

ASSOCIATION OF SENATES, SHOORA AND
EQUIVALENT COUNCILS
IN AFRICA AND THE ARAB WORLD



رابطة مجالس الشيوخ والشورى والمجالس
المماثلة في أفريقيا والعالم العربي

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Communique of the 3rd council Meeting and 2nd Conference of ASSSECAA,7-9 May 2007, Sanaa, Yemen.

Under the patronage of his Excellency, Ali Abdullah Saleh, the President of the Republic of Yemen and upon the invitation of his Excellency, Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani, the Speaker of the Shoora Council of Yemen and Chairman of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and the Arab world; and according to the provisions of the Association's Statute; the second Conference of the Association as well as the third meeting of the Council were held in Sana'a Yemen from the 7th to the 9th of May 2007, with the participation of the Presidents, Vice Presidents and members of the following member Councils /Senates:-

1-Council of the Nation-The Democratic Republic of Algeria

2-Shoora Council-The Kingdom of Bahrain

3-Senate-The Republic of Burundi

4-Shoora Council-The Arab Republic of Egypt

5-House of the Federation-The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

6-Senate-The Republic of Gabon

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7-House of Dignitaries-The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

8-Senate-The Islamic Republic of Mauritania

9-House of Counselors-The Kingdom of Morocco

10-National Council-The Republic of Namibia

11-Senate-The Federal Republic of Nigeria

12-Advisory Council-The State of Qatar

13-Council of States-The Republic of Sudan

14-Shoora Council-The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

15-National Council of Provinces-The Republic of South Africa

16-Senate-The Kingdom of Swaziland

17-Shoora Council-The Republic of Yemen

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Delegates from the following Councils/Organizations attended the Conference as Observers:

- 1. The President of the Senate of Zimbabwe**
- 2. The Ambassador of the Republic of Tunisia representing the Senate of Tunisia**
- 3. The Secretary-General of the Arab Parliamentary Union**
- 4. Ambassador Mohammed Rasheed Ghaleb representing the League of Arab States.**

Council Meeting

The 3rd meeting of the Council of the Association was held on Monday 7th May, 2007. The Secretary-General of the Association, Mr. Livinus I. Osuji delivered his statutory Annual Report to the Council.

In his Report, the Secretary-General reviewed the activities of the Association for 2006 and reported on the General Secretariat's views on the socio-economic and political developments in the regions of Africa and the Arab world as well as events in the Parliamentary world in the year 2006. He proposed the programmes and activities of the Association for 2007. Finally, the Secretary-General presented the Financial Report of the Association for 2006 and the Draft Budget of the General Secretariat for 2007 and 2008. The Council applauded the

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Report and adopted it as the basis for the deliberations of the Council. Thereafter, the Council resolved into four Committees.

The First Committee discussed:

- **The Budget of the Association for the years 2007 and 2008 and the Financial Report for The Workshop for Administrative Heads of member Councils/Senates**
- **The Calendar of the Association's Conference and Council meeting for 2007 and upward.**

The Second Committee discussed:

- **The Study Visit Exchange Programme**
- **The Retreat for the Council/Senates of the Member States**
- **Meeting of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Africa and the Arab world**
- **Requests presented by the member Councils/Senates**

The Third Committee discussed:

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- **The Students Exchange Programme**
- **The Relations with Similar Organizations**

The Fourth Committee discussed:

- **The Issues of Peace in Africa and the Arab world.**

The four Committees submitted their Reports to the Council in session. The Council adopted the Reports and approved them for presentation to the Conference on 8th May 2007. The Council adjourned sine die at 10.00pm

2nd ASSECAA Conference

On Tuesday 8th May 2007, at MOVENPICK HOTEL, SANA'A, YEMEN at 11.00am, Mr. Abdo Rabo Mansour Hadi, the Vice President of the Republic, representing His Excellency, Mr. Ali Abdullah Saleh, the President of the Republic of Yemen, opened the Conference with an important speech, in which he expressed his pleasure to open the Conference and welcomed the participants to the Conference held in Sana'a. He reiterated his deepest interest in the Association and prayed that the Association assumes its role in developing cooperation between African and Arab states at all levels. He also expressed joy at the orientation of the Association, in giving priority to the issues of peace and security and establishing economic cooperation between the two regions of Africa and the Arab world. He concluded by wishing the Conference great success.

His Excellency, Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani, the Speaker of the Yemeni Shoora Council and Chairman of the Association gave an additional speech, in which he mentioned the Association's most important achievements since its establishment in Sana'a, in April 2004. He stated that the programs that were recently implemented, especially the Visits' Exchange Programme were very successful and yielded desired dividends.

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The Chairman stressed the importance of holding the meetings of the Association's Council, and its general Conference on a regular basis, in view of their importance in strengthening the Association and enabling it to achieve its goals.

He also reviewed the content of the Association's new agenda, especially that aiming at strengthening mutual economic benefits and maximizing its contributions to the international and regional efforts intended to put an end to conflicts and restore peace in the African and Arab regions.

Other speeches were given in the opening ceremony by Mr. Ali Yahya Abdullah, the President of the Council of States in the Republic of Sudan, on behalf of the Presidents of the Councils present. Mr. Livinus Osuji, the Secretary-General of the Association presented a welcome speech on behalf of the Secretariat. They all commended the initiative of the Yemeni Shoora Council to host the second Conference of the Association as well as the third meeting of the Association's Council. They also expressed their hope to see the role of the Association enhanced so that it contributes to achieve what the Councils/Senates and member States aspire to realize. They all stressed the importance of the issues included in the Conference agenda.

The Heads of the Delegations and the Secretary-General were honored to meet the Yemeni President, His Excellency, Mr. Ali Abdullah Saleh at the Presidential Palace. At a short reception, he delivered a speech considered by all the members present to be an integral part of the Conference. The Conference resumed sitting at the Shoora Council of Yemen Chambers, Sana'a at 7.00pm.



Speeches by Heads of Delegations

The following Heads of Delegations delivered speeches at the resumed sitting of the Conference:

S/s/N	NAME	COUNCIL/SENATE	COUNTRY
1. 1	Abdul Razaq Boohara	Council of the Nation	Democratic Republic of Algeria
2. 2	Fouad Ahmed Al-haji	Shoora Council	Kingdom of Bahrain
3. 3	H.E Hon. Anatole MANIRAKIZA	Senate	Republic of Burundi
4. 4	Mohammed Morsy Awad	Shoora Council	Arab Republic of Egypt
5. 5	H.E Mr. Degefe Bula	House of the Federation	The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
6. 6	Dr. Jean- Baptiste MINTSA MIMBA	Senate	Republic of Gabon
7. 7	H.E Dr. Tareq Al-Sahimat	House of Dignitaries	Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
8. 8	Homa Ould Al-Sheikh Sadabu	Senate	Islamic Republic of Mauritania
9. 9	Mohammed Fadhili	House of Counselors	Kingdom of Morocco
10.10	Senator Jonathan Zwingina	Senate	The Federal Republic of Nigeria
11.11	Mohammed Khalid Al-Sadah	Advisory Council	The State of Qatar
12.12	Abdulrahman Al-Suwaylym	Shoora Council	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
13.13	Mr. Ali Yahya	Council of States	Republic of Sudan
14.14	Senator Chief Gelane T. Zwane	Senate	Kingdom of Swaziland
15.15	Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani	Shoora Council	Republic of Yemen
16.16	Nourredine Bashkoji	Arab Parliamentary Union	
17.17	Ambassador Mohammed Rasheed Ghaleb	League of Arab States	

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In their presentations, the Heads of Delegations expressed gratitude to His Excellency, President Ali Abdullah Saleh, President of the Republic of Yemen for the support he has continued to give and the interest he is showing in the affairs of the Association. They extended similar gratitude to His Excellency Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani, the Speaker of the Shooraa Council of Yemen and Chairman of the Association for his continued efforts to head the Association since its inception. In the same vein, the Heads of Delegations thanked the Secretary-General and the Secretariat for their remarkable efforts and efficient performance in the General Secretariat which is geared steadily towards the realization of the objectives of the Association. They expressed the good wishes of their Councils/Senates to the Association and proposed their commitment to contribute to the realization of the objectives of the Association.

Proposals from the Council to the Conference

The Conference considered the following Proposals from the Council to the Conference;

i) Study Visit Exchange Programme

The Conference noted the importance of the Study Visit Exchange Programme outlined by the Council which included:

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a. The promotion of joint action and the advancement of cooperation by enabling member Senates/Councils to use the opportunity of the visit to enhance bilateral relationships

b. The sharing of experiences on national and regional socio-economic, political and cultural affairs

c. Informal deliberation on regional and world topical issues and thus aid the harmonization of interest in the African and Arab regions so as to facilitate the formation of regional consensus on world affairs.

The Conference noted that it was necessary for the Secretariat to liaise with member Councils/Senates in respect of dates, in fixing the schedule for the Study Visit Exchange Programme.

Accordingly, the Conference approved the organization of the Study Visit Exchange Programme for members of the Association in 2007.

ii) Venue for Association's Conferences



The Conference considered the proposal from the Council on the venues for the annual Conferences and Council meetings of the Association and upheld that the provisions of the Association's Statute, Article 5(1) be applied. Accordingly, the Conference resolved that the Association shall hold its annual meetings in one of the member countries according to English alphabetical order, otherwise in a member country which offers to host the meeting.

iii) 2008 Conference and Council meeting

The States Council of Sudan offered and the Conference adopted that the 2008 Conference and Council meeting be held in Sudan. The date would be agreed between the State Council of Sudan and the Secretariat and communicated to members.

iv) 2007 Budget for the Secretariat

The Conference received and approved the report of the Council on the 2007 Budget for General Secretariat.

v) 2008 Budget

The Conference received the report of the Council that in view of the improbability of holding another meeting in 2007 to consider the budget for 2008, and in view of the absence of an audit report on the 2006 Accounts, the 2008 budget like the 2007 budget, be credited with same amount, to which will be added 10% increase to cater for inflations.

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vi) Appointment of Auditors

The appointment of Auditors for the 2006 Accounts was delegated to the General Secretariat.

The Conference accordingly resolved that the 2008 budget be credited with the same amount like the 2007 budget to which will be added 10% increase for

inflation and that the General Secretariat should appoint an Auditor for the 2006 Accounts as delegated by the Council.

vii) Retreat for Member Councils/Senates

The Conference received the report of the Council on the proposed Retreat for Members in 2007. Pursuant to Article 3 (1) of the Association's Statute which stipulates that the Association shall organize for its members, at least one annual meeting, on subjects of common interest and considering the perceived benefits of the 2006 Retreat held in Nigeria, the Conference resolved that a Retreat be organized for members of the Association in 2007.

viii) Relationship with Similar Organisations

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The Conference received the report of the Council on the contacts being made by the General Secretariat with Similar Organizations as ASSECAA. The Conference accordingly approved:

(a) the continued communication and interaction between the General Secretariat of ASSECAA and the Secretariat of Similar organizations

(b) the eventual arrangement for meetings between those Organizations and ASSECAA whenever possible.

ix) Students' Exchange Programme

The Conference received and considered the report from the Council on the Students' Exchange Programme. In place of the proposed Students Exchange Programme, the Conference directed the encouragement of the role of Youth Parliaments to extend the frontiers of cultural exchanges between the youths of Africa and the Arab world.

x) Peace Meetings in the regions of Africa and the Arab world

The Conference received and considered the proposal from the Council on the setting up of a Standing Committee to be called "Political Committee for Conflict Resolution" comprising:

1. The Umma Council of Algeria

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- 2. The Shoora Council of Bahrain**
- 3. The Shoora Council of Egypt**
- 4. House of the Federation of Ethiopia**
- 5. The Senate of Gabon**
- 6. The House of Dignitaries of Jordan**
- 7. The Senate of Mauritania**
- 8. The House of Counselors of Morocco**
- 9. The Senate of Nigeria**
- 10. The Shoora Council of Saudi Arabia**
- 11. The National Council of the Provinces of South Africa**
- 12. The Council of States of Sudan**

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13. The Shoora Council of the Republic of Yemen

14. The General Secretariat of the Association.

The Committee shall study the origins, trends and current position of conflicts and wars in the regions of Africa and the Arab world; the international efforts thereupon and to make appropriate recommendations to the Conference so as to enable ASSECAA to play a more effective role in the efforts to find lasting solutions to these conflicts.

The Conference resolved that;

a. A Standing Committee to be called the Political and Conflict Resolution Committee be set up with the terms of reference as enunciated in the Council memo.

b. The General Secretariat should prepare papers specifying the Rules of Procedure for the Committee, the funding and necessary support for the realization of the objective of the Committee.

c. Any other member Council/Senate could join the Committee.

Meeting of Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Africa and the Arab world



The Conference received the proposal from the Council that pursuant to Article 2 (2) of the Association's Statute which aims at reinforcing economic, political, cultural cooperation and security among the nations of Africa and the Arab world, a meeting of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Africa and the Arab world be organized by the General Secretariat under the auspices of ASSECAA in 2007 without involving the Association in any financial commitment. The meeting shall enable these Chambers of Commerce and Industry to deliberate on effective economic cooperation between the two regions.

The Conference resolved that a meeting of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Africa and the Arab world be organized in 2007 by the Secretariat, under the auspices of ASSECAA without involving the Association in any financial commitment.

xii) Visit to New Members

The Conference considered the proposal to encourage new Councils/Senates to join the Association. Accordingly, it was resolved that the Secretariat should organize the visit of some members to new Senates and Second Chambers in Africa and the Arab world to encourage them to join the Association.

xiii) Conflicts and Violence in Africa and the Arab world

The Conference strongly denounced the continued emergence and existence of conflicts and violence in several parts of Africa and the Arab world, it condemned the violation of international laws and conventions and seriously regretted the lack of progress in the peace process aimed at resolving these conflicts and stopping the violence which are daily claiming innocent lives.

The Conference commended the efforts of the Arab League and the African Union to solve the current crisis in the Sudanese province of Darfur and underscored the importance of the Abuja accord in contributing to the resolution of the conflict. The Conference called for the harnessing of all regional and international efforts to encourage coexistence among the citizens of Sudan.

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The Conference stressed the necessity to fully respect the unity, sovereignty and independence of Sudan while contributing to the stability and attainment of peace in the nation. The Conference reiterated the rejection of all forms of terrorism by the Association. The Conference decried any form of discrimination against people based on religious, social, ethnic or gender bias.

xiv) Promotion of Democracy

The Conference reaffirmed the objectives of the Association regarding commitment to the promotion of democratic practices, respecting human rights, encouraging lawful civil society organizations, empowering women to play active roles in national affairs and encouraging good governance. Finally, it re-emphasized the importance of parliamentary bicameralism which enlarges the basis of participation in decision making in a modern nation state.

xv) Vote of Thanks

Distinguished Senator (Chief) Gelane Zwane, President of the Senate of Swaziland, on behalf of the delegates and the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and the Arab world read the text of a telegram, proposed to be sent, to His Excellency, President Ali Abdullah Saleh, the President of the Republic of Yemen for his generous sponsorship of the Conference. The Conference resolved that the telegram be sent accordingly.

Adjournment

The Conference adjourned sine die at 12.30 p.m.