venues in Copenhagen. We are currently planning a full programme of African music, dance and entertainment. Ticket information and more details will be revealed later at our website [www.missafrica.dk](http://www.missafrica.dk)

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