



Opening of the academic year for the fourth class of 4 regional master's programs of ERAIFT
Monday, April 4, 2022

The start of the academic year of the 4th class of the 4 regional master's programs of ERAIFT took place on Monday April 4, in the conference room. The following people attended this opening ceremony: The chairman of the ERAIFT's Board of Directors, Mr. Jan BOGAERT, Full Professor at the University of Liège, Chairholder at ERAIFT and member of the Academic and Research Council (ARC); Mr. Baudouin Michel, Director of ERAIFT, Professor at ERAIFT, President of the Academic and Research Council, Senior Lecturer at the University of Liège and President of IFA-YANGAMBI; Mr. Jean-Pierre Mate, Full Professor, Academic and Research Secretary of ERAIFT, Professor at UNIKIN; Mr. Bienfait Kasenga, the Administrative Secretary of ERAIFT; and the ERAIFT staff present in Kinshasa.

Indeed, following the international call process – of December 30, 2021 – 40 fellows forming the 4th class were selected at the seventeenth session of the ARC on March 8, 2022. The fellows come from 10 countries including *Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Gabon, Madagascar, Mali, DRC, Republic of Congo, Senegal and Togo*. The meeting that took place on Monday, April 4 was essentially informative and educational and not ceremonial. The new students were briefed on the school's international governance, the structuring of the courses as well as the staff: *the contact person - who's doing what, where, when and how*.

In his welcoming remarks, the Director of ERAIFT and President of the ARC, went through the history of ERAIFT – from a UNESCO project to an institution, the *Category 2-Centre under the auspices of UNESCO*. Then, he dwelt on *the Seat Agreement* signed with the DRC (host country) government, which confers a special status to ERAIFT. Finally, he urged the students to communicate well during their course path at ERAIFT. For his part, the Chair of the BOD, Professor Jan BOGAERT, while congratulating the students for their selection after a rigorous process, he recommended them to double their efforts to deserve the confidence of this regional institution, by being proactive. He also invited the students to take first responsibility for their academic success, be at the core of their learning process. For his part, the Academic and Research Secretary (ARS), Professor Jean-Pierre MATE, reminded students to combine hard work with discipline, insisting on the attitude that often conditions the academic course! Finally, the Administrative Secretary, Mr. Bienfait KASENGA, underlines the sense of ethics of the students – the latter must provide evidence (acceptable supporting documents) for any expenses incurred. It is with these few exchanges and advice that this meeting related to the opening of the academic year ended in a friendly atmosphere.

This meeting ended with a family photo, followed by a cocktail buffet offered in the reception Hall!
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Pose for a family photo with the students (from 10 different countries) of the 4th class of 4 regional master's programs