

## Summer 2010

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### **GOPAC Annual Executive Committee Meeting held in Ottawa, Canada.**

The annual GOPAC Executive Committee Meeting was held in Ottawa, Canada from June 7–8, 2010. This newsletter provides the highlights of the discussion and the decisions. Some highlights follow.

#### **Membership and Invitees**

Hon. Given Lubinda, elected as Chair of APNAC earlier this year, was confirmed as a Vice Chair of GOPAC, replacing Hon. Augustine Ruzindana of Uganda. In view of the scope of the meeting, the Leaders of its five Global Task Forces, the Chair of the Mexican Chapter (host of the 2011 GOPAC Global Conference), were invited to the meeting. For the discussion of strategic issues on the first day, representatives of the three principal funders (Canadian International Development Agency, US Agency for International Development, and the World Bank Institute) were also invited to participate in this year's meeting addressed a number of strategic or medium term issues as well as specific programming and administrative matters.

#### **Monitoring Program and GOPAC Plan and Monitoring Report**

The new monitoring program (based on the Toolkit which was developed in partnership with UNDP Oslo) was approved as the key vehicle for engaging members in the GOPAC activities related to its policy positions. This Toolkit is the product of the GOPAC UNCAC Global Task Force (GTF) and is available at:

[http://www.gopacnetwork.org/Docs/UNCAC/UNCACToolkit3May2010Long\\_en.pdf](http://www.gopacnetwork.org/Docs/UNCAC/UNCACToolkit3May2010Long_en.pdf)

[http://www.gopacnetwork.org/Docs/UNCAC/UNCACToolkit3May2010Short\\_en.pdf](http://www.gopacnetwork.org/Docs/UNCAC/UNCACToolkit3May2010Short_en.pdf)

The objective is to assess the strengths and weaknesses of parliamentarians' capacity and performance in preventing corruption and parliamentary oversight. The Executive Committee therefore advocated the active involvement of regional and country chapters in the new GOPAC monitoring program which was launched earlier this year – including the preparation of regional summaries in the forthcoming GOPAC Global Plan and Monitoring Report. GOPAC chapters are also expected to document, (in addition to their assessments of strengths and weaknesses), related current and recent corrective actions; and areas where steps need to be taken or where there is a need for technical assistance. This information is urgently required for:

preparations for the February 2010 Global Conference which also includes a Global Plan and Monitoring Report by the GOPAC Secretariat; and all GTFs to start reviewing their respective policy positions from Kuwait; and the development of a sustainable and comprehensive funding approach for GOPAC.

Three GOPAC regional chapters, APNAC - African region, ARPAC - Arab region, and LAPAC - Latin America, agreed to work with their country chapters to provide good quality assessments for the Global Plan and Monitoring Report including the preparation of regional syntheses. In addition a workshop will take place in Manila on September 30-October 2, including an open meeting of the GTF-UNCAC (hosted by the President of the SE Asia regional chapter) to launch the monitoring effort.

### Other Issues

Some medium term issues were identified by the Executive Committee and these issues have also been raised by our key funders, namely:

- greater membership engagement;
- global-regional programming coordination;
- regional and national chapter development;
- building political demand for parliamentary oversight;
- partnerships and public recognition; and
- a sustainable funding strategy.

These issues and others will be developed further in consultation with our funders, partners and members to produce a GOPAC Strategic Plan. Some current highlights follow. **Greater membership engagement:** The issues of how to make membership in GOPAC more valued by members and how to ensure partners that GOPAC members are in general well informed, respectful of GOPAC objectives, and active in promoting practical corrective actions related to GOPAC policy positions was discussed. Many ideas were offered, and it was felt that the issues merited a workshop and resolution at the Mexico City Conference. It also was suggested that this workshop address the issue of the membership of parliaments in GOPAC.

**Program Coordination:** There was general agreement that GOPAC Secretariat work, the Global Task Forces and regional chapters should better harmonize their programming. This issue will be addressed in the Global Plan and Monitoring Report and the Strategic Plan as well as being taken into consideration in current activities.

**National and Regional Chapters.** The meeting confirmed the view that operational regional and country chapters are essential as well as a key complement to the global GTFs. While funding to strengthen regional chapters is very constrained, there was a commitment to address global and regional funding issues at the 2011 Conference. In that regard, it was agreed that GOPAC, while remaining open to developments in other regions, encourage the rapid development of operational plans in the SEAPAC and LAPAC and encourage its Executive members from North America and the Caribbean to also actively pursue chapter development in their regions.

**Building demand for parliamentary oversight** and reform was considered a key issue for the Participation of Society GTF. Hon. Musikari Kombo, the Leader of this GTF undertook to include this matter as an important issue to be addressed.

### Other GTF Developments

GOPAC chapters and members are encouraged by the Executive Committee to use the new handbook for parliamentarians on **Ethics and Conduct** (a product of that GTF in partnership with the Westminster Foundation on Democracy). This was regarded as a major issue in virtually all regions and the GTF was urged to explore how it could encourage greater consideration of the handbook by GOPAC chapters. GOPAC's **Anti Money Laundering** GTF will be meeting in Paris in September 2010 to also develop a strategy for informing and engaging GOPAC members regarding the UNCAC and Financial Action Task Force AML initiatives.

The Executive also directed that GTFs contribute to and benefit from the monitoring program in order to produce their updated GOPAC policy position statements to be available for distribution prior to the Mexico City Conference. In addition, more frequent reporting from the GTFs both to members and the Executive Committee is requested to help address the program coordination objective.

### Comments from the Chair

While the meeting did focus on further improvements and developments, the GOPAC Chair took the opportunity at the beginning of the second day to recognize the considerable achievements of this voluntary network of parliamentarians from around the world such as:

- significant global recognition and active participation by many leading international organizations; emerging recognition by international media; a documented policy agenda and positions driven by and accepted by Parliamentary members, chapters and task forces to promote and monitor corrective measures; and specific results of changes in individual countries both the legislation supporting the prevention of corruption, more effective parliamentary oversight, and public engagement experiences leading too support for similar changes – by providing significant examples. This led other members to also highlight similar practical benefits. These examples also highlighted the personal challenges this often entails.

The next meeting of the GOPAC Executive will take place in Mexico City during the GOPAC Global Conference in February 2011.

## **Philippines Senate to host GOPAC GTF-UNCAC Meeting and Monitoring Workshop September 30-October 2, 2010**

The Global Task Force on the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) has guided the development of a supporting UNDP Oslo-GOPAC Toolkit for parliamentarians. At the June 2010 meeting in Ottawa, the GOPAC Executive Committee approved this toolkit as the formal reporting framework for regional and country GOPAC chapters, using the long or short version depending on the Chapter's capacity. Parliamentarians, working with other stakeholders are to assess strengths and weaknesses of their and their colleagues' performance in implementing the UNCAC and progress on the GOPAC policy positions, adopted at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Conference in Kuwait City. Senator Edgardo Angara, Chair of SEAPAC (the Southeast Asian chapter of GOPAC) is hosting a meeting by invitation only of the task force in Manila. The aim is to document progress based on country assessments using the Toolkit, design corrective actions, and to develop a network of parliamentary champions from the region to promote the UNCAC. GOPAC's international partners including but not limited to UNDP, UNODC, World Bank Institute, and USAID will be invited to share their experiences and expertise with participating parliamentarians. The meeting will be chaired by Dr. Naser J. Al Sane, Chair of GOPAC, who also leads the UNCAC task force.

Assessments and plans for corrective actions from Southeast Asia and other regions of the world will be summarized into a global report for release at the GOPAC Global Conference in Mexico City in February 2011.

Senator Angara has served as the Chair of SEAPAC since its formation at a meeting in Manila in March 2005 and was instrumental, as reported by the media, in the ratification of the UNCAC by the Philippines in June 2006. Senator Angara also serves on the Executive Committee of GOPAC.

## **APNAC Chair elected as Vice-Chair of GOPAC**

Hon. Given Lubinda, a Member of Parliament from Zambia, and Chair of APNAC was unanimously elected to be a Vice Chair of GOPAC at its meeting in Ottawa on June 8<sup>th</sup>. In addition to welcoming Hon. Lubinda to the Executive of GOPAC, the Hon. Naser Al Sane, GOPAC, Chair also thanked Hon. Augustine Ruzindana of Uganda, who resigned from the Executive earlier this year, for his service to GOPAC and APNAC.