

# ASSECAA DAY

## 5 MAY 2014



**Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent  
Councils in Africa and the Arab World**



**Excerpts from speeches delivered during the 8th Conference of ASSECAA, Addis Ababa-Ethiopia, 5- 6 April 2014 on the Occasion of 10th Anniversary of ASSECAA.**

**Introduction:**

The celebration of the 10th anniversary of ASSECAA in Addis Ababa from 5th to 6th of April, 2014 is considered to be a special occasion at which the speakers / Presidents of Councils/Senates and Heads of delegations evaluated the achievements of ASSECAA during the past decade in the light of the principles and objectives for which ASSECAA was established, more particularly the objective which is related to enhance the political, socio -economic and cultural cooperation between Africa and the Arab World.

We have the pleasure to introduce some excerpts from the speeches of the participants and delegates during the Celebration of the 10th anniversary of ASSECAA on the sideline of the 8th Conference held in Addis Ababa, in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia from 5th to 6th of April, 2014, that reflects their views, evaluations and aspirations of member Councils/Senates, as well as excerpts from the speeches of leaders and founders of ASSECAA.

“Today, as we celebrate the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the Association, we thank God for the favours he bestowed upon us, as He helped us right down the line. We confirm the importance of what has so far been achieved since the creation of the association with respect to enhancing its role in extending a robust bridge for consolidating the bonds of economic and sustainable cooperation, joint action among Arab and African countries as well as the attainment of the noble objectives and principles for which the association was founded.

I would like to draw your attention to the modalities and mechanisms established by ASSECAA at the regional level. These



are in the form of periodic meetings and discussions conducted by Senates/Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and Arab world, the adoption of joint activities to facilitate cooperation, exchange experiences, during which quality issues were raised. They include also the fifth retreat for members of ASSECAA, which was held in Bujumbura, Burundi last November, the Meeting of women parliamentarians held last February in Sudan. We have been keen to participate in the activities of international unions, support the proposals submitted by ASSECAA's members during their participation in the Meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Union held last October.

In the framework of establishing a sustainable economic cooperation between Africa and Arab world, the General Secretariat's efforts have borne fruits in that it signed on October 14, 2013, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the GCC Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the Pan-African Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The memorandum aimed at initiating cooperation in various fields such as commerce, economic activities and investment as a mechanism for achieving comprehensive and sustainable development in the two regions.

Regarding the promotion of youth activities, the encouragement of scientific research and ASSECAA's Cup of Excellence constitute one of the distinctive qualitative events held during the past period. Added to this, is the signing of memorandums of understanding with research institutes and renowned universities for the purpose of supporting research activities and consultations in the fields of security and peace, among others”.

***(H.E. Ali Bin Saleh Al-Saleh, ASSECAA's Former Chairman and Speaker of the Shoora Council of Bahrain).***

“We at the General Secretariat have taken formidable steps towards helping to establish a confederation of Afro-Arab



Chambers of Commerce that paves the road to establish a common market within two regions and promotes investment and inter-regional trade.

The General Secretariat of ASSECAA in collaboration with member councils can venture to fight corruption, terrorism and to promote peace and security on the one hand and to foster the need for food security and securing employment opportunity through its annual retreat program so that members exert their utmost to have them implemented in their respective countries”..

***(Secretary General of ASSECAA, Abdul Wasie Yusuf Ali ).***

“The successful completion of our meeting couldn’t have been materialized had it not been for your attendance and pivotal role that you have played by raising relevant, current issues and very fruitful interaction that culminated in putting forward useful recommendations and a final communiqué. The success achieved at this meeting so far is a testimony that our young Association is on the right track and is gaining ground firmly at the international arena. This by itself is the result of our joint effort and firm commitment to implement the noble objectives we set for ASSECAA.

I strongly believe that testimonies you have shared in this unique occasion of the 10th Anniversary of our inter-regional association, ASSECAA undoubtedly are the manifestations of the bridge that brings our regions closer. Accordingly, ASSECAA enabled us to know one another better, share information and rich experiences in the spheres of social, political and economic development, democratic governance and peaceful coexistence as well. We can take clear example of this partnership in case of Ethiopia and Yemen. The two Countries are endowed with strategic geographic location to serve as a departure where we can put a bridge between two continents to consolidate our cooperation for the common benefit of our peoples.

It is with this spirit that I undertake the responsibility of the



Chairmanship of ASSECAA, and will look at it as an opportunity rather than a burden. I am very confident that with your full support, we can take bold steps towards achieving the objectives of ASSECAA and let our two regions in particular and the world at large benefit from the outcome.

In the coming periods together we can work on how to empower our women parliamentarians to enlighten our women population to let them share with us the responsibility of establishing good governance, fighting corruption, prevailing peace, eradicating poverty, guarantying food security and realizing remarkable development for our peoples. Moreover, sharing our diversified experiences in this regard and formulating mechanisms on how to implement them are areas to focus upon.

We can also expedite our efforts to bring about economic cooperation both in expanding trade and investment relations, supporting ASSECAA in its effort of gathering information about our respective cultures and to disseminate them, thereby paving the way to exploit our cultures for our economic development.”.

***(H. E. Honorable Kassa Tekleberhan, Speaker of the House of Federation of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Current chairman of ASSECAA).***

“The Association reaches today maturity, which requires us to work harder, to give more attention and commitment towards the values and principles of Arab and African civilizations and to have more faith in the ability of our peoples and their representatives to carry out the strategic role as a geographic, demographic, and historical entity rich in terms of achievements for the benefit of humanity.

Our Association has organized many conferences and council meetings, retreats, and perhaps the most prominent activities are the meetings of the chambers of commerce and industry in Africa and Arab world, that what we call as a smart initiative



for promoting investment among Arab and African countries and strengthen the interdependence between the two regions and develop opportunities for joint economic cooperation.

The Afro - Arab composition of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and Arab World adopted by ASSECAA is capable of creating a real mechanism in the service of the strategic interests of the peoples of African and Arab countries, to be included in the list of regional organizations actively working under the Partnership Strategy of Afro-Arab 2011-2016”.

***(Honorable Mohammed Noacer - Vice President of the Council of the Nation in the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria - Head of Algerian delegation).***

“At the moment where Councils/ Senates members celebrate the 10th anniversary of the ASSECAA, we all noticed that the Association has grown and it is not as it was at the stage of the establishment, while waiting until the association reaches maturity, we should support it, especially through its General Secretariat, to work harder, to adopt more initiatives for the action of ASSECAA to have a larger scope and a truly global visibility”.

***(His Excellency Honorable Gabriel NTISEZERANA, President of Senate of Burundi).***

“The Senate of Cameroon is certainly very young because it has one year of existence; hence the importance of this institution, ASSECAA, to get close to the great sages that ASSECAA gathers humbly to acquire their experiences and share ideas with them.

The Association to which we proudly adhere today, it works persistently in the same direction, because in fact, its ideals are based on the support of parliamentary bicameralism, development parliamentary cooperation in political, economic and cultural fields; sharing of common values in the field of democracy and



establishment of the State of law, fight against poverty, hunger and underdevelopment as well as strengthening the role of women to achieve comprehensive and sustainable development for all peoples. We can easily conclude that the Senate of Cameroon and ASSECAA are in harmony and move effectively in the same direction”.

***(Honorable Abdoulaye Aboubakary, the First Deputy President of the Senate of the Republic of Cameroon).***

“Since more than ten years, a number of Speakers of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and Arab World met during the period from 25th to 27th of April, 2002 in the city of Sana’a, Republic of Yemen, and then they decided unanimously to establish our association called (ASSECAA). The Association represented a tool to promote parliamentary cooperation as well as strengthening the integration between the countries of South-South, among others targeted objectives of the Association.

We recognize today that it becomes necessary to remember the strenuous efforts that have been made and the energies devoted by many Speakers of legislative Chambers, who assumed the presidency of our Association and the management of the Secretariat to urge more countries to join our family of the Association (ASSECAA) - on the one hand, and to create an administrative entity able to implement what had been approved in our deliberations and to ensure better visibility for the Association, on the other hand.

We must admit that there are great challenges currently facing States members, but we are still be able to overcome them. And when the member states of the Association are really determined they can overcome all these challenges and that what I am confident of”.

***(H.E. Venerable Andre Obami- Itou, President of the Senate of the Republic of Congo).***

“After a decade of existence, our Association has managed to be rooted with ability at the institutional and political levels of our



world of today that we can legitimately be proud of.

I would like to remind you that the philosophy of any political entity is to gather people around a common passion, joint activity, common values, women and men of all ages from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds. It is this diversity, this mixture that makes the richness of Association as it allows exchange of ideas, experiences, differences to achieve a common goal, that of the Association to which we belong”.

***(H.E. Venerable Rose Francine Rogombé, President of the Senate of the Republic of Gabon)***

“On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of ASSECAA’s establishment, I would like to congratulate all council’s members.

My country’s delegation believes that this respective Association gathered political elite, dignitaries and senators of high calibre, who can positively stimulate the development and maximize the fruitful cooperation among our nations at socio-economic and political levels.

We, in Jordan, believe that communication, exchange of knowledge and dialogue among countries do ensure the breaking down of barriers and solving difficulties that impede the mutual cooperation among our countries and peoples, in addition to solving any existing problems among these countries. Our respective association comes in existence to support the right of both Arabs and Africans to free and dignified life”.

***(Honorable Mohammed AL-Thuwaib, Head of Delegation of the Al-Ayan Council of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan).***

“On the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the Association, we should have the right to evaluate our input to this association, and the aspirations of our people as the main objective of the Association is to strengthen economic and social cooperation in our geographical area of Africa and the Arab world. These objectives





are inspired from the basic principles for the development; peace, security and stability, as you all know that there is no development without stability. Our region today is in dire need for her good sons to end disputes and establish a stable social life, where peoples live in security and stability, what is the position of our association as a gathering entity for Arab and African parliamentarians and when it will work to unify our efforts”.

***(Honourable Ibrahim bin Didi, Head of the Delegation of the House of Counsellors of the Kingdom of Morocco).***

“An anniversary such as this usually presents an opportunity to celebrate our mile stone, but sadly, we are still faced with emerging and continuing challenges to peace of our securities”.

***(Senator Abdul Ahmed Ningi, Deputy Senate Leader/ head of delegation, Senate of Federal Republic of Nigeria).***

“ We meet today to celebrate the 10th anniversary of our blessed ASSECAA which has contributed in the enhancement of inter-Arab – African parliamentary cooperation, supported the bonds of friendship and contributed to the promotion of good-neighbourliness; accordingly, this make us assume a greater responsibility to exert more efforts to move towards the achievement of aspirations and hopes of our peoples, coordination of attitudes to common interests, establishment of justice, dissemination of dialogue and pluralism culture and seeking to provide decent life to our societies and next generations as a response to the dedication to our religious and humanitarian duty.

The kingdom of Saudi Arabia under the leadership of the Custodian of the two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah Bin Abdul-Aziz – May Allah protect him – believes in the importance of consolidating the Arab and African relations and seeks to support cooperation among our countries, as a real necessity to the requirements of the current era and circumstances surrounding in



order to move towards new horizons of joint cooperation and Afro-Arab partnership, more particularly in the areas of development and investment as well as settlement of disputes by peaceful means”.

***(H.E. Abdullah Bin Ibrahim Al Alsheikh , Speaker of Shoora Council of Saudi Arabia).***

“Our Association is considered as one of the most important and most active regional organs which emerged as a result of the meeting held in the city of Rabat in the Kingdom of Morocco in 2002. The birth of this association fully reflects the brilliant idea behind the time and the place where it has a symbolic significance in building bridges and opening lines of communication and cooperation between partners in this organization to serve its political, social and cultural goals as an entity gathering representatives of the peoples in the Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and Arab world.

As we believe in the objectives of the Association and its feasibility, we, in the Council of States of Sudan, hosted many activities of the Association; Khartoum witnessed the 3rd Conference of the Association held in 2008, the establishment of the Women Parliamentarians Committee in 2010 as well as the holding of the Conference of Women Parliamentarians from 18th to 19th of March, 2012, and the Meeting of the Women Parliamentarians Committee from 8th to 9th of February, 2014 as well.

We also supported ASSECAA activities by looking for sponsorship for the Meeting of Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Africa and the Arab world, we helped as possible as we could in supporting ASSECAA’s activities because we believe in the importance of the association and its principles which deepen communication between the council members and pave the way for the exchange of expertise and information that help in making our hope and dream as true by transforming this association into an entity leading initiatives at social, economic and cultural levels



between its countries members and to set up a mechanism for settling disputes and put an end to wars and achieve security, peace and stability in the Arab and African countries”.

***(H.E Dr. Abdullah Ambali -, Speaker of Council of States of Sudan)***

“On the 10th anniversary of the establishment of ASSECAA which our country had the honour and privilege to contribute to its creation and host the headquarters of its General Secretariat, we would like to confirm the particularity of the geographic location of the Republic of Yemen and its historically geographic distinction in terms of linking Afro-Arab interests.

In accordance with the Shoora council’s internal and external contributions to ASSECAA, we are working seriously towards the support of ASSECAA’s activities and the enhancement of relations with its member countries despite the harsh conditions our country is currently experiencing. Following the fifth retreat held in Burundi, we have started contacting with the authorities concerned with implementing the recommendations of that retreat in such a way that confirms our keenness to consolidate cooperation among the two region’s peoples with an aim to serve the common interests”.

“As you are all aware that our country was not an exception in terms of the developments that have recently taken place on the Arab scene. However, it is the province that helped us reach a national consensus that resulted in the Yemenies of all stripes taking part in the comprehensive National Dialogue Conference (NDC) headed by President AbdRabbo Mansur Hadi. This was based on our brothers’ and friends’ keenness to maintain Yemen’s peace, security and unity as manifested in the GCC – brokered initiative as well as the UN’s Security Council resolutions that turned the Yemeni experience in conflict resolution into a model for resolving internal crises”.

***(H.E Sheikh Abdul Rahman Mohammed Ali Othman, Speaker of Shoora Council of Yemen).***



## **Important Excerpts from Speeches of Heads of Delegations at other ASSECAA meetings**

“This association forms a parliamentary space at Arab and African sphere which will contribute to encourage consultations and enhance cooperation among parliamentarians in Africa and the Arab world on the one hand, and between them and the world, on the other hand, we believe that the establishment of the Association of Senates Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and the Arab world in this historical period where all Arabs and Africans are going through difficult time, it will be a qualitative step which supports orientations of country members of the association in their common efforts to counter the growing phenomenon of terrorism, which has become a global phenomenon and it commits the most heinous forms of murder and destruction. Unmerciful terrorist will not show respect for laws and international boundaries.”

***(H.E. Honorable Abdul Qadir bin Saleh, Speaker of the Council of the Nation of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria - the first meeting of the Association –Sanaa, 28 - 29 September, 2004).***

“it is very natural that we, as Arabs and Africans hold this meeting, depending on common legacy and long period of struggle to get rid of colonization, poverty and underdevelopment and aspiring for a better future that would give our peoples the chance to build their independent lives in line with their wills and national interests.”

***(H. E Mohammed Morse Awad, Ambassador of Egypt to Yemen, 2nd conference of ASSECAA, Sana'a, 8 - 9 May, 2007) .***

“We hope that members of the Association will be able together to achieve the interests of their peoples inspiring from features in common among ASSECAA member countries in its geographical location in the south northern of Earth and the convergence in term of economic growth and at political and social level their



common desire to a new world of peace and prosperity.

The cultural and geographic links and common interests between the African continent and the Arab World, require the cooperation between their countries as one entity in the framework of the international community. The Jordan does not consider the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and the Arab world as a forum where members meet from time to time, but an institution that bears the responsibility of the participation in joint action in support of its fair international issues as well as the promotion of bilateral and regional cooperation between their countries”.

***(H.E. Honorable Zaid Rifai, Speaker of the Al-Ayan Council in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the first meeting of the Association –Sanaa, 28 - 29 September, 2004).***

“As Parliamentarians representing the senates and parliaments in Africa and the Arab world, we emphasize our conviction of the need to continue to work together continually to build a world of peace and prosperity and promote the common interests of our countries through international cooperation at regional level in order to achieve progress and peace towards achieving the goals of the new millennium. The Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and the Arab world was established to enhance cooperation and coordination between the Arab world and Africa in various fields”.

***(Dr. Fayez Tarawneh - former Prime Minister in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Retreat, Dead sea, Jordan in 2007).***

“We are keen on enhancing relations among the Arab and African countries in order for them to be able to work together to achieve their common interests in order to achieve the noble objectives of our association and to be in line with our historical binds”.

***(H.E Hama Ould Sheikh Bouh, Vice president of the Senate of Mauritania, 2nd conference of ASSECAA, Sana'a, 8 – 9 May, 2007).***



“We are aware of the importance of the Association which is the only organization bringing together Africa and the Arab world. It is also the only organization that defends the “bicameralism” in Africa and the Arab World ; it has also focused, during the last years, on the economic cooperation through meetings of chambers of commerce and industry and on the social cooperation by bringing together parliamentary women, as well as through other activities related to the problems of the citizens of the region”.

***(H. E. Dr. Mohammed Cheikh Baidallah, speaker of the House of Councilors of the Kingdom of Morocco, ASSECAA Conference, Rabat, Morocco, 12- 13 November, 2009).***

“After our first meeting in Nouakchott, which is considered as the cornerstone of a clear and explicit dialogue between our councils in Africa and the Arab world, the Constitutional conference of the Association held in Rabat focused on how to bring us together and to create a space which allows us the possibility of communication, consultation and coordination among ourselves, guided by the Statutes of the Association that we approved in Rabat during our Constitutional conference.

In light of this constructive spirit, we moved to the stage of preparation with wisdom and intelligence to launch an active start for the association provided with necessary mechanisms and means to ensure its success in performing its tasks that what we are dealing with today. This conference is being held under suitable circumstances as we wished, all the conditions are adequate to precede, let’s go ahead, and God’s blessing to proceed”.

***(The late H. E. Honorable. Mustafa Okasha - Speaker of the House of Councillors in the Kingdom of Morocco - first conference of the association –Sanaa, 25 - 26 April, 2004).***

“One of ASSECAA objectives call for member states to deliberate on issues of common interest within national and international



spheres to make appropriate recommendation and adopt practical resolutions concerning them. In addition, the Association has adopted a consultative approach on tackling political, economic and social issues suffered by our people, in cooperation and coordination with the African Union, Arab League, the organization of the Islamic Conference, regional organizations and other international Organizations”.

***(Honorable Asser Kuveri Kapere, Chairperson of The National Council of Namibia, 4th ASSECAA retreat, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 25 -26 September 2011)***

“From its humble beginning in 2004, ASSECAA has grown to take its rightful place in the comity of international organizations .As we enter a new decade, it is my feeling that we review our journey so far, acknowledge our success and take an honest look into our challenges in order to approach the new decade with vigor and commitment”.

***(Senator Victor Ndoma Egba, head of Nigerian delegation, ASSECAA Conference, Rabat, Morocco, 12 -13 November,2009).***

“We, in Qatar, believe that peace and stability are the major bases of political and socio-economic progress .Accordingly, our country is leading the afro-Arab efforts that include the Afro-Arab initiative, Darfur initiative, the UN and the Sudanese effort; we are very proud of this role deemed a good example of cooperation and Afro-Arab common Action for which, we believe, ASSECAA was established . We hope that our efforts would end in success”.

***(H.E. Mohammed Bin mubarak Al-Khalifi, Speaker of Shoora Council of Qatar, ASSECAA 2008 conference, Khartoum, Sudan 24 - 26 November, 2008).***

“We are meeting today to pursue our efforts aimed at achieving



the objectives for which this Association was established. We have high hopes that this parliamentary organization will play an effective role in enhancing democracy that constitutes the pillar of stability and development in Arab and African countries . Therefore, we should extend unflinching support to this Association to help it accomplish its goals”.

***(H.E. Eissa Bin Rabiaa Al-Kawari, Head of Qatari delegation, 2nd conference of ASSECAA, Sana’a, 8– 9 May, 2007).***

“We have no doubt that in this stage our gathering could become an influential force in Africa and the Arab World.

However our nations have to adopt constantly strategies through which we can promote the rational logic behind the establishment of the association and clarify the noble objectives it seeks to achieve and the difficulties that it is trying to avoid all that can be achieved through highlighting the objectives that the Association is established for and goals which it seeks to achieve them.

Our association is a leading institution that all members’ countries should promote and without performing this role by all the members this organization will not be useful.

It is clear that this association is inspired from our ideas, but that does not mean we do not keep it for next generation. The idea of unifying nations through education would be a useful idea for all generations, nations that are under the umbrella of this association. In the same context, I call on all Member States in order to strengthen the role of women in Africa and the Arab world”.

***(H.E. Senator Gelane T. Zwane, President of the Senate of the Kingdom of Swaziland - The 3rd Council Meeting, Sana’a 7 -9 May 2007).***

“We have tried to make available for your use the necessary facilities needed for the running of this important meeting, which





draw delegates from the continent and the Arab world; this is because of the importance of the issues you are gathering to discuss that include the challenges and prospects for multi-racial regions in search of socio-economic and political cooperation, large scale entrepreneurial challenges for developing nations: Africa and Arab case study and regional economic groupings to cushion the harsh realities of globalization. The issues you have placed on the table underscore the importance of political and socio-economic cooperation in order to achieve harmony among different states, which is necessary for development and economic freedom. Without doubt, members of the business community and civil society have a keen interest in the resolution of these issues”.

***(H.E Honorable Mninwa Johannes Mahlangu, chairperson of the national council of provinces of South Africa, at the meeting of chambers of commerce and industry, Cape Town, South Africa, 27 -28 October, 2008).***

“The meetings of the Association have their objectives in bringing members together in order to engage and debate on the contribution of Parliaments to nation building, human rights and the constraints on socio-economic, political and cultural development of Africa and the Arab world”.

***(Honorable MN Oliphant, head of South Africa delegation, 2008 retreat, Nouakchott, Mauritania, 5–6 May 2008).***

“The conferences of ASSECAA are goaled to enhance Afro – Arab relations, exchange of viewpoints on common issues, revitalize the role of parliamentary diplomacy in establishing relations among people and seriously consider the issues dealing with peoples’ lives”.

***(H.E. Ali Yehya Abdullah, former speaker of Sudanese council of States, ASSECAA, 2nd conference of ASSECAA, Sana’a, 7- 9 May 2007).***



“We believe that the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent councils in Africa and the Arab World (ASSECAA), which emerged in 2000 in Rabat and launched officially in Sana’a in 2004, opens up new avenues of cooperation and illuminates the path for Arab and African leaders so that they can strengthen, through ASSECAA, parliamentary diplomacy, proceed with establishing useful and modal relations.

What raises optimism is that the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent councils in Africa and the Arab World has drawn wide attention from Arab and African countries, a matter that reflects their belief in the association, its principles and objectives”.

***(The late H.E. Abdul-Aziz Abdul-Ghani, former speaker of Shoora council of Yemen, former chairman of ASSECAA, 2nd conference of ASSECAA, Sana’a, 7 -9 May 2007).***

“The participation of a Zimbabwean delegation in this meeting is a clear indication of our commitment to the goals and objectives that the Association is seeking to achieve. We have closely followed great achievements of the Association and accordingly we express our appreciation to the founding fathers for their great initiative.

The association has contributed to enhance cooperation between members countries in Africa and the Arab world and in this regard, we believe that this organization would become a bridge for enhancing cooperation between Africa and the Arab world as well as the South - South cooperation and Zimbabwe as a member of the African Union and the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77, strongly supports the goals and principles of the Association”.

***(H. E. Senator Edna Madzongwe - President of the Senate of the Republic of Zimbabwe in the 5th Conference of the Association -Libreville, Republic of Gabon, February 25 -26, 2011).***



## **Excerpts from speeches of Guests of Honour.**

“ASSECAA is the only organization on governmental level between Africa and the Arab World, therefore, all efforts should be put in place to sustain its activities considering that Africa and Arab World have historical, religious, geographical and cultural similarities”.

***(H.E. Olusegun Obasanjo, former president of Nigeria, ASSECAA Retreat, Abuja June 2006).***

“We, in Yemen are very much interested in the role ASSECAA is playing in establishing good Arab-African relations, and achieving our joint political and economic interests.

We, in fact, are encouraging this association being the sole institution bringing together Arab and African nations. This out of our keenness to accomplish the objectives for which this nascent Association was created. There is no doubt that the Association has achieved a lot of objectives since its inception, as its members believe in freedom and democracy, the conduct of periodic elections, inspiring the spirit of the age, and positively interacting with new variables”.

***(His Excellency, Abduh Rabbou Mansour Hadi, Vice-president of the Republic of Yemen, 2nd conference, Sana'a, Yemen 8 - 9 May 2007).***

“Given the above considerations and the requirements of the current, crucial phase, I hope your conference will help create a new dynamic to which your esteemed Association can make a major contribution at the following four levels:

At the political level, your Councils can help strengthen fledgling democracies, taking into account the specificity of each country.

On the economic front, and considering your Councils' competence and make up, I believe they can play a key role in



promoting an efficient development partnership between the Arab world and African countries, through concrete projects that are not restricted to basic infrastructure, but that also cover human development. Your assemblies and Councils can also help with the positioning of Member States; economies in preparation for the revamping and restructuring of the global economy. They can also help with the emergence of a system of governance, one which is not only more equitable and more balanced, but also one in which solidarity and human values feature more prominently.

On the cultural level, the interaction and interchange between Arab and African civilizations and the unstinting efforts Arabs and Africans are making to rise to the challenge of the knowledge and communication –based society, should prompt you to help set up an alliance of civilizations, promote inter-cultural, interfaith coexistence, confront extremism and terrorism- which cannot be ascribed to a given religion or a specific location and ensure respect for cultural diversity, since the latter enriches national identity and should not be a pretext for isolationism, intolerance and division.

The strategic policy sector remains a major area on which to focus your joint action. Many of the hotbeds of tension around the world today concern Africa and the Arab world and the most tragic of them is the ordeal and aggression suffered by our Palestinian brothers. This means your energies should be geared towards creating the right conditions for the constructive role that dialogue plays in promoting rapprochement, confidence and reconciliation, which are the ingredients for just, peaceful solutions; solutions that must preserve the sovereignty, national unity and territorial integrity of states and help prevent the squandering of energies and resources on artificial conflicts to which no solutions can, indeed, be found”.

***(Message from His Majesty Mohammed VI King of Morocco to the fourth conference of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and the Arab world (ASSECAA) Rabat, Morocco, 12 November, 2009).***



“It is my understanding that ASSECAA’s objectives are indeed noble and the General Secretariat has been doing a commendable job in the effort to achieve these objectives.

All Africans –Arab or non-Arab alike – as well as our brothers in the Middle East, though physically separated by the Red Sea in fact share so many things in common. We have common cultural heritages, similar historical background, and more importantly, common destiny. It is therefore only fitting that we harmonize our efforts towards consolidating our developmental endeavor”.

***(H.E Hailemariam Desalegn, Prime minister of Ethiopia).***