



The Final Communiqué Issued by The First Conference of The Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and The Arab World , Sana'a 25- 27 April 2004.

In line with the rules of the Charter of the Association of Senates, Shoora And Equivalent Councils in Africa and the Arab World. And in continuation of the efforts aimed at realizing the objectives of the Association, represented in supporting the Bicameralism and enhancing cooperation among Association's peoples and continuing the coordination and integral efforts of Arab, African and Islamic parliamentary Unions, and contributing in the activities of the Arab Parliamentary Union and the African, Islamic and International Union. And by an honorable invitation extended from the Shoora Council in the Republic of Yemen: The first Conference of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and the Arab World was held in Sana'a, during the period 25- 27 of April 2004, with the attendance of delegations representing eighteen Councils as follows:

1	The Republic of Algeria	The National Council
2	Bahrain Kingdom	The Shoora Council
3	Republic of Burundi	The Senate
4	Arab Republic of Egypt	The Shoora Council
5	Democratic Federal Republic of Ethiopia	The Federal Council
6	The Republic of Gabon	The Equivalent Council
7	Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan	Al-Ayaan Council
8	Kingdom of Lesotho	The Senate
9	Democratic R. of Madagascar	The Senate
10	Islamic R. of Mauritania	The Senate
11	Kingdom of Morocco	The Consultative council
12	Federal R. of Nigeria	The Senate
13	Republic of Namibia	The National Council
14	Sultanate of Oman	The State Council
15	State of Qatar	The Shoora Council
16	The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	The Shoora Council
17	Kingdom of Swaziland	The Senate
18	The Republic of Yemen	The Shoora Council

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And with the participation of three delegations representing:

- 1- The French Senate.
- 2- The General Secretariat of the Arab Parliamentary Union.
- 3- The General Secretariat of the Shoora Council for the Arab Maghrib Union.

The Conference was honored by the attendance of His Excellency President of the Republic of Yemen/Ali Abdullah Saleh, under whose patronage the Conference was held, and who inaugurated the works of the Conference by an important and historical speech in which he expressed his happiness in attending the opening ceremony of the Conference and welcomed the participants in the historical city of Sana'a/the Arab Culture Capital, which embraced earlier the Inter-Governmental Regional Conference on Democracy, Human Rights and the Role of the International Criminal Court.

His Excellency concluded his speech by wishing the participants to would come up with positive and active results which would satisfy the needs of the peoples of the member States.

The Speaker of the Yemeni Shoora Council/Chairman of the Conference then delivered a speech in which he greeted his predecessor/Mr. Mustafa Oukasha/the Speaker of the Moroccan Consultative Council for his fruitful efforts in steering the Association during the last period.

Then, Mr. Mustafa Aukasha/the speaker of the Moroccan Consultative Council/chairman of the previous session delivered

a speech in which he expressed his confidence in the ability of the current Chairman in administering the works of the Association.

The Conference discussed the following issues:

- 1- Discussing the Association's draft Rules of procedures.
 - 2- A working paper entitled Bicameralism as an ideal choice for expanding the peoples' participation in the decision-making process and implementation thereof.
 - 3- A working paper on the Civil Society and Human Rights Organizations: their role in the development of democracy.
- The Conference expressed its deep appreciation to H.E. President of the Republic of Yemen/Ali Abdullah Saleh who has patronaged this Conference and has shown keen interest to attend the opening session thereof, and who delivered an important speech which the Conference

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has taken a Resolution that it be considered as a Document of the Conference due to its valuable contents as well as significant and tremendous meanings.

- The Conference has resolved that the Capital of the Republic of Yemen “Sana’a” to be taken as the Permanent Headquarters of the General Secretariat of the Association, and the Conference has highly appreciate the honorable grant of His Excellency President Ali Abdullah Saleh in offering a building in the name of the Republic of Yemen for the General Secretariat of the Association.
- The Conference unanimously approved the Rules of procedures of the Association in the meeting of the Heads of delegations.
- The Senates, the Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and the Arab World included in the membership of the Association have undertaken to abide by implementing the Resolutions and the Recommendations of the Conference; and in contributing in deepening democratic values in their respective countries and transfer them to reality.
- The Conference is committed to cooperate with the Regional and International Parliamentary Organizations to enhance democracy and public freedoms and to support of the just and fair issues of the African and Arab peoples, top of which is the Palestinian cause. The Conference declares its absolute denouncement for the brutal Israeli practices, the cleansing campaigns, the oppressive and detention acts and the demolishing of the houses on the heads of their tenants in Gaza and the West Bank. The Conference, too, declares its solidarity with the Palestinian people in their legitimate struggle for achieving their specific and legal objectives represented in self-determination and the establishment of an Independent Palestinian State with Al-Qods as its Capital. Within this framework, the Conference expresses its full support for all exerted efforts for achieving just, fair and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, in accordance with the International Security Council Resolutions as well as the United Nations General Assembly Resolutions.
- The Conference confirms its full support for the exerted efforts and political initiatives at speeding up the withdrawal of the occupation forces from the Iraqi territories and to be replaced by forces under the supervision of the United Nations; and to hand over the authority to the Iraqi people in accordance with the measures and mechanism that will be agreed upon. The Conference highly appraised, in this regard, the Yemeni initiative aiming at stopping the bloodshed, securing the unity of the Iraqi territories, and forming a National Assembly representing all sects and national Iraq powers, and holding General Elections guaranteed in its



legality; the refusal of establishing any political parties based on race, religion or sectarianism which secure the establishment of and Iraqi, democratic, independent and unified national State.

• The Conference declares its support for the international efforts of peaceful solutions of conflicts in order to eliminate the aggravated tension in a number of spots of conflicts in the African continent.

In the field of Democracy, Human Rights and the Role of Civil Society: the Committee has reached the following Recommendations.

- The Conference confirms the extreme importance that the Councils of Senates, Shoora and the Equivalent Councils of the Associations members to contribute in working for deepening the democratic process and enhancing human rights, as well as to play pioneering role in encouraging abidance by essential criteria for the good governance: through concentration on building the civil and administrative capacities and enhancement of the parliamentary supervision, in addition to supporting the current initiative of participating in decision-making and adopting active measures for fighting the phenomena of disfiguring the public performance and supporting orientations related to judicial reforms with a view to achieving its independence.
- The Conference confirms the necessity of the role of the civil society organization in strengthening the peoples' participation in the political and development process and deepening democratic values and human rights in our societies.
- The Conference confirms the importance to adapt suitable legal atmosphere for the establishment of civil societies and to assist them in enhancing their role in the democratic development process.
- The Conference confirms the importance of enhancing the role of women and their participation in the political and social process, and protecting them form all forms exploitation or to weaken their rights.
- The Conference discussed the Paper regarding the Bicameralism System presented to the Conference from the Republic of Yemen, and found that the Paper is suitable because it has clarified all that should be clarified as regards the Bicameralism System. In this regard, the Conference confirms its support for the Bicameralism System since it is an ideal choice for expanding the peoples' participation in the decision-making process. The Conference also encourages the interested States to take this System due to its characteristics and capacity to absorb the people's requirements and the active society potentials in the legislative powers.
- The Conference responded, thankfully and graciously, to the Republic of Namibia's invitation to host the next Conference of the Association, and confirms its positive response for this

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honorable invitation at the time to be agreed upon with the General Secretariat.

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At the end of the final session his Excellency the Speaker of the Yemeni Shoora Council/Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani/the Chairman of the Association, delivered a speech in which he thanked the Heads and members of the participating delegations for all that they have presented as well as the constructive and frank discussions in making the works of this round a success: thanking his colleagues and members of delegations for bearing the trouble of traveling to attend and participate in the success of the first round of the Association.

Issued in Sana'a
On 27 April 2004.