



2006 Retreat of The Association of Senates, Shoora And Equivalent Councils in Africa and The Arab World, Held in Abuja, Nigeria 5th – 6th June 2006 Communique.

1. The 2006 ASSECAA Retreat was held in Abuja Nigeria from 5th – 6th June, 2006. Delegates from the following ASSECAA member countries attended:

- (a) Algeria
- (b) Bahrain
- (c) Burundi
- (d) Egypt
- (e) Ethiopia
- (f) Gabon
- (g) Jordan
- (h) Morocco
- (i) Nigeria
- (j) Qatar
- (k) Saudi Arabia
- (l) South Africa
- (m) Sudan

- (n) Yemen



ASSOCIATION DES SENATS, SHOORA ET CONSEILS EQUIVALENTS
D'AFRIQUE ET DU MONDE ARABE

The Retreat was inaugurated by the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency Olusegun Obasanjo (GCFR).

Welcome addresses were delivered by the following:

- (a) the Chairman Local Organizing Committee, Distinguished Senator Jonathan Silas Zwingina
- (b) the Secretary-General of ASSECAA, Mr. Livinus I. Osuji
- (c) the President of the Senate of Nigeria, H.E Senator Ken Nnamani
- (d) the Chairman of ASSECCA, and Speaker of the Shoora Council of the Republic of Yemen, His Excellency, Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani.

2. The Heads of Delegations in their speeches reaffirmed their commitment to the fundamental aims and objectives of the Association as conceptualized by the founding fathers. The Delegates unanimously endorsed ASSECAA as a platform for the cross-fertilization of ideas on the deepening of the awareness of democratic norms, encouraging bicameralism and parliamentary democracy and stimulating cooperation in political, economic, social and cultural dimensions between Africans and the Arab World.

3. A total of five (5) papers were presented as follows:

Paper I – “The Contribution of the Legislature in Modern World Diplomatic and Political Order to create Universal Peace”.



ASSOCIATION DES SENATS, SHOORA ET CONSEILS EQUIVALENTS
D'AFRIQUE ET DU MONDE ARABE

Paper II – “The Role of the Legislature in Foreign Policy Process to Enhance International Trade and Economic Cooperation”.

Paper III – “The Legislature as a Vehicle of Change in Socio-Economic, Political and Cultural Behaviour”.

Paper IV – “Culture, Communication and Relationships: An Exploration of Effective Cultural Diversity Management Imperatives in Regional Integration”.

Paper V – “The Role of the Legislature in Strengthening the Rule of Law, Institutional Building, Economic Development and Democratic Principles”.

4. These papers were extensively discussed and debated by delegates. The following resolutions, based on the papers and the contributions of delegates were made:

(i) Global effort to maintain international peace and security must contend with three major challenges, namely;

(a) the phenomenon of globalization;

(b) the question of international political decision-making;

(c) the problem of corruption.

When there is internal peace in all member states of the international community, there is bound to be international peace.



ASSOCIATION DES SENATS, SHOORA ET CONSEILS EQUIVALENTS
D'AFRIQUE ET DU MONDE ARABE

(ii) In the light of the achievements

of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in which ASSECAA is now an observer, there is need for more states to affiliate themselves to IPU as the best plausible avenue for participating effectively in the global project of actualizing universal peace.

(iii) African Parliamentarians should adopt the following African economic initiatives; the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA).

(iv) It was a general consensus of the delegates that the issues in globalization must be critically re-examined.

(v) It was also recognized that within Africa and the Arab World, there is need to strive for educational, social and cultural reforms and developments through identifying, analyzing and appreciating the impediments to such reforms.

(vi) It was a general consensus of delegates that with the achievement of educational goals in Africa and the Arab World, the parliaments will be able to crystallize strategies towards removing impediments to educational, social and cultural reforms.

(vii) It was agreed that ASSECAA should play a pivotal role in stimulating foreign relations and economic cooperation amongst its member states.

(viii) Delegates also agreed that the role of the legislature in Africa and the Arab World is very crucial in fostering development due to the inter-relationship of the legislature with the executive and judiciary



ASSOCIATION DES SENATS, SHOORA ET CONSEILS EQUIVALENTS
D'AFRIQUE ET DU MONDE ARABE

through law-making processes and their effective implementation. Accordingly, it was emphasized that ASSECAA legislatures must develop adequate structures for effective performance of these roles.

(ix) Delegates also agreed that regional integration presupposes communication among national groupings with disparate cultures and world views. For regional integration to become a reality, architects of the effort must become aware of the cultural baggage they bring to the table. They must deal with those culture-bound inertia, which present unique challenges to group dynamics. Their various interests must be properly harnessed and managed for effective group cohesion to eschew unhealthy inter-group conflict and competition.

(x) Delegates also emphasized the importance of the supervisory and oversight functions of the legislatures in ensuring the effective and transparent implementation of laws and resolutions passed by the legislatures.

(xi) The Association:

(a) noted that a durable peace effort has been started in the Republic of Sudan;

(b) expressed solidarity with the African Union initiative to resolve the long and costly conflict in Sudan;

(c) urged Africans and Arabs, wherever they live together to respect one another's culture and rights and pursue honest means of livelihood;

(d) called upon the IMF, Paris Club and other creditor countries and Associations to understand the hard economic conditions of some African and Arab debtor countries;



ASSOCIATION DES SENATS, SHOORA ET CONSEILS EQUIVALENTS
D'AFRIQUE ET DU MONDE ARABE

(e) resolved to exert influence on African and Arab governments to contribute substantially to the recovery of the Sudan nation and the establishment of lasting peace in the country;

(xii) The Association regretted the worsening political situation in Somalia and urged all parties to the conflict to eschew bitterness and contribute to the restoration of peace in the country;

(xiii) The Association noted with regret the continuing conflict in Iraq and other parts of the Middle East, particularly between Palestine and Israel and urged all parties to the conflict to respect the United Nations resolutions and ensure a speedy resolution of the conflict.

(xiv) Delegates would want to place on record their sincere and profound gratitude to the following:

(a) the Government and people of Yemen for hosting ASSECAA's headquarters and for their continuing efforts to support the Association;

(b) the Government and people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for hosting this Retreat;

(c) the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, its President and other Principal Officers for the generous hospitality extended to ASSECAA delegates to the Retreat;

(d) His Excellency, Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani, Speaker of the Shoora Council of the Republic of Yemen and the Chairman of ASSECAA for his able leadership of the Association and

(e) The Secretary General of ASSECAA and his staff for ably piloting the affairs of ASSECAA and the Local Organizing Committee for the preparation and organization of this Retreat.



ASSOCIATION DES SENATS, SHOORA ET CONSEILS EQUIVALENTS
D'AFRIQUE ET DU MONDE ARABE

4. The Retreat adjourned sine die on 6th June 2006 at 5.10 pm.

The General Secretariat

Association of Senates,

Shoora and Equivalent Councils

in Africa and the Arab World

6th June 2006