



## PROMOTING PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY

25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE OF AWEPA  
2&3 OCTOBER 2009 CAPE TOWN

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### OPENING SESSION: PARLIAMENTARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO ACHIEVING THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Chair, **Dr. Jan Nico Scholten**, President of AWEPA started by saluting and acknowledging the guests. He went on to mention the human injustices that characterized the governance of South Africa and Namibia 25 years ago which created the basis for the formation of AWEPA to address that dire situation. He specifically recognised the contribution of Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Ms. Graça Machel.

“It is all about the rights of every human being to live with dignity and security”, according to Dr. Scholten. He went ahead to stress the mission of AWEPA by saying that the world and in particular Africa needs strong parliaments, independent judiciary, honest police forces, a free press and energized civil societies to be able to deliver a sound, accountable governance. Africa needs strong institutions not strong men, as President Obama recently said.

In conclusion, he quoted Nelson Mandela and called for a renewed promise to fight the evils in our society by saying, “Massive poverty and obscene inequality are such terrible scourges of our times that they have to rank alongside slavery and apartheid as severe evils.” Referring to apartheid and the time he was in prison he said; “In the new century millions of people in the world’s poorest countries remain impoverished, enslaved and in chains. They are trapped in the prison of poverty and it is time to set them free. Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural, it is man-made and it can be overcome, like slavery and apartheid, by the actions of human beings.”

**Ms. Graça Machel**, Chair of the AWEPA Eminent Advisory Board, Mozambique pointed out that AWEPA’s 25th anniversary is an opportunity for celebration and reflection on how Africa has changed during that period. She pointed out the milestones and achievements that AWEPA registered over those 2,5 decades. AWEPA contributed to the fight against apartheid, in addition to contributions to a Democratic Namibia.

Thereafter, AWEPA was able to redesign its mandate to strengthening parliaments and good governance. Ms. Machel expressed her congratulations to Dr. Jan Nico Scholten and colleagues for driving the process. Today it is evident that the number of countries in conflict have reduced and there are several efforts aimed at consolidating peace, she said.

Whereas economies in Africa have been able to register 5% growth in 2008, nevertheless these are challenging times. There have been coup d’états in Guinea Bissau, Guinea Conakry and evident political polarisation in Kenya and Zimbabwe. Ms. Machel sees this as evidence of the return to one-man states in which the Heads of States drive the constitutional processes to entrench themselves in power.

Institutional violence against women and children is on the increase and poverty is rising. Intolerance against media and civil society is on the increase with divergent voices between ruling parties against opposition. In short Ms Machel feels Africa is more democratic, however the substance has to be checked and improved.

On the efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Ms. Machel stated that most countries are far from reaching the set goals. One quarter of all children in Africa are underweight,

child mortality is high, most countries have not achieved gender parity, and women account for less than 10% in parliament. Rural migration is increasing while 1/3 of the urban population is living in slums. In essence, she said more people are becoming poorer, 100 million people will recede to abject poverty with economies expected to recede to an estimated 2.8 % growth.

Therefore she argued that aid and investment should go hand in hand. Without aid efforts to combat HIV/AIDS, access to health services, education, and improved infrastructure democracy gains will be compromised. Developed countries should aim to meet their development aid commitments.

In Ms. Machel's opinion the mentioned challenges can nonetheless be turned into opportunities, since history will not forgive us if we fail the people, in these times when human kind has reached unprecedented achievements in wealth creation and communication. She reiterated that inequality can be changed, and people can once again live a life dignity.

She reiterated that parliaments have crucial roles to play to continue pressurising government, not only to aim at meeting aid targets, but to do more despite the financial crisis. She added that where there is a resolve and when interests are at risks, money can be found. Just as billions were pumped into banks to save the collapse of the financial world, in comparison far less funds are needed to meet the eight Millennium Development Goals.

Ms. Machel's strong message to the European policy makers is that **aid is not a luxury and there should be no negotiation about it since a human life is priceless**. Governments need to reshape their obligations to put a human face to all activities, in order to keep our brothers and sisters alive.

She stated that MPs' oversight roles should be sharpened and African parliamentarians need to allocate sufficient resources to enable them to fulfil their mandates more effectively. Parliaments must keep the executive accountable and assert it. Democratic pillars must be strong including support to civil society. Africa has the potential to be the bread basket of the West, if only resources are used wisely, poverty is reduced, and respect for human rights is upheld.

**H.E. Mr. Festus Mogae**, Former President of Botswana addressed the meeting in Cape Town noting this occasion celebrates two things. First of all, the transformation of South Africa into a rainbow nation and secondly the transition of AWEPA into an organization that promotes the relationship between Africa and Europe. He thanked AWEPA for the role it played in promoting the principles of good governance and enhancing the capacity of parliamentarians by training Members of Parliament (MPs) and parliamentary staff.

H.E. Mr. Festus G. Mogae also praised the Southern African Development Community (SADC) for proving itself to be the most objective and impartial elections observer in the region. He also added that the overall conference theme of promoting parliamentary democracy is in keeping with political objectives of reducing poverty, promoting human rights by supporting well functioning parliaments in Africa and keeping Africa on the political agenda in Europe.

**Hon. Mary R. Mugenyi**, Second Vice-President of the Pan-African Parliament conveyed her congratulations to AWEPA on its 25 years commemoration. She praised AWEPA's initiatives and support for interactions between European and African MPs.

She stated that the role of the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) is to familiarise the people of Africa on the African Union (AU) programmes. She added that PAP is in the process of reviewing its protocols, in order to become a full legislative organ by 2010.

Mugenyi decried the gap between parliaments and communities. She said that MPs need to be the bridge between the people and the governments. Additionally, parliaments need to hold governments accountable. She noted that there were nevertheless obstacles that impede MPs from realising their objectives such as:

- Lack of awareness of the MDG concept from the start, as MPs did not participate in the formulation process of the MDGs;
- MPs are not fully independent from the executive, due to party politics which renders oversight difficult;
- Limited capacities within parliament;
- Lack of parliamentary linkages with research;
- Limited independence to pass budgets against the will of the executive;
- Limited possibilities to influence budgets with donor conditionalities;
- Flawed election processes whereby the ruling parties form the government, posing limitation on parliamentary oversight roles.

Hon. Mary R. Mugenyi stated that conditionalities for strengthening parliaments need to be addressed. She decried the emerging undemocratic trends, evidenced through military coups d'état, flawed elections and power sharing.

Addressing these new trends in her opinion calls for the strengthening of election monitoring processes, including peace building and strengthening peer review processes. Also more attention must be given to addressing all practices affecting women negatively and enforcing the 30% participation of women in Parliament. She recognised the positive efforts realised in Rwanda where women currently form over 50% of parliamentary membership. Finally, she thanked AWEPA for the continued support to parliamentary democracy and good governance in Africa.

**His Royal Highness Hon. Prince Guduza Dlamini**, President of the SADC Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF) saluted AWEPA for its work in strengthening parliamentary democracy and linkages with European Parliaments, providing technical support for parliamentary oversight and legislative processes. In this way he said AWEPA represent the voice of the voiceless.

He stated that the emancipation of South Africa represented an elimination of injustice to the whole continent of Africa. He said that the conference theme was very appropriate and that governments should now move from political rhetoric and rally around the MDGS to spearhead economic development. Parliamentary debates should point to clear programs of actions on MDGs, gender equality and efforts to increase female representation in parliaments

Hon. Prince Dlamini added that the SADC PF is very committed to the MDG objectives and supports efforts towards gender equality and increased women representation in parliament and governments through its Committees on Gender. Moreover, the SADC PF is also committed to HIV/AIDS concerns through its Standing Committee on Health. The committee lobbies for increased budgetary allocation to health, while also raising awareness and addressing ways to domesticate and execute the laws supporting these commitments.

**Hon. Abdirahin H. Abdi**, Speaker of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) expressed gratitude on behalf of his Assembly for seven years of sustained support and partnership. He went further to mention the role of Parliaments in achieving the MDGs in general and drew specific examples from the progress so far made by EALA towards that end including: the East African Community Joint Trade Negotiations Act, the East African Community Customs Management Act, the Inter-University Council for East Africa Act, the Lake Victoria Transport Act, the East African Community Budget Act, the East African Community Appropriation Acts, and the Summit Act (Delegation of Powers). Sections in these specific pieces of legislation reinforce the MDGs. He added that EALA is also currently considering the EAC Tourism Bill and the Elections Bill, which also address the MDGs and that it also the only other regional legislature other than the European Parliament with law making powers, which is exclusive in the region. This gives EALA a wide law making mandate.

The 2nd East African Legislative Assembly, Hon. Abdi said, has adopted over ten resolutions since its inception in June 2007, the most important being the resolution on the UN Convention on the Rights of

Persons with Disabilities, the resolution on energy resources and land use management and the resolution against conflicts in the region due to their negative effects on the well being of the citizens of East Africa. Ending his speech, the Speaker expressed the commitment by the EALA to work towards the attainment of the MDGs, despite the world economic slowdown and the effects of climate change.



*Ms. Graça Machel, Chair of the AWEPA Eminent Advisory Board, Mozambique*

## PANEL DISCUSSION: ASSESSMENT OF THE STATE OF PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY IN AFRICA

The Chair of the session **Hon. Mary R. Mugenyi, Second Vice- President of the Pan-African Parliament** began by outlining the discussion, which will focus on two questions:

- What is the state of parliamentary democracy in Africa?
- What contribution does parliament make to the development of Africa focussed on the MDG's?

The African Charter on Good Governance and Elections, which was adopted in 2007 is a blueprint for safeguarding democracy. It refers to the need to support and consolidate good governance and building and strengthening democratic institutions. Chapter 3 states the respect for human rights and democratic principles. Hon. Mary Mugenyi asked speakers to focus on the following question: - are we adhering to these principles?

**Hon. Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab**, Speaker of the National Assembly of Namibia and President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union started by expressing his gratitude to AWEPA for inviting him to present an assessment on an issue of true importance: "the State of Parliamentary Democracy in Africa".

He explained that promoting democracy is at the core of the mission and work of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). It has become recognised as a universal value, which does not belong to any country or region alone. The IPU promotes democracy in a variety of ways, ranging from its firm political commitment to strengthening parliamentary institutions, protecting and promoting human rights and building partnerships between men and women in society. Underpinning the work of the IPU is the simple idea that strong parliament is a vital pillar of a functioning democracy. In September 2005, the Speakers of National Parliaments at the UN collectively stated explicitly that within a democracy, "*Parliament is the central institution through which the will of the people is expressed, laws are passed and government is held to account*".

On 15 September 2009, the world celebrated the second International Day of Democracy. Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab explained that an IPU conference was held in Gaborone, Botswana, which not only brought parliamentarians together to celebrate achievements of democracy, but also to assess what still needs to be done. That day Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab specifically invited all parliaments in the world to reflect seriously on the challenges that they face as the central institution of democracy and transparency.

Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab underlined that great efforts are made in supporting parliaments to become more representative, transparent, accessible, accountable and effective. However, more often than not parliament itself is incapable of stepping forward to take up the challenge in key areas. In some instances, parliamentarians who speak out of turn are put under enormous pressure and end up succumbing. At other times, they even lose their parliamentary mandate and are left out in the cold. He said that numerous cases before the IPU's Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians attest to this regrettable situation. We all need to find ways and means to reinforce the powers of parliaments to pass good laws, hold government to account, and ensure the equitable distribution of national wealth in the society, he explained.

Parliament plays an important role in bridging the gap between the people and the government, according to Gurirab. However, it can only play such a role, if it effectively holds governments to account, passes laws that are commensurate with the interest and aspirations of the people and maintains democracy internally. He said that most parliaments are weak and lack capacity to do that and often the opposition is not what it should be, as it lacks resources. Subsequently, he stressed that parliamentary effectiveness and properly functioning mechanisms are needed to keep in close contact with the electorate and particularly those in the rural areas.

Over the years, through a number of resolutions and debates, the IPU has sought to disseminate the MDGs among parliamentarians. In the speaker's views the parliamentary enterprise has a very

important responsibility in monitoring these crucial goals. Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab recounted that it fell on his shoulders at the end of the 20<sup>st</sup> century, to be the President of the UN General Assembly, when the MDGs were developed. This explains his personal attachment to the success of the Millennium Development Goals.

Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab drew attention to a poll executed by IPU to test the relevance of parliaments in the promotion of development and democracy. The results showed that the opposition is irrelevant for the most part in African Parliaments. He explained that although a commitment was made by the SADC states, we have not kept it and instead moved backwards.

In this respect, Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab stressed that the primacy of political parties is the responsibility of individual MPs through loyalty to the party and to the constituency. However, nationalities and ethnic communities are neglected and he therefore agreed with the assessment that we need to do more, IPU and AWEPA. We have joined our programmes to make parliaments more effective. Gurirab pleaded for a continuing engagement in idea sharing, best practices, and most importantly to find ways to enable parliaments to play their role.

Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab continued by recollecting his memories of 25 years ago. He explained the difficulties that parliamentarians faced and the total commitment of our partners including AWEPA to state the cause with us. Your continued persistence and courage to speak out against apartheid, related to Namibia, he said. The persistent acts against the frontline states, the actions for Angola and Mozambique. Gurirab explained that on that great day that people celebrated the independence of Namibia, people met Nelson Mandela for the first time and the SG of the UN handed over the power.

He concluded by honouring AWEPA and African parliamentarians as dedicated people throughout, and underlined the need to continue to celebrate together. He said that the job is not done yet. We are celebrating and looking up to you. *La lotta continua*.

**Prof. Ben Turok**, Member of Parliament, South Africa and Chair of the NEPAD Contact Group of African Parliamentarians started by paying tribute to AWEPA. It is vital to repeat this and to say it to the donors present. He wondered if the donors really appreciate the good work of AWEPA and encouraged them to go back and say that we from Africa are highly appreciative of this unique organization. Prof. Turok said that he did not know any other organisation in Europe that has this kind of persistence, especially Jan Nico Scholten has showed fantastic leadership.

Prof. Turok drew attention to the findings of a new publication of the Economic Commission of Africa, from the Oxford University. The study has employed many experts, and contains hard evidence of the state of parliamentary democracy including the following points:

- Credibility of electoral systems in Africa is quite high;
- The political party space remains largely liberalised in Africa and political parties are flourishing in many countries;
- Demand of African people for democracy is very high, as is showed by high turnout at elections and high political participation.

Prof. Turok continued to address the audience on the politics of parliamentary democracy. To him the political culture in a particular culture seemed a key thing, in addition to mechanisms. He recalled that it was Ms. Graça Machel who said, let us also discuss the content of parliamentary democracy and not just the form. We tend to discuss the form, but content is the key issue. He explained that when the IMF and World Bank fly in to talk about governance, they are missing the political culture.

The Westminster model of parliament was imposed on Africa and had to be adopted in countries like Ghana and Zambia. Prof. Turok does think it is a good model, but the question he raises is whether the model has delivered the expected results?

In this respect, Prof. Turok sees problems, but not only in Africa. For example in Germany all the press reported that the voting had been disappointing and that the election was not a great success. Hence he concludes that it is a good model, but it is not delivering what it ought to do. As example Prof. Turok refer to the situation under apartheid, when South Africa had a multi party parliament, so the mechanisms were there. It functioned. But it was not delivering to all people, only to a small minority.

Then Prof. Turok warns the audience not to be taken by appearances. In 1994, South Africa passed a good election, people stood in queues and it was a wonderful occasion. There was a mood of celebration and so began the Mandela area, with a good spirit. The document for reconstruction was generated by civil society, academics, and ANC members. Prof. Turok recollected that Julius Nyerere said to him that he had never seen such a wonderful document in Africa, but asked him will you implement it? Just in the middle of the spirit of victory, the South Africa government adopted a growth, economic and redistribution policy. The programme was adopted in 1996 and was alien to the tradition and history of the ANC, according to Turok. Some say it was imposed, others point to the huge problems in the financial sector. We had to adopt a programme to reduce inflation, budget deficits and state debt, he said. The effect of the withdrawal of funding was a different kind of mood. So when we talk about the institutions of parliament, we have to take into account political culture and economic environment.

Then Prof. Turok pointed to the mood of a country. When you reduce spending, and the budget is subject to other issues than democracy, it affects the political mood and climate. No matter how efficient a parliament can be, how well the parliament operates, the political mood in a country is critical, he said. What happens when a government denies money to the people is a scaling down of enthusiasm, according to Turok. In South Africa we started off in a wonderful mood and slowly people began to worry that the system did not deliver. It was not enough, as a result a certain degree of concern came up and there was a backlash, explained Prof. Turok.

At the moment, there is a new mood of opening up in South Africa, with President Jacob Zuma in office. A new spirit and a new political culture is forming according to Turok. The government has been willing to open up statistics about crime, poverty and employment rates. They stopped pretending everything is fine and is willing to admit its weaknesses, said Turok, our legacy is still a huge burning. This means the parliament has to face the reality, which affects our oversight efforts and how we operate he continued.

Prof. Turok indicated to participants that they can draw lessons from the South African experience. The main questions he outlined was that why the South African Parliament was not performing, which led to a re-examination of the structure of institutions and formal mechanisms (oversight, transparency, duties of parliaments coming from constitutions). He added that it depends on a political culture in a country, whether it is going to be performing and just throwing money towards parliaments that do not perform well is not the solution. He concluded that even when you give them facilities, when the culture is not democratic it will not be effective. The second lesson from South Africa is that we as a government and parliament are not moving fast enough. We need to accept that we have not done enough.

Prof. Turok wrapped up by stressing the importance for MPs to give leadership. He underlined that he would like to see all parliamentarians accept the responsibility of leadership, in particular from African MPs.

### ***Discussion***

Hon. Mukhondo Danwood, Member of Parliament, Zambia asked Prof. Turok in what way does he foresee MPs to provide leadership. He responded by saying that the main job of an MP is to understand policy. Nothing is automatic, they need to understand the choices the country faces and be able to inform the public about policy. This is what I do, he said. An MP is not someone, who can just stand up and make good speeches, it is all about policy. Hon. Dr. Theo-Ben Guirab added by saying that during election campaigning, we are able to reach out to the people and we will be able find out from them

what they need. They know those things better than we. People know what their needs are and conditions are. Moreover, he stressed that political culture comes from the constitution. We have the responsibility to build the political culture that bridge the elected and people.

Hon Margaret Mudisa Muhanga, Member of Parliament, Uganda stated that the IMF/WB structural adjustment programmes were badly drafted, as they did not take into account the different levels of developments of countries. Prof. Turok responded by saying that the adopted fiscal and monetary policies were the fashion, until a year ago. In the new issue of the New Agenda [Prof. Turok's publication] I didn't write an editorial, but instead took extracts from for example the Financial Times, because in the West they are saying our economic policies were mistaking. However, the policies that were used by the North were mistaking, hence the crisis. We followed Europe. Now the time has come for us to understand that they are questioning the macroeconomic model. Otherwise it will get us another crisis.

Hon. Francis Epetai, Member of Parliament, Uganda congratulated AWEPA with its anniversary and with the choice of the venue in South Africa. He said that South Africa has demonstrated the way of democratic power and independency of parliament, while most Parliaments have enormous pressure from the executive arm. Especially when the majority is of the ruling party and the Speaker is also a member of the ruling party. How to deal with loyalty issues? The time is now to say how to reassert the independence of the Speaker: by not attending an MP seat. The Speaker should be independent. So it cannot be biased. Prof. Turok agreed to this suggestion.

A Member of Parliament from EALA addressed the issues of accountability, oversight of budget and political culture. We have to examine the institution of the parliament and its own culture in respect of its country. For example, some African constitutions do not allow MPs to bring motions. The parliaments debates, but the executive defines the entire budget, as MPs do not have authority to make significant changes. Prof. Turok commented and said accountability is vital, but again it depends on the mood. We need to feel that we have to give leadership. Regarding the changing of the budget, we have fought for the right of the parliament to change the budget, but it is a question of political will. Will you as an MP want to confront the Minister of Finance? If you want do something, you do it.

Mr. Peter Sluiter: Related to the comment on the role of SADC PF and PAP in the elections, let me suggest that MPs follow up on frail election results. How to follow up the frail process in order to monitor the government? And on a regional level, SADC PF and PAP do what we all agree they must do, challenging the government in what they do. If you MPs in Africa continue doing what you must do, you will get the support from European MPs and civil society.

Hon. John Corrie shared his thought that the loyalty of the MPs does not necessary lie with the executive. He asked himself if MPs will get frustrated, because they cannot get to the executive?

Another participant indicated that the political culture is certainly important in the African countries, but respect for opinions seems difficult to find. On this cultural intolerance, Prof. Turok said that South Africa was the most intolerant society in the world before. We overthrew them and that is my answer to those problems: leaders who are intolerant: get away with them.

## PLENARY SESSION I: MOBILISING PARLIAMENTARY ACTION TOWARDS AGRICULTURE, FOOD SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT

The Chair of this first plenary session, **Mr. Pär Granstedt, Secretary-General of AWEPA and Former Member of Parliament, Sweden** started outlining the topics for discussion. He explained that the session will focus on a very important challenge for the world, and not in the least for Africa. An area that has sometimes been neglected, but in fact is the basis for the survival of all of us: food and our food security.

AWEPA implements together with its partners the Pan-African Parliament, the NEPAD Secretariat, the African Union and other major parliamentary actors in Africa, the Mobilising Parliamentarians for NEPAD (MPN) Programme. The MPN Programme follows the same basic principle as honoured by the NEPAD initiative: Africa must be behind the steering wheel of its own development. It is important to have a Pan-African approach, but at the same time this need to be done in partnership with the rest of the world, according to Mr. Granstedt. After all, no one can survive without cooperation with others. In this context, he underlined the importance for AWEPA to be good partners with Africa.

AWEPA linked its thematic capacity building in the field of agriculture and food security to the African Union's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). A key objective is parliamentary monitoring and lobbying for the objective set by the Maputo declaration of African governments investing at least 10% of the national budget in the agricultural sector. Mr. Par Granstedt explained that AWEPA has also linked agriculture to the issue of climate change, as climate variety has given a blow to agricultural production in Africa. On the other hand, agriculture and deforestation are also partly creating the problem through its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. This session will particularly focus on agriculture and food security; tomorrow the discussion during this 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary conference will focus on climate change.

Mr. Pär Granstedt introduced the key note speaker Dr. Adesina and announced the signing ceremony of the AWEPA-AGRA Memorandum of Understanding right after the plenary session.

**Dr. Akinwumi A. Adesina, Vice-President, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa** began with a special thanks to AWEPA for inviting me to address this conference. The array of leaders at the conference demonstrates well that your work over the past 25 years in support of democracy and development in Africa, beginning with the struggle against apartheid, is deeply appreciated on the continent.

Dr. Adesina brought greetings from Mr. Kofi Annan, Chairman of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), who congratulated AWEPA on its 25th Anniversary. AGRA knows that work with African and European parliaments is essential to success in transforming African agriculture into a highly productive sustainable system that can assure food security and lift millions out of poverty.

It is fitting that we meet here in Cape Town, 15 years after the fall of apartheid. But while we have come a long way as a continent, the journey ahead is daunting still. Today, more than 200 million Africans go hungry every day. And the hungriest of all are the families of our farmers. To liberate Africa, we must liberate African farmers from hunger and poverty, according to Adesina.

There is nothing more fundamental to the success of democracy than people's access to food. Africa cannot build democracy on empty stomachs, and the best way to secure the right to food is for Africa to produce its own.

Dr. Adesina continued by stating that African farmers have long faced enormous challenges. While the majority of the political leaders come from rural areas, including many of our parliamentarians, the misery of the African farmers have continued. We have abandoned our farmers, according to Adesina.

Until recently, development assistance for Africa declined steeply: from 18 percent of total assistance in 1979 to 3.5 percent in 2004. And, in the US, even as Official Development Assistance (ODA) to agriculture fell ten-fold, money spent on food aid tripled. This is a strange paradox: farmers who are supposed to feed Africa are fed on food aid.

As Kofi Annan once said, “There is no farmer more abandoned in the world than the African farmer”. Yet, we know that unless we grow agriculture and support our farmers, we will reap nothing but misery. Africa fought for liberation from the slave trade and colonization. We are today proud and free. But our freedom is incomplete: Africa cannot feed itself. This, then, is the next frontier for the fight for our total freedom, for a nation that cannot feed itself is free only in words.

Our parliaments must lead Africa to total freedom through developing comprehensive policies and support systems for farmers, according to Adesina. Parliaments should become the voice of the rural poor, of women farmers who produce most of Africa’s food, of all our people who desperately need support to break the shackles of hunger and poverty.

Africa must arise and change from “policies of abandonment” to policies of comprehensive support for farmers. Such change is what is at the heart of the success of Malawi. With strong political leadership, which included expanding farmers’ access to seeds and fertilizers, Malawi averted famine and became a net exporter of maize. Dr. Adesina underlined that this transformation was not a miracle: it came from astute political leadership that rejected the arguments of pundits, instead embracing support to farmers. Now is the time for Africa to lead its own development, and put in place home-grown policies that correspond to our needs and priorities. Only in this way can we achieve economic growth that lifts millions out of poverty. Change must come as well from our rural villages and towns where we must support farmers’ efforts to organize themselves into effective bargaining units to trade on favourable terms—whether they are purchasing seeds, selling their produce, or trading carbon sequestered in their fields.

While new agricultural technologies are needed, technologies that exist today could make an enormous difference. The primary challenge is how to get critical farm technologies to farmers. To take such Africa-driven innovations to scale, governments need to increase their spending on agriculture. The Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development, or CAADP, calls on governments to allocate 10% of their national budgets to agriculture. Progress has been very slow. Only six countries have met this target.

Estimates from the International Food Policy Research Institute show that Africa will need \$30-38 billion per year to achieve agricultural transformation, not including the costs of infrastructure. By meeting their 10% allocation, African governments would raise at least \$20 billion. The increased investments from the European Union – spurred by the work of its parliaments – the US government, and the rest of the G8 should meet the remaining short fall, if they honour their promises. To effectively advocate for these critical public investments, parliaments across Africa need strong capacity to demand and utilize evidence-based policy analysis for shaping debates on public investments to support agriculture. Many of our parliaments do not have this capacity. We must turn this around.

Mr. Adesina highlighted that policy change is needed to ensure women farmers have full and equal access to land, finance, extension and technologies. To organize effectively, farmers need support in the form of training; in basic literacy and numeracy; in management and finance; and to understand and meet new consumer-driven demands for standards and labelling.

Also, the future challenges to agriculture will be enormous – especially from the impacts of climate change. Africa’s farmers can and must adapt to climate change. But in Adesina’s opinion they can do more and be part of the global solution, helping to tame climate change. Therefore he raises the critical question for the Parliaments of Africa and Europe of: how to reward Africa’s farmers for both avoiding deforestation through intensified production on existing land, and for sequestering carbon through

improved land use practices. After all, these changes do not come free. For providing not only food, but also a global public good, Africa's farmers must be compensated. African carbon must count on the global carbon market. Agriculture in Africa is a solution to climate change, according to Dr. Adesina.

We cannot wait for the COP15 in Copenhagen to produce solutions. Here at home, we need a sustainable and uniquely African Green Revolution that benefits human well-being, the environment and the climate. Globally, we must insist on a fair carbon market, one which fully accounts for the benefits of environmentally sound farm land management. Africa cannot hold its breath. We must be proactive. It is in Africa's own interests to save our environment and to develop our agriculture as a diverse, high-productivity, low-carbon system.

The rush for land in Africa by foreign governments and companies is not the solution to African agriculture's challenges. The solution will come when African smallholder farmers are supported to be productive, efficient and competitive. African farmers have waited long enough. The time for transformative change is now. He concluded by saying that the future for agriculture depends on the bold leadership of parliamentarians.

**Mr. Zahnn Meyer, Director Agriculture, Origination and Client Coverage, Standard Chartered Bank** started with a quote: In order to make a small fortune in farming you have to start with a big one".

Mr. Meyer gave a presentation about the role of commercial banks in establishing a commercial farming culture in Africa. He started his presentation with an overview about the Standard Chartered Bank, which is present in 13 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. For the Standard Chartered Bank agriculture is a focus area, Mr. Meyer explained. The Bank recently financed inputs and soft commodities for about US\$950 million and subscribed itself to sustainable lending. Also the issue of climate change is high on the agenda of the bank. For example, it committed US\$10 billion to the Clinton Global Initiative for Renewable Energy and it just signed the Copenhagen Communiqué.

With regard to funding the value chain, Mr. Zhann Meyer mentioned the Bank assesses projects for its economic viability and operational capacity and does not base itself on the strength of the Promoter's Balance Sheet. The focus is on funding and retaining control over the entire value chain, he added. Mr. Meyer continued by addressing participants on precision farming and the financing of new technologies. Food security is in our hands according to Mr. Meyer.

He continued his presentation by explaining the structure of the deal; how finances are given to small scale producers. He addressed the role of the landowner; the intermediary; the off-takers; the Government and the issue of multi-peril assurance.

**Mr. Tony Worthington, Former Member of Parliament, United Kingdom** and International Development Consultant started off with some remarkable stories indicating the many years of neglect of agriculture by key actors such as the World Bank, donors, but also African leaders. He said that before there were so many people working as an agricultural expert. Nowadays it is difficult to find people working on this subject within donor agencies.

Mr. Tony Worthington mentioned the importance of leadership in this current agricultural and ecological crisis. If there is a situation which cries for leadership, it is the current situation in the world now, he stated.

Mr. Worthington explained why it is now that people are interested in agriculture and food security. Reason for this is, for instance, the fact that the World Bank report of 2008 mentioned that it was wrong to neglect agriculture, as it is crucial for development. Furthermore, the issue of agriculture is mentioned in different documents recently agreed upon, such as the Maputo Agreement: African Union commits 10% of national budgets to agriculture and the African Union's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). Another reason for the current interest is the huge

dependence of African economies and workforce on agriculture. Additionally, the HIV/AIDS pandemic also had its impact upon the labour forces in the agricultural sector. Mr. Worthington also mentioned the issue of hostile global trading policies as reason for the growing interest in agriculture and food security.

Further, Mr. Worthington addressed the fact that population increases are overwhelmingly in the poor world. "How can nine billion people be fed equitably, healthily, safely and sustainably? , he asked himself. Already one out of six billion people in the world do not have access to adequate amounts of food", he stated.

Mr. Worthington continued his presentation by speaking about the role of AWEPA regarding the issue of agriculture. AWEPA should start, he suggested, its next 25 years by building up its partnership between African and European Parliaments and particularly their agriculture committees. The Agriculture Committee should be the most important of committees, Mr. Worthington stated. He explained that an AWEPA model needs to be devised for the parliamentary strengthening of the committees on agriculture and environment in partnership with sub regional and regional bodies such as COMESA, FARA and NEPAD. This model should start with certain principles, like building on the strength of the parliamentarians as the only people who work at both the national level and the constituency level – a system that is both top-down and bottom-up.

Mr. Worthington concluded his presentation by saying that AWEPA should lead the way in establishing such a role model for African countries, agriculture committees and constituency MPs in tackling food security and climate change. Because of changed attitudes, he believes the funding is now there but it needs AWEPA to show strategic vision, Mr. Worthington ended.

### ***Discussion***

Ambassador Muton from Belgium wanted to emphasize the issue of "land grabbing". The fact that foreign countries are buying land in Africa is a socio-political issue. It would be good, he stated, to make Codes of Conduct on this and maybe not only on a national level, but on a regional level.

Mr. Worthington stated that it is not just land grabbing, it is the whole issue of land use. It is also about the percentage of water used by agriculture. People have to use water much more efficient, as is done now and of course clashes in the usage are inevitable, he stated. In his opinion, it is possible to have a modern programme on agriculture, designed by parliamentarians and agricultural committees on what they should be doing on a national basis. Mr. Worthington added that it is maybe an idea to make a toolkit for these committees. In the situation nowadays there is no linkage between the parliamentarians and the information which is already there. There is a lot of information, Mr. Worthington stated, and it needs to get to the people who can use it. AWEPA can play a role in this, he concluded.

Hon. Margareth Muhanga mentioned the mismatch in designing programmes in Africa. "We have to empower local farmers", she explained. She also mentioned the fact that the problem is that there is food in Africa, but it is exported to other countries. Lastly, she emphasized the importance of the empowerment of women. Women are social excluded, as only 7% of the women own land.

Hon. Bodil Caballos mentioned that she was afraid of the fact that AWEPA and AGRA are going to work together to promote GMO. In her opinion that would be a threat to humanity. Dr. Adesina replied by saying that not all the work of AGRA is on that. AGRA knows how to give options to farmers, and he added just to be clear, that AGRA is not going to promote GMO. Mr. Meyer said that also his bank knows other options, such as the application of fertilizers, which doubles the crop.

A Member of Parliament from Malawi added to the whole discussion of this session that everyone need to be serious and look at the real answers to the issue of agriculture and that is, he said, that the EU is realising that you cannot subsidise food without having adverse effects in Africa.

## **PLENARY SESSION II: PROMOTING PARLIAMENTARY LEADERSHIP ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

### ***Chair: Hon. Hilda Ndude, Member of the South African Portfolio***

In October 2007, the South African government developed a long-term mitigation strategy. That strategy and a recent report on climate change are very clear and therefore very exciting. The South African government was not present at the Rio conference. However, the country is party to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and parliament has ratified the international treaty. More recently, the portfolio committee adopted a work programme on climate change. Activities include a video conference meeting with the UK parliamentary committee in October. Also, Committee members will attend the COP15 meeting in Denmark as part of the governmental delegation. Hon. Ndude stressed that South Africa as a developing countries is committed to agree in Copenhagen on curbing carbon emissions. She concluded by saying that the commitment to develop clean energy must be embraced by all of us.

***Dr. Strike Mkandla, Representative to the African Union and Ethiopia, UNEP*** talked about the African common position in the UNFCCC negotiations. He indicated that Africa started quite a while ago preparing for these negotiations on a new climate deal. In 2005, the African Ministers met under the umbrella of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and developed a Strategy for Disaster Risks Reduction under the guidance of UNEP. Since 2007, the AMCEN meeting has been the focal point for the African negotiating position. Inputs have also been delivered by the ministerial conferences of AMCOW (Water) and AMCOST (Science and Technology) in this negotiating process. All committees have looked at the possible effects of climate change. The AMCEN has pushed for an African High Level Panel on Climate Change to ensure that Africa has a well-informed policy.

Dr. Strike Mkandla continued by highlighting that Africa only has 34 Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) projects registered out of a total 1800 projects worldwide. Therefore, Africa only accounts for less than 3% of all CDM projects. He continued by indicating that African countries have been very outspoken in the G77 block which includes China. Less than 3% of the greenhouse gasses are emitted from the African continent. Therefore, the financing for development and disaster risk reduction is very important for the continent. Dr. Strike Mkandla explained that Africa must now develop National Adaptation Plans for Action (NAPAs). He also mentioned that African countries have lobbied for a standalone adaptation fund. It is quite problematic for Africa that the GEF funds for mitigation are much larger. The African position consequently states that funding for adaptation needs to be considerably beefed up.

Dr. Strike Mkandla underlined the historic responsibility of Europe to help Africa adapt to this problem that was not caused by the continent itself. He spoke favourably about taking a global view to environmental threats that will tackle Africa's problems along the way. He referred to H.E. Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of Ethiopia, who underlined the fact that climate change is a developmental issue for Africa and the need to improve the resilience of its ecosystems. Dr. Mkandla pointed out that national awareness of the urgency of adaptation and climate proofing of economies needs to be supported. In this respect, cross cutting measures should be introduced on the national level. He also said that Africa is not doing well in tackling the crisis and concluded by saying that with parliament in the lead we can still go forward and move out of this crisis.

***Pär Granstedt, Secretary-General of AWEPA and Former Member of Parliament, Sweden*** centred his speech around the following question: What is AWEPA doing with its partners on climate change?

Last year AWEPA organised a conference in Nairobi and the outcome was the African-European Dialogue on Climate, Food Security and Development. Since then the organisation has organised regional sessions in Cape Town (October 2008) and Dakar (March 2009) in cooperation with the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank. Additionally, the topic of climate change featured prominently on the agenda of our two EU Presidency seminars organised in Prague and Stockholm this

year. Mr. Pär Granstedt expressed the hope that the declaration of Stockholm to the negotiating parties at COP15 could be endorsed at the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary conference. Mr. Pär Granstedt continued by saying that AWEPA collaborates with other parliamentary networks like IPU and CPA and is also working with our parliamentary partners in Africa: PAP, EALA, SADC PF and the ECOWAS parliament.

Mr. Granstedt highlighted that the North and the South have a joint responsibility to tackle climate change together. AWEPA feels strongly that there is a clear role for parliamentarians to address this problem, as any response needs to have a strong popular base. He continued by saying that a sense of solidarity and the demand for justice from common people is what drives the development. Parliamentarians have the direct access to their constituencies, as such they hold the executive branch accountable. Through the dialogue AWEPA tries to create a common understanding of what needs to be done in the North and the South, concluded Mr. Granstedt.

***Hon. Patricia Hajabakiga, Member of EALA and Former Minister of Land and Environment*** began by indicating that researchers predict a rise in average temperatures. The Northern, Southern and Western areas of the African continent will become much drier, apart from the floods that will take place in Eastern Africa. She continued by explaining that Africa is currently not able to capture rain water for irrigation and highlighted some of the associated problems: road destructions and water siltation. She gauged that about 25 countries in Africa will have increased water stress by 2025.

Hon. Hajabakiga continued by saying that Africa is not capable to adapt to the effects of climate change and we have a huge increase in crop failure. Moreover, there is no preparedness to adapt, which is a serious problem according to her. Consequently, there is a need for support and change of behaviour to be able to undertake some conservation techniques. One of the downsides of this dependency is vulnerability in terms of finance technology and knowledge.

Hon. Hajabakiga brought forward the lack of funding available for parliamentary delegations to go to the UNFCCC COP15 meeting. The African negotiators are far outnumbered by the other countries and with negotiations running into the late night, African countries are heavily undermined. The speaker called on members of the national parliaments to really observe the budget. She concluded by saying that: we, as parliamentarians from the North and the South should have a united voice in Copenhagen and beyond.

### ***Discussion***

The subsequent discussion focussed on the role parliamentarians can play in effectively tackling climate change. Hon. Hugh Bayley, Member of Parliament, United Kingdom put forward that parliamentarians can work with constituencies, hold public hearings, create public interest. He stressed that parliamentarians must seek out these examples and explain the need for sustainability.

Hon. Seydou Diouf, Member of Parliament, Senegal put forward the dilemma of competition between developed and developing countries, as both have different stances in the climate negotiations. Secondly, he indicated that there is a strong tendency of governments to include NGOs in the negotiating process, but to exclude parliamentarians. However, it is in the end those same parliamentarians that need to ratify the international agreements. In his view, Copenhagen will be evaluated according to emission reductions and not adaptation financing. He concluded by saying that the road to a just resolution to this problem is still long and that MPs have not yet fully assumed their role to play in sustainable development of the planet.

Hon. Dora Kanabahita Byamukama, Member of EALA, Uganda, raised the issue of land tenure in Africa. Land inheritance goes via the male and this poses a problem as climate change and the lack of food security will mostly affect women, as they spend most time on the land. Therefore, she concluded that we need to tackle the issue of land rights for women.

Ms. Brunhilde Irber, Former Member of Parliament, Germany raised the issue of storage of nuclear waste as 50% of energy demand must be generated by nuclear energy in the future.

Hon. Christian Folly-Kosi, Member of Parliament, DRC, Vice-president CEMAC was of the opinion that the under representation on the international UNFCCC platform constituted a real problem. He concluded that such is also reflected in the low number of African CDM projects. Finally, he also congratulated AWEPA on all the work the organisation has done in the DRC and said that AWEPA constituted the needed space for exchange and tolerance.

Dr. Mkandla explained after questions that work has been done on land rights at the African Union level. In response to the speech of Hon. Patricia Hajabakiga, he explained that the Kyoto deal was reached, while the African delegation had already returned home. He finished by saying that he saw a clear commitment from AWEPA to really work together.

Hon. Patricia Hajabakiga underlined that importance of an effective follow-up to during the post agreement phase and said that parliaments should enforce the agreements made by governments in Copenhagen.



*Member of Parliament from Belgium participating in the conference discussions.*

## PLENARY SESSION III: EFFECTIVE WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY

**Ms. Miet Smet**, AWEPA Vice-President, chairs the third session on *promoting the role of women in parliamentary democracy*. This session's speakers included the Honourable Farida Illimi (Member of the Parliament of Algeria and President of the Women's Caucus of the Pan-African Parliament), the Honourable Dora Kanabahita Byamukama (Member of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) and Secretary-General of the EALA Women's Forum) and the Honourable Dersou Kalbansou (Member of the National Assembly of Chad and representative to the *Réseau des Femmes Parlementaires d'Afrique Centrale* [Network of Female Parliamentarians in Central Africa, RFPAC]).

Ms. Miet Smet convened the session by highlighting the key issues faced by women in politics, in positions of power or in the accessibility of these positions. The issues at hand include women's rights, the social position of African women and the problems encountered in the emancipation of women. According to Ms Smet, the key to the solution involves addressing the tremendous need for skills and the ability for women to access and hold key positions. "No issue requires more savvy than gender."

Ms. Smet then invited **Ms. Graça Machel**, who honoured us with her presence at this session, to take the floor as part of her desire to share her extensive knowledge of this issue.

**Hon. Farida Illimi** posited that the equal participation of women and men in political and public decision-making is an essential aspect of fundamental human rights and that – in this context – the position of women consequently serves as a key indicator of the general circumstances in Africa as it embodies a guarantee of social justice and a necessary precondition for all democratic processes. Hon. Farida Illimi noted that despite the fact that certain countries – including Rwanda, where the level of participation of women is nearly 60% – demonstrate that Africa is able to rise up to the challenge, which has so far been the exclusive domain of the established northern democracies, and that despite the fact that the principles of equality are supported by rights and obligations laid down in international conventions, legislation and regulations, women are generally quite poorly represented even though they serve both as partners and willing participants in many domains of public life.

Hon. Farida Illimi also outlined the current state of female representation in Africa's parliamentary democracies. Global average female participation in all lower and upper houses of parliament combined is 18.3%. When looking at the position of individual African nations in the global ranking of lower houses, an African nation tops the list! In addition, three African nations are among the leading ten parliaments with the highest rates of female participation in the world: Rwanda, South Africa and Angola. However, it is abundantly clear that the majority of the countries (33) – i.e. more than three quarters of Africa – fall below the global average. Only seven countries have achieved a rate of participation of 30%; another 24 are making progress. The overwhelming majority has failed to make progress.

**Hon. Dora Kanabahita Byamukama**, Member of EALA Uganda and Secretary- General of the EALA Women's Forum highlighted that women's rights are recognized and guaranteed in all international human rights instruments as being inalienable, interdependent and indivisible human rights. More specifically in Africa, women's rights to participation in the political and decision-making processes is clearly articulated in the 9th article of the Maputo Protocol adopted in 2003 by the African Union, which is ratified by 27 countries and signed by 45 out of 53 African countries. Hon. Kanabahita asked what happen to the commitment to this protocol, since as we all know the position of African women is still by far too influenced by factors including culture, religion, laws, education, quality of health services, poverty, wars, water, food shortages, globalization and limited political participation of women. Thus limiting the capacity of them to impact policies and influence allocation of resources.

Hon. Kanabahita then discussed the 16 main issues encountered in the advancement of women in the political arena: patriarchy-perception and attitude; transition from a private to a public domain; socialisation – lack of self-esteem and stereo-typing; limited education; fear of violence, exposure or

simply fear of ridicule; lack of intra party democracy – mentors; poverty – limited network; political structures designed for men; lack of finances, resources; discriminatory property and citizenship laws; lack of support of the media, religious and cultural leaders ; dependency on political will, which results in patronage; challenge of having to chose between party loyalty and women’s agenda; assumption that women must support women’s agendas ; keeping the women’s agenda as top priority even after women have ascended to higher political positions.

She subsequently proposed action points and strategies on inclusion of women in politics and their effective participation in Parliamentary Democracy and more specially she identified actions to be taken in the parliament:

- Identify issues, facts and figures;
- Know rules and structure, proactive use of parliamentary procedures;
- Strategise for positions, caucus across part lines;
- Build alliances with male MPs, CSOs, media, judiciary, executive, key actors in government;
- Identify mentors and power centres;
- Continued skills building and education; and
- Utilise ICT creatively and effectively.

On behalf of the RFPAC, **Hon. Dersou Kalbansou** spoke at length of the importance of a network’s added value in enabling women who are elected to public positions, including parliament, to make their own contributions. More female parliamentarians would be able to change the parliamentary agenda in this regard. In clearly highlighting the various obstacles faced by women, the RFPAC points out the need to come together in these organisational structures both outside of and in parliament itself to engage actively and constantly in order to raise the awareness of women of their rights and do justice to them. In addition to these structures, the RFPAC believes that – as a means of supporting women – the various networks should exchange instances of good practice and, furthermore, specifically proposed that “there needs to be a handbook of instances of good practice and strategies based on positive examples in the various African countries and to apply them in order to balance the contributions of women and men in political decisions”. Miet Smet then expressed her strong commitment to this and urged AWEPA to create such an overview of good practices and strategies!

## FRENCH VERSION

C’est l’**Hon. Mme Miet Smet**, Vice présidente de l’AWEPA, qui a présidé la III<sup>ème</sup> session, sur comment *Encourager le rôle des femmes dans la démocratie parlementaire*. Les intervenants de cette session étaient l’Hon. Farida Illimi, Membre du Parlement d’Algérie et Présidente du Caucus des femmes du Parlement Panafricain, l’Hon. Dora Kanabahita Byamukama, Membre de l’Assemblée Législative de l’Afrique de L’Est et Secrétaire Générale du Forum des femmes de l’EALA, ainsi que l’ Hon. Dersou Kalbansou, Membre du Parlement du Tchad et représentante du Réseau des Femmes Parlementaires d’Afrique Centrale (RFPAC).

**Mme Miet Smet** a ouvert la session en attirant l’attention sur les majeurs problèmes que rencontrent les femmes en politique, à des postes de pouvoir, ou dans l’accès à ces postes. Il s’agit des droits des femmes, de la position sociale des femmes africaines et des problèmes rencontrés dans la promotion des femmes. Selon Mme Smet la principale réponse se trouve dans le grand besoin de compétences, de capacités chez les femmes pour accéder aux postes clés et y rester. « Il n’y a pas de question qui nécessitent plus de compétence que celle du genre ».

Mme Smet a ensuite invité **L’Excellence Mme Graça Machel** qui a fait l’honneur d’assister à cette séance d’intervenir dès qu’elle le souhaitait pour faire part de sa grande expertise en la matière.

**L'Hon. Farida Illimi** part du postulat fort que la participation équilibrée des femmes et des hommes dans la prise de décision politique et publique est partie intégrante des droits fondamentaux de la personne, et qu'à ce titre, la situation des femmes est donc un indicateur primordial de la situation globale de l'Afrique, puisqu'elle représente une garantie de justice sociale et une condition nécessaire à tout processus démocratique. L'hon. Illimi fait remarqué que même si certains pays comme le Rwanda par exemple avec presque 60% de participation de la femme, nous donnent aujourd'hui la démonstration que l'Afrique est en mesure de relever le défi jusque là monopole des vieilles démocraties du nord, et que malgré des conventions internationales textes législatifs et réglementaires consacrant les principes de l'égalité en droit et en devoirs, la femme reste en général très faiblement représentée bien qu'elle soit un partenaire et une partie prenante dans beaucoup de domaines de la vie publique.

L'Hon. Farida Illimi a ainsi établi un Etat des lieux de la représentation effective des femmes dans la démocratie parlementaire en Afrique : La moyenne Mondiale de participation de la Femmes est de 18,3% toutes chambres confondues. Au niveau des Etats africains dans le classement mondial pour la chambre basse, on constate que le premier pays du rang mondial est africain ! Et que 3 pays africains font partie du « top 10 » parmi les 10 parlements les plus hauts du monde, le Rwanda, l'Afrique du Sud et l'Angola. Ensuite, il est clair que la majorité des pays (33), donc plus des trois quarts de l'Afrique, est en dessous de la moyenne mondiale. Seulement 7 pays ont atteint les 30%, avec quand même 24 pays qui sont en progression, mais encore trop majoritairement ce sont des stagnations que l'on est forcé de constater.

**Hon. Dersou Kalbansou** s'est attardée, au nom du RFPAC, sur l'importance de l'apport d'une structure, d'un réseau pour que les femmes soient élues mais aussi pour qu'une fois au parlement, elles y apportent leurs propres contributions. Plus de femmes au parlement pourraient changer l'agenda parlementaire dans ce sens. En vue de parier aux multiples obstacles des femmes, le RFPAC montre la nécessité de se regrouper dans des structures tant en dehors du parlement que dans le parlement lui-même pour un travail actif et constant afin d'amener les femmes à la prise de conscience de leurs droits et de les mettre en valeur. Au-delà de ces structures, le RFPAC estime que les différents réseaux se doivent pour soutenir les femmes, d'échanger leurs bonnes pratiques, et il a ainsi fait la proposition très concrète qu'« il faut élaborer un manuel de bonnes pratiques et stratégies basé sur des exemples positifs dans les différents pays d'Afrique et les faire appliquer pour arriver à créer un équilibre entre les femmes et les hommes dans la prise de décisions politiques. » Miet Smet a de suite marqué son soutien ferme à cette demande, en engageant l'AWEPA dans l'élaboration d'un tel manuel de bonnes pratiques et stratégies!



*Mr. Pär Granstedt, Secretary General of AWEPA*

## PLENARY SESSION IV: PARLIAMENTARIANS AND THE CHANGING AID ARCHITECTURE

This fourth session of the conference titled, Parliamentarians and the Changing Aid Architecture, was chaired by **Hon. Brendan Howlin**, Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Ireland, and AWEPA Vice President. The chair opened the session by thanking participants and introducing the panellists including Hon. Lola Kisanga (MP, DRC), Hon. Kilontsi Mporogomy, (MP, Tanzania), Hon. Dr. Odette Nyiramilimo, member of EALA (Rwanda), and Hon. Hugh Bayley, (MP UK, Chair of PNoWB).

**Hon. Lola Kisanga** explained that he had a special presentation to give during the session, and he thanked the chair for the opportunity to make his presentation to the floor on such short notice. After 25 years of work that AWEPA has carried out for Africa and in particular AWEPA's cooperation with the DRC, Hon. Kisanga was happy on this occasion to announce that a space was made available in Kinshasa where a monument was erected to honour this association which has worked so hard for Africa and will be working with Africa in the future. Hon. Kisanga also made a tribute to Hon. Luc Doohre, whose courage he saluted and to his wife who was present at the seminar that day. The monument (a steel construction, will be erected on that particular square because it is situated on the avenue of Nelson Mandela.

Chair thanked the Hon. Kisanga and the DRC for the magnificent gesture. The Chair emphasized that AWEPA owes much to Luc Doohre, who has done tireless amounts of work in the promotion of parliamentary democracy. Yesterday, the Chair recalled, participants heard about the progress made from SADC, EALA, and Graça Machel. Participants heard that parliaments need the capacity, but also need to be willing to hold executives to account. European parliamentarians want to assist. Not to interfere, but to be true partners in the process. The economic crisis has diminished people's faith in parliament to represent their interests, he explained. There has been a loss of confidence in the parliamentary systems. Hon. Howlin made clear that we can and need to work to support each other, especially when it comes to aid effectiveness.

This session is one of the most important sessions of this conference, he explained. The Chair proceeded to introduce the topic of the aid architecture. Significant milestones in the changing aid architecture include the drafting of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action. Now AWEPA is heavily involved in the work of the OECD-DAC Working Party on Aid Effectiveness. In all of this, there are loud voices, he explained, but the one voice which is systematically absent is that of parliament and parliamentarians. Parliamentarians are the democratic voice of the people with a mandate to shape decisions-this cannot be left to technocrats, he emphasized. On the subject of mutual accountability, there is no better institution to provide accountability than parliament. Parliaments oversee aid funds and the spending of these funds. At least, Hon. Howlin explained, this is how it should be. He fears that this is not always the case. The Chair ended his introduction in expressing his hope that this question can be answered in the panel discussion. He emphasized the need to link up parliaments and process to assure that mutual accountability and progress is precisely that.

The second panellist to speak was **Hon. Kilontsi Mporogomy** (MP) Parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania. He began by thanking AWEPA for the invitation and by posing an important question- can industrialized countries uphold their commitments by providing finance and technology in a systematic manner?

The aid architecture, he explained, includes all players, instruments, and strategic or political frameworks governing development and implementation destined for developing countries. The volume of foreign aid in recent years has been undergoing significant changes. In particular, it has increased from an estimated US \$60 billion a year through the 1990s to about \$100 Billion in 2005. This figure, Hon. Mporogomy explained, is projected to reach \$130 billion by the year 2010. On the other hand, aid architecture has become more complex with a proliferation of agencies and special purpose institutions as vehicles for aid delivery. At a global level, according to the United Nations Development Programme, their calculations suggest that there are more than 1200 financing

mechanisms. Both donors and independent observers agree that this system is too complicated and imposes high transaction costs calling for a possibility of addressing wider architecture issues and the involvement of parliamentarians and political parties which are usually bypassed.

The whole of parliament and parliamentarians in defining and overseeing development priorities are usually undermined in the process of aid delivery, he emphasised. This reduces their legitimacy and in turn undermining democratic consolidation. It is important to note here that democratization involves the distribution of power in the interest of a given country's citizens, whilst building state capacity which may require centralization of state power and improved state autonomy. However, overall, in many African countries, democratic systems are often too weak to handle the new aid architecture. Some of this concern can be built through capacity building in aid projects but the concentration of power- notably power over politics, finances and scrutiny and more difficult to deal with.

The presenter went on to say that in many countries aid is still based upon poverty reduction strategies. If donors impose conditionalities, the space for policy making is reduced. The significant role of parliamentarians in oversight is essential. All aid must receive the approval of parliament. African parliaments must ensure that the effectiveness of aid is increased. The question of mutual accountability is discussed in the Paris Declaration, but the role of parliamentarians is ignored. In order to carry out a number of reforms it is important that the parliaments are involved at global regional and national levels. Aid is an agreement between the donor and the executive, parliamentarians are rarely involved. Mutual accountability presupposes that both partners are accountable for development results. The role of parliamentarians can be found in national development strategies and the oversight of budgets.

Although the Paris Declaration does not make mention of the role of parliaments and parliamentarians, it recognizes that in order to carry out a number of reforms suggested in the document including continued high-level political support, peer pressure and coordinated efforts at the global, regional, and country levels. It also recognizes that the pace of change can be accelerated by implementing partnership commitments in the spirit of mutual accountability. This would facilitate the measurement of progress against 12 specific indicators that were agreed and set out in section III of the declaration.

Mutual accountability presupposes that both donors and recipient countries are accountable for development results. The major priority for both countries is to enhance mutual accountability and transparency in the use of development resources. This would help to strengthen public support for national policies and development assistance. Here again, the role of parliamentarians in national development strategies calls for particularly in scrutinizing budgets. However, both executives of donor and recipient countries rarely present comprehensive progress assessments and budget reports to their legislators and citizens.

Hon. Mporogomy then outlined the way forward in the new aid architecture. The Paris Agenda on Aid Effectiveness and many other recent developments point to a foundation for debating changes to the aid architecture. Much of the literature on the aid architecture and development emphasizes the importance of implementing the Paris Declaration. They also underline the role of the civil society as an honest broker and independent adviser. More recently, the linkages between aid and democracy have started to be explained, he said. Donors need to analyze their behaviours to appreciate and understand its influence on politics and democracy. They should take the opportunities and deal with the challenges presented by the Paris Agenda for strengthening democracy and development, he said.

For democracy to take root and for ownership to have real meaning, political actions/parties and legislators, particularly need to assume a key role in shaping and approving national development programmes. Donors need to allow for democratic processes to take place, said Hon. Mporogomy. With regard to the accountability chain new ways to strengthen the voice and accountability – through all involved- should be developed. This should be done in an integrated, joined up manner in order to ensure that overall, domestic accountability chains are enhanced and oversight actors are empowered.

Strengthening checks and balances that includes providing what is viewed as “high risk support” to political parties, trade unions and other political forces as well as NGOs and the media. Increase democracy support and find new and more effective ways to support drivers for change, not least in the media sector. In summary, Hon. Mporogomy told participants that donors should take the following steps to improve their contribution to making aid more effective:

**Take policies and power seriously:** Whether the neo-patrimonial account of African policies is correct or not, it is vital to understand and address informal policies, its incentive structures and how it interplays with the goals of strengthening democracy and development

**Reform Political Conditionality:** The current use of political conditionalities- the cutting of aid when democracy, human rights, or corruption worsens, is confusing and ineffective. In practice it amounts to a tap that is continuously being turned on and off. This helps neither development nor democracy. Political conditionalities need to be analyzed and reformed to do good rather than bad.

**Integrate democracy and development support:** Donors promote both development and democracy. But development assistance is usually carried via processes and structures that are functionally separate from parallel democracy support efforts. Better integration of these two assistance areas would provide the correct basis both for understanding how to promote them in tandem and for dealing with any resulting tensions and/or areas of contradiction or conflict between the two.

**Africa’s voice must be raised:** The policy debate in aid and politics is heavily dominated by western academics and practitioners. More African thinking and debate on the key challenges in democracy and development needs to be heard. African experts from governments, academia, media and civil society should address challenges in this area, not least the role of external actors in transforming domestic challenges. This will, in turn, provide a solid platform for future dialogue and reform efforts.

The next panellist to speak was **Dr. Odette Nyiramilimo**, member of EALA (Rwanda). She began by congratulating AWEPA for 25 years of action and achievements. She then proceeded to tell a story in French. There was once upon a time a man who lived in town. And like most of us Africans, he had left his parents at home in the village in the rural area, and he said one day I am going to town and stay at a hotel. He comes home to tell his father what the city looks like, as he wanted to share. It was a very high building, and he told his father he would show him what an elevator is. They stood in front of the lift, and while the son was explaining to his father what a hotel is, someone arrived in a wheelchair with an old lady, who was a bit misshaped. The wheelchair went into the lift and after a few minutes the lift opened and a very well dressed woman emerges from the lift. Then the man said “what are you waiting for! We need to go into this lift, so that we can all be transformed!” It was President Kagame who told us this story once, Hon. Nyiramilimo explained. She told it in order to convey to participants that they will be different when they leave the room.

Hon. Nyiramilimo then began with her presentation. Since the beginning of the 21st century, she said, the world has shown increasing concern about an international problem: Despite continuously increasing flows of development aid from international donors, foundations and private organizations to help fight poverty in the developing world, a high level of poverty still prevails. Meetings and High Level Forums comprised of representatives from both developed and developing countries have been convened in order to examine the ways in which these funds can be put to more effective use including the assurance of the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Following the 1st High Level Forum on Harmonization in Rome (February 2003) and the Marrakech Roundtable on Managing for Development Results, a High Level Forum gathered in Paris in 2005 and adopted what is known as the “Paris declaration on Aid Effectiveness”. Quite significantly, this forum did not include parliamentarians and the signatories of this document did not have the obligation to discuss the declaration with their parliaments. Nonetheless, she explained, the Paris Declaration laid out five important pillars upon which future aid relationships should be based. These include:

- Ownership: Developing countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies, and strategies and co-ordinate development actions
- Alignment: Donors base their overall support on partner countries' national development strategies, institutions and procedures
- Harmonization: Donors' actions are more harmonized, transparent and collectively effective
- Managing For Results: Managing resources and improving decision-making for results
- Mutual Accountability: Donors and partners are accountable for development results.

At the same time, in each of these pillars, indicators of progress were defined along with clear targets for review in 2010. In 2008, the OECD-DAC Working Party on Aid Effectiveness conducted a review of the implementation of the Paris Declaration and found that if no action were taken, these targets would not be met. As a consequence, there was little hope that the MDGs could be reached if the way in which aid was disbursed and processed was not reviewed. The 3rd High Level Forum in Accra, in September 2008 was called to address this very problem.

For the first time in the aid effectiveness "debate", parliamentarians were able to contribute their voice to the mix as they participated in the High Level Forum. Under the leadership of AWEPA Vice President, Hon. Brendan Howlin and Chair of the NEPAD Contact Group of African Parliamentarians, Hon. Professor Ben Turok, and the delegation submitted the pan-African parliamentary communiqué to the organizers.

The resulting Declaration, the Accra Agenda for Action, provides a modus operandi for the Paris declaration, clearly describing the responsibilities of donors and recipient countries, both separately and as a single unit working towards a common goal. Significantly for participants of this conference, the Accra Agenda for Action called upon parliaments and Parliamentarians to take the lead on a number of issues and addressed their crucial role both in developed and developing countries. The following article highlights a key point: Country ownership is key. Developing country governments will take stronger leadership of their own development policies, and will engage with their parliaments and citizens in shaping those policies. Donors will support them by respecting countries' priorities, investing in their human resources and institutions, making greater use of their systems to deliver aid, and increasing the predictability of aid flows.

Hon. Nyiramilimo said that, considering the role of parliamentarians as legislators, overseers of the public purse, and representatives of their electorates, it has now become apparent that the problem of aid inefficiency and inefficacy was the result on complete lack or insufficient involvement of parliamentarians in the whole process of aid delivery and at all levels. Therefore, within the framework of their constitutional mandate, parliamentarians must live up to their role as described in the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA). In the area of ownership and policy dialogue: parliaments of developing countries must participate in shaping these policies; they must also oversee public spending to assure that government policies are being implemented and in the way in which they were intended and agreed upon; Parliamentarians must act as watchdog vis-a-vis the governments and local authorities of their countries.

For better and more efficient results, she explained, it was decided that governments and parliaments should work together in preparing, implementing and monitoring country development policies and plans. As representatives of the people, parliamentarians in recipient countries must ensure that their respective governments include all aspects of human rights, gender equity and equality, disabled and protection of environment in their planning.

In order to conduct proper scrutiny and evaluate government spending and policies at the mutually agreed periods, parliamentarians need sectoral data; they must also ratify the aid agreements agreed upon by the executives along with bank loans. At the same time, parliamentarians need to keep the indicators to be evaluated in 2010 in mind. Civil Society Organizations which implement donor's projects and programmes can serve as excellent partners for parliamentarians for this endeavour. At

the same time, Parliamentarians in developed countries can do their part in influencing the scaling up of aid at the time their budgets are set and knowing how much, when and for what purpose aid is proposed.

Systematic, ongoing communication between parliamentarians of both developed and developing countries is essential in order to create transparency and track corruption on both sides of the aid equation, she emphasised. Information sharing amongst peers is an indispensable tool for parliamentarians in both donors and recipient countries.

In conclusion, Hon. Nyiramilimo explained that parliaments in both donor and recipient countries are being put to a test. In order to live up to the important role laid out for them in the new aid architecture, parliaments, mainly those from developing countries, must be strengthened, both logistically and through capacity building support. There is a need to establish parliamentary coordinating committee on aid effectiveness, like that of the NEPAD Contact Group of African Parliamentarians (NCGAP), comprised of both parliamentarians of the North and the South. That Committee would hold governments to account and leave them to respond to questions such as the following:

She posed questions to the audience such as: Are parliamentarians parts of the ODA planning processes and do they have clear responsibilities? Is there a system in place to harmonize donor activity in order to avoid or reduce transaction costs? Is aid aligned to country's priorities defined in strategic plans, or is it donor driven? Is there a clear division of responsibilities? Are there monitoring mechanisms in place for the implementation of the goals of the Paris Declaration? Does Technical Assistance include mechanisms to ensure the transfer of knowledge? Is there any data on aid flows? Is it user friendly? How accurate is it? Is it shared between the governments of recipient countries and donors? Are they using a National Monitoring and Evaluation System? The list goes on.

As someone recently said, "the future of developing countries is in parliamentarians hands"! So, let's not waste the momentum and merit the trust our peoples have placed in us. To close, Hon. Nyiramilimo thanked the participants for their attention.

The final speaker of the session was **Hon. Hugh Bayley**, MP UK, and Chair of the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank. He opened his presentation by expressing his hope that participants will leave this conference with a renewed passion for this subject. These technical questions are too important to leave to technocrats, he explained. The world financial crises has brought the world to the brink of collapse and has been catastrophic for developing countries including a fall in remittances and currency devaluations. The IMF believes that the global economy will shrink by 3% this year, but this is the first time since African independence that Africa has been so affected. The prospects for eradicating MDG 1- extreme poverty, will be put back by 3 years as a result of the economic crisis, Hon. Bayley explained. Africans should not have to pay a price for the catastrophic mistakes of rich countries. In order to overcome this, parliamentarians from the north and the south need to work together. Effective use of aid wins the argument for the North to continue with aid, he said. We need to make the results on the ground clear to our constituents in Europe. As donors we ought to ask why we have 10 countries with bilateral programmes in each. Why can't we have a single agency? Furthermore, there is still too much tied aid, he said. If the donor is Japan, recipients are required to buy Japanese; if the US provides food, the food is American grown; China wants resources.

Hon. Bayley urged participants to let the African people decide what type of vehicles are better products. More aid should be multilateral through the EU and the WB to avoid complications, he said. The IMF and the WB have structural adjustment programmes and Hon. Bayley emphasised that he doesn't want to complain about these institutions; he wants to change them. Boards of directors are appointed by European governments and European officials are playing a role here. The WB and the IMF- these institutions need to be changed, he explained, but the structures and representations in these institutions are just a means to an end. What changes do we want from the WB, or the IMF? Hon. Bayley pointed out that as parliamentarians, participants need to tackle these questions and come up

with answers. Policies like the structural adjustment programmes were imposed from outside, but aid must be used in accordance with the countries' Poverty Reduction Strategy Plans (PRSPs).

Hon. Bayley went on to say that donors need to change the availability of funds. It was agreed to increase funds to 750 billion at the G8. The World Bank funding comes from IDA window and the funding is on a three year cycle. European parliamentarians will be discussing IDA 15 in our parliaments. Next year, the WB will be negotiating with countries on each of their contributions to this basket. Parliaments need to press governments on what commitments we will be making, he urged. The last round before the deadline on the MDGs will be between 2011 and 2014. If we are serious about the MDGs, Hon. Bayley said, then they must substantially increase their funding for IDA in the next round. To do this, he explained, we need noise from both the north and the south. We need to increase the speed by which aid is disbursed. The IMF is particularly slow.

In conclusion, Hon. Bayley emphasized that parliamentarians must insist that governments come to parliament and explain development plans and policies. The biggest change necessary is that governments need to come to parliament. They need to be made accountable to it, and with this, to the people the parliament represents. These multilateral institutions, at the same time, he said, need to adopt policies that are good for those in the developing countries.

The Chair, Hon. Brendan Howlin, then made a short intervention and mentioned the fact that in partner countries, the parliament needs to oversee what is done with aid; while in donor countries parliamentarians need to oversee conditionalities and make sure that aid flows are still dealing with the problems in Africa. In order to bring the point home, the Chair asked participants: How do we deal with inequality in Europe? We transfer resources, he said. When Ireland joined the EU in the 70s, it was empowered to take on its own development, he reminded participants. Germany did not try to do this for us, he said.

The Chair then opened the floor for questions and comments. Discussions revolved around:

- The question of "overpopulation" in Africa and the need a relative population assessment;
- the immediate need to treat malaria and increase literacy;
- the need for developing countries to remain committed to maintaining development projects, like roads;
- the importance of international trade and the movement away from aid dependency;
- the need for technology and the investment in human resources;
- the need for Parliamentarians should consider themselves guardians of the public goods, not "watchdogs";
- the problem of transaction and institutional costs of aid, where the bulk of support does not reach those in need;
- The suggestion of monitoring budgets based upon countries' PSRP so that donors can bring help for specific actions in the medium term;
- The need to give parliamentarians our confidence in overseeing the budget;
- The need for donors to harmonise their practices;
- Whether or not aid has helped to develop Africa;
- The important role of NGOs in development and democracy.

### ***Discussion***

The Chair opened the floor for panellists to address participant's comments and concerns. Hon. Hugh Bayley began by responding that there are parts of Africa where aid has gone well. Aid cannot develop Africa; it is a tiny part of their budgets. Development is in Africa's hand. We need to improve terms of trade, he said. 70% of Europe's trade is amongst its own members. On the issue of transaction costs and "lost" money, if only 20% of a project's funds truly finds its way to the recipient, he wouldn't fund it, he noted. There needs to be an audit trail to see where the money is spent, he suggested. We need more transparency on this. On China, they are quick to react but they are not as good on

environmental issues and consultation and dealings with them may lead a country into a lot of debt. Finally, said Hon. Bayley, NGOs are only a tiny portion of the overall aid budget.

Hon. Nyiramilimo addressed the question on family planning and overpopulation. She responded by saying that the problem of family planning is not in the philosophies of African families. Some women have 10-12 children, some have only one. The average now in Africa is somewhere around six, she explained. For the last three years the parliamentarians have been fighting to reduce the population and to inspire family planning, she said, but that does not mean that she totally agrees with the idea, she explained. She suggested participants talk about the architecture of aid. It needs to be restructured so that the donors are helping the recipients to help themselves, she noted. Developed cannot come with their plans and agendas and impose it on a partner country. They know their countries better than any outsider could, she explained. Donors should be listening to proposals from partner countries!

On the subject of conditionalities, only one condition is indispensable and that is the condition that the recipient country decides on what is best for it. Donors must respect a country's wishes, Hon. Nyiramilimo emphasised. This does not mean that parliamentarians have to be watchdogs, she explained. Parliamentarians must play the role they've always played- but they must have the information on how aid flows are being spent. On the role of the NGOs, Hon. Nyiramilimo agreed that NGOs often know the field and the politicians, but with the new architecture, parliamentarians must commit themselves to know their own terrain!

As the final respondent, Hon. Kilontsi referred back to the question he posed at the beginning - can industrialized countries uphold their commitments by providing finance and technology in a systematic manner? The playground needs to be levelled, he said, and our countries should decide which projects to undertake. Donors need to increase their contributions to meet the MDGs. On the question of whether aid works or does not work, it does, he said, but only under certain circumstances. Aid has been skewed towards the interest of donors and away from the recipients. China has been increasing their assistance and they have been doing well. This means we will all have to do our part in making the system functional again.

On that note, the Chair thanked the panellists and participants for the lively discussion and closed the session.

## CLOSING SESSION

**Dr. Jan Nico Scholten**, President of AWEPA opened the closing session and presented the speakers.

**Mr. Par Granstedt**, AWEPA Secretary-General began by saying that this is the final big conference of one of AWEPA's major programmes: Mobilising Parliamentarians for NEPAD (MPN). The MPN programme reflects African leadership and African development in a true sense and stimulates the strengthening of African parliamentary partnerships.

Lately much focus has been placed on climate change, but projects also addressed economic development, private sector development and the role of parliament in conflict management. Next year, the last national workshops will take place in West Africa for which a strong focus is placed on climate change and agriculture. Additionally, AWEPA will also be working together its African partners in developing a new thematic capacity building programme.

The year 2015 is the deadline for the achievement of the MDGs. It is a great challenge to make sure that we can meet these goals, especially in these difficult economic times. AWEPA is committed to do what we can to let parliaments play their leading role in this process.

Mr. Granstedt read out Conference recommendations and the audience made suggestions for edits. See AWEPA website for the final recommendations ([http://www.awepa.org/awepa-news/promoting-parliamentary-democracy-in-africa-for-25-years\\_en.html](http://www.awepa.org/awepa-news/promoting-parliamentary-democracy-in-africa-for-25-years_en.html)).

**Hon. Marie Weibull Kornias**, Member of the Swedish Parliament and Member of the Swedish AWEPA Section gave some examples of how parliamentary democracy is applied in Sweden. She started by pointing out vital pillars necessary for a well-functioning democracy namely: an independent judicial system, a legislative body, as well as proper implementation of decisions by the executive. She however added a few more factors that coincide in a modern society being a parliament that is open to the public and journalists, access to public documents, free press, and a parliamentary ombudsman to safeguard the rights of the individual. Finally, Hon. Weibull Kornias pointed to the opposition's right to take fully part in the democratic process.

On the issue of climate change, Hon. Weibull Kornias asserted the commitment of the Swedish government in working towards more effective development cooperation, as is stated in the Paris Declaration. "When it comes to the issue of climate change, I want to stress the fact that it concerns us all," she said and added that the adoption of a new climate agreement in Copenhagen in December is a must and a priority. On her last point, the honourable member reiterated the close link between climate change and food security, adding that there is nothing more fundamental to the success of democracy than people's access to food.

Ending on a congratulatory note, Hon. Weibull Kornias applauded the achievements of AWEPA for the last 25 years and wished it more prosperity for the future.

**Dr. Jan Nico Scholten**, closed the meeting by saying that with such a large presence of donors, he hoped the call made on AWEPA by its partners was heard.

The PAP is still only 6 years old and it must become a success, according to Dr. Scholten. This regional parliament needs the support AWEPA can give, and for that we need donor support.

He continued by saying that it was an excellent conference with much information provided by experts and new political energy. Dr. Scholten urged participants to ask themselves what they can do as a next step to follow-up on this conference, so that their participation can lead into concrete actions.

Dr. Jan Nico Scholten concluded by saying: “All the work we do is in the interest of our brothers and sisters in Africa. I know from my own experience how rewarding it is to work for the freedom of others. It sets yourself free in the end. Let us walk forward with passion, compassion and renewed commitment”.



*Dr. Jan Nico Scholten, President of AWEPA*

**FINAL PARTICIPANTS LIST**

**25<sup>TH</sup> AWEPA Anniversary Conference: Promoting Parliamentary Democracy**  
**2-3 October 2009, Cape Town, South Africa**



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Bayr, Hon. Petra	Austria, Speaker of Parliament
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Cita, Hon. Laurent	Burundi
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Coyitungira, Hon. Frédienne	Burundi
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