



For Immediate Release

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## **ITC PRESIDENT, MICHAEL A. BATTLE, ACCEPTS POST AS U.S. AMBASSADOR TO THE AFRICAN UNION**

August 10, 2009, Atlanta, GA - Dr. Michael A. Battle, President of the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC) will leave that office after an exemplary six-year term to become the U.S. representative to the African Union with the rank of ambassador. The Addis Ababa, Ethiopia-based organization integrates the political interests of 53 African nations. The U.S. Senate confirmed the appointment on August 7, 2009. The swearing in ceremony is scheduled for Friday, August 21, 2009, Washington, D.C.

Dr. Joseph L. Crawford Sr., President of the ITC Board of Trustees commented, "This is a well-deserved honor for our president and a very proud moment for the ITC family. President Battle has taken the ITC to a higher level in our expectations of excellence at every juncture of its operations, its imaging, and its academic growth. Certainly, he is equipped for this awesome experience and will bring the kind of leadership to the position that he readily gives in any venue just as he has given to ITC - that builds bridges and engenders cooperation." Dr. Crawford announced that the Board will appoint an Interim President, effective, September 1, 2009. A search committee will also begin its work to find a permanent replacement by the 2010-2011 academic year.

Dr. Battle leaves the ITC, as board member, Michael Gist says, "with a bitter-sweet feeling. I'm excited for the move, for he is so deserving; however, I'll miss him greatly - he's done such a tremendous job and made such a difference in so many ways at ITC".

When Dr. Battle arrived on the ITC campus in August 2003, he immediately began addressing the most pressing issues facing the institution; among them the seminary's pending probationary accreditation status with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). "SACS offered me a year to make things right and we fulfilled the task and were reinstated within six months". Since then, Dr. Battle has cultivated an administrative team that is well-versed in accreditation policies and procedures as the institution continues to operate with a very secure adherence to the standards of both SACS and the Association of Theological Schools in preparation for its next review.

An extremely capable and visionary administrator across denominational lines, the new ambassador leaves a rich legacy of achievement at ITC, Dr. Battle has led the institution in the development of a Ten Year Strategic Plan and has accomplished many of the mandates of the plan to include: major renovations and upgrades throughout the campus, making a substantial "green footprint" in the environment and in the curriculum in

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keeping with *its TheoEcology* initiative; expanding its academic program to offer the graduate degree via a Distance Learning-Online module, and creating partnerships throughout the church, civic and corporate communities.

Dr. Battle commented, “My tenure at ITC has been an exceptionally fulfilling one. The uniqueness of this institution with several different denominations and layers of administration ironically has been good preparation for what I will encounter on a grander scale with the participating nations in the African Union. I leave ITC with gratitude to those who served with me in a manner that was respectful, affirming, and that were essential to the progress of one of God’s best theological academies. It has been a good season and now, my wife Linda, and I will pray for the same reception as I accept this new appointment and we prepare to make new friends in Ethiopia.”

The ITC faculty, staff, students, alumni and supporters plan a ***Sending Forth Celebration*** for its president on Tuesday, August 18, 2009 at 5:30 p.m. in the ITC Chapel.

For additional information or for interviews, call 404-527-7718.

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