



General Meeting

19th – 20th September, 2009
LUSAKA, ZAMBIA

REPORT

INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

The APNAC General Meeting (GM) is held biennially at a venue agreed upon by the Executive Committee. The 2009 GM was held in Lusaka, Zambia from 19th to 20th September, 2009.

The main objectives of the GM were, *inter-alia* to:

- a) hold APNAC Executive Committee elections;
- b) consider and adopt a Memorandum of Understanding between APNAC and the Global Organization of Parliamentarians against Corruption (GOPAC);
- c) consider and adopt the amended APNAC Constitution; and
- d) Any Other Business.

Attendance

The GM was attended by thirty-seven (37) delegates from fifteen (15) countries, all of which already had APNAC national chapters established. The countries represented were Burkina Faso, Chad, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Mozambique, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Among the cooperating partners in attendance were representatives from CIDA (Canada), DFID (United Kingdom), Africa Parliamentary Centre (Ghana), and World Bank Institute.

DELIBERATIONS OF THE GM

The GM focused on sharing experiences and lessons learnt in the different jurisdictions as far as the fight against corruption was concerned. Further, the GM also considered the GOPAC relationship with APNAC and the need for APNAC to have a code of conduct for Parliamentarians. The Guest of Honor, Hon. M. D. Lungu, MP and deputy chairperson of committees of the whole house of the Zambian parliament commended the Parliamentarians for gathering to devise better ways of strengthening the fight against corruption under the APNAC umbrella and urged Parliamentarians to develop a code of ethics which upheld anti-corruption values as he viewed this a cardinal factor in the fight against corruption. While alluding to the detrimental impact corruption had on developing countries such as the

distraction of programs aimed at aiding the poor meet their basic needs, he emphasized the need for Parliamentarians to complement efforts by national governments that had put up measures in place to reduce corruption.

SHARING EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS ON THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

During this session, delegates shared experiences from various presentations. The following issues came out strongly:

- a. Almost all African countries, having realized the need to fight the corruption scourge vigorously in order for them to develop economically, they were realigning their respective constitutions and enacting new legislation all aimed at curbing the vice;
- b. Integrity and morality were springboards to fighting corruption effectively and for Parliamentarians to perform their oversight role effectively;
- c. The Constitution of APNAC needed to be streamlined so as to make the network more effective in fighting corruption;
- d. There was need for effective financial resources mobilization to aid in effective implementation of APNAC activities;
- e. African countries through APNAC were now working closely with other stakeholders such as Transparency International and other civil society and faith organizations to spearhead the fight against corruption;
- f. The impact of APNAC in some countries was being felt as evidenced by the resignation on moral grounds of a good number of senior government officers or were arrested for involvement in corrupt practices;
- g. It was important that APNAC Chapters operate impartially, otherwise governments would perceive them as being either opposition political parties or Non-Governmental Organizations, a situation that might undermine the work of APNAC.
- h. There was a need to explore more opportunities to improve on the sources of funding for APNAC; and finally,
- i. As a voluntary body, APNAC members should have unity of purpose and issues of regionalism should not emerge. For instance, it was important to emphasize that APNAC was not primarily limited to Sub-Saharan Africa but included North Africa as well.

GOPAC/APNAC RELATIONSHIP AND MOU

A background to the interim Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) entered into between GOPAC and APNAC through their respective Chairpersons was presented after which the MoU was tabled for discussion. Discussions on the relationship between APNAC and GOPAC and what the MoU construed them to be led to a resolution by the GM that called for further clarification of the relationship by the new Executive Council:

“We the members of APNAC meeting in Lusaka, Zambia at the General Meeting on 19th September, 2009, hereby RESOLVE to support the principle underpinning the MoU signed by the Chair of GOPAC and the Chair of APNAC on the 19th day of June, 2007, and further TASKED the incoming APNAC Executive to work towards defining a clear and concise form of the structural relationship between APNAC and GOPAC for the ratification by, and at, the next GM.”

CODE OF CONDUCT- WORLD BANK INSTITUTE

The presenter, Mitchell O'Brien on behalf of the World Bank Institute, observed that citizens were the ones that bore the heavy cost of corruption and that in a democracy, citizens turned to parliaments for proposal towards tackling corruption in a country. Stating that strategies to curb corruption had mostly been focused on the Executive and the Judiciary, it was important that Legislature should also get actively involved in the fight and lead by example through the establishment of codes of conduct by which all Members of Parliament should abide. They would do this by adopting a three-thronged strategy namely; external strategy, internal strategy and participation in parliamentary networks against corruption. The codes of conduct would have to be harmonized with the Standing Orders of parliament to achieve unity of purpose.

OUTGOING CHAIR'S REPORT

The outgoing Executive Chair of APNAC, Augustine Ruzindana, stated that APNAC had, since its inception, achieved a number of milestones in capacity building, advocacy and research. With respect to the challenges faced by the organization, he noted several:

- a. The temporary nature of parliamentary terms and the effects of attrition of members through elections leading to a high turn-over of MPs in APNAC chapters;
- b. the executive domination of parliaments, particularly where the ruling party was not seriously fighting corruption, posed a major problem for parliaments to fight corruption effectively;
- c. funding and lack of other resources vital for sustaining a complex African continental organization; and
- d. inadequate number of female parliamentarians in most APNAC chapters.

On the lessons learnt, it was observed that:

- a. as far as possible, Parliamentarians needed to act together across party lines on cross cutting issues such as anti-corruption;
- b. the parliamentarians needed to build alliances with civil society organizations for effective anti-corruption policies and programs; and
- c. Political will in the executive and parliament was essential for the success of any anti-corruption initiative.

As a way forward, it was stated that APNAC should:

- a. increase the number of chapters (at least 3 chapters per year) as well as strengthen existing ones;
- b. create a parliamentary resource centre for empowerment of African parliaments at the APNAC secretariat;
- c. increase linkages with civil society organizations, government institutions and parliamentary committees;
- d. create linkages with regional parliaments such as the Pan African Parliament (PAP), the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC), the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), the Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community – Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF); and,
- e. Strengthen the APNAC secretariat.

APNAC AFRICA CONSTITUTION

The proposed amendments to the Constitution were presented and after a long discussion thereon, it was resolved that a sub-committee appointed by the new Executive Committee and working together with a consultant, be tasked to consider the form and substance the proposed amendments to the Constitution should take.

ELECTIONS OF THE NEW APNAC EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

The following were elected President and Vice-President of the council respectively:

President

Hon Given Lubinda, Zambia

Vice- President

Hon Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu, Ghana

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

The following were elected regional representatives:

Region	Name	Country
East Africa	Hon Musikari Kombo, MP	Kenya
	Hon Dr Zainab Amir Gama, MP	Tanzania
Central Africa	Hon Ouchar Tourgoudi, MP	Tchad
	Hon Dr Bouzabo Patchili, MP	Tchad
West Africa	Hon Osei Kyei Mensah-Bonsu, MP	Ghana
Southern Africa	Hon Eduardo Namburete, MP	Mozambique

The President-elect, Hon. Given Lubinda, assured the GM that his executive council would not only work hard towards the achievement of APNAC's objectives but also do so with humility and integrity. He was confident that he would receive cooperation from all national chapters as his executive sought to drive the causes of APNAC to greater heights.

In his remarks, the out-going President, Augustine Ruzindana, congratulated the in-coming executive and thanked the meeting for recognizing his performance during his tenure of office. In conclusion, he thanked the founding members of APNAC for their foresight and urged all delegates to keep that vision alive.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The meeting observed that:

- i) there was need for more national chapters to be recruited especially in North Africa;
- ii) the financial base of APNAC should be strengthened;
- iii) channels of communication amongst national chapters as well as the parliamentary centre in Accra should be improved; and
- iv) There was need to transform APNAC into a formidable institution recognized internationally and able to participate in international conferences.

30.09.2009

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