

Minutes of the ‘Pan African Australasian Diaspora Network’ (PAADN) Council Meeting of the 16th March 2016 7pm to 9.30pm EST, Australia.

Agenda Items:

1. Take stock of progress so far
2. Assess committees and action taken so far to engage with members
3. Receive update on plan to visit the PM
4. Consider proposed MoU with the African Union.
5. Deliberate on a proposed Regional Consultative Conference by the African Union, scheduled to take place in Sydney in November.
6. Brainstorm on expanding PAADN presence in New Zealand and other Asia Pacific region.
7. Any other matter
 - Between the Council and Committees, enhancing mutuality and accountability mechanisms in the approaches of identifying and implementing projects (who is who? Resourcing and Support? Possibly cross-pollinated!!).
 - Unity in actions, roles descriptions as emphasis of the committees’ links to the network, and PAADN’s membership criteria.
 - Strategic planning, motivational sustenance, PAADN’s promotion/marketing (including, communication strategy & policy, structure re-assessments, website, logo, motto, official stationery e.g. letter heads), and relevant controls in the foregoing processes.

Present:

David -Chair Climate Change, Charles - Chair Community Leaders, Teresia - Chair Population, Health, and Ageing, Sisay - Chair Youth and Human Rights, Apollo - Chair Entrepreneurs/Co-Chair Community Leaders (minutes taker), and John - Facilitator.

Absent:

Chika –Academic, Amy- Gender, and Johannes –Ag. Professionalism and volunteerism, Fatima –Diplomats.

Introduction:

Facilitator and Chair declared meeting open at about 7.30pm, after spending about 30 minutes attempting to use Skype so as to link with Fatima in Nairobi Kenya, later reverted to our usual telephone conferencing. He welcomed the new committee members only Teresia was available, Amy, Fatma and Johannes were absent. He went through the agenda, and a few topics were added under AOB. Apollo was requested to take minutes. Each member introduced him/herself.

Agenda 1 & 2 Stock of Progress and Extent of Engagement with Members.

- Apollo summarised PAADN’s progress and developments to date. They included:
 - Great and magnificent work done so far, thank you all who have been involved, starting with John and the core team members,
 - Almost 2 years process of developing the legal and structural mechanisms, mapping out PAADN’s role consistent with AU Diaspora objectives. John

added that about 100,000 people around the globe and 10,000 people in Australia have been reached through various communications, e.g. e-mails, internet, TV and Radio broadcasts, papers, and different social Medias. However, a proper feedback on the extent by which PAADN is known it is yet to be properly ascertained,

- Involvement of an Australia wide consultations, State by State (now the wish is to extend beyond Australia),
- Launch in the Victoria Parliament during the 2015 Celebration of the African Australians Awards by the African Union (AU's) delegation.
- Completion of PAADN's formal registration process, first in South Australia and second Federally under Australian Securities & Investments Commission (ASIC) on the 15th February 2016.
- Thank you members who made financial contributions to facilitate the registration,
- Elections into Vacant Chairs and sub-committees' positions
- BBQs for getting to know each other in a State, have been held, and interesting ideas for projects have emerged through this initiative. For example, the Tasmania group (Tassie group), through Dr Kiros Hiruy of the University of Tasmania the following ideas for projects have been flagged: seeking for scholarships, creating links or establishing think tanks, enhancing investment in Africa, augment Australia-Africa volunteer networks, professional and cultural exchange, all in addition to promoting sister city and twinning programmes with parallel cities in Africa.
- Invited interested new members to join the network, more than twenty have responded taking the number to about 70 total members,
- Requesting to respond to CIDO/AU call of proving our commitment to the tasks, thus, each committee is encouraged to initiate and operationalise at least a project to be ready by September/October 2016,
- In the period under review, three committees Chairs have resigned: Dr Mimmie, Maria, and Ellen. These have been at the core formation members' level. The positions have been filled, a resolution was passed to remove Maria from the Governance list of Board members, which is filed with ASIC.
- PAADN has run a few promotional radio live broadcasts through Manet Media Australia of South Australia -Adelaide (more to come but with better arrangements),
- John also noted that PAADN has been promoted through Celebrate African Australian Inc. Network, a situation that helped a lot including getting to the AU delegation to come and launch PAADN on the 6th November 2015 at the Victoria Parliament (Australia).
- John as well added that passionate and active members are likely to be doing more grass-root work. Chairs of the committees are encouraged to run their own projects with members of their teams or across committees. In the event that others are not contributing, Chairs can carry-on with a project's implementation, but s/he should carry members along through regular update on progress. Letting the project remain within the committee.

- Through PAADN it is critical to be having membership of people linked by the idea of “Unity in Action”, which is core to holding the network together.
- David commended the hard work accomplished, highly appreciated the roles team members have played so far and he further observed that our partners at home deserve to be thanked for letting us spend part of the sleepless nights working for PAADN. He added that PAADN should do the following:
 - Find some funds to run its activities, support the Councils work, and perhaps assist some projects.
 - Have a mechanism in place of financially leveraging a proportion or a small percentage from the respective committee projects for the central Council’s running/account.
 - Have strong sharing and support mechanisms across the committees,
 - Have a national bank account for the central office the Council, and to be managed or operated from where most Council members happen to be living. At this time, the place is Melbourne. A resolution was passed, and it is found in the resolution section.
- Charles noting the above, and thanking for the wonderful work so far done, the following were his additions:
 - As progress is not generally linear, more work is needed in promotional strategies and processes to reach more target people, locally, nationally, and internationally. More grass-root work is vital.
 - Raising more awareness and publicity are critical for PAADN’s functionalism
 - Much of PAADN’s projects need to be in line AU Diaspora key or priority focus
 - Teresia suggested use of social media and events for this promotional matter given the high costs associated with it, events for publicity and website for various things highlighting so far done are good targeting promotional strategies
 - It appears there is a need for a communication or media committee and a promotional strategy.
 - John indicated that he can develop the website, but at a cost. Thus, he will have to absent himself during the discussion of the matter. This is for limiting conflict of interests.
 - David suggested contacting some people in the University of South Australia seeking whether the website would be developed for free.
 - Also, a reminder was raised in regard to the maintenance cost of the website
 - Issues of managing well Social Medias, Facebook, privacy, confidentiality, and other legal matters, and articulation of the contents; all were raised for control, image, creditability, and cautionary measures.
 - Here, Sisay articulated the obligation of being legal under corporate governance as demanded by ASIC, including managing well all platforms, and highlighting a need to have tangible outcomes in all our communication styles and action process i.e. being clearly publically accountable (transparent) including in our consultation processes. Relate well to the cohorts we

represent, first to avoid demonstration of serving obvious, open pecuniary or self-interests.

- Charles suggested perhaps we should develop a policy manual that would supplement and tighten in some grey areas of the rules.
- As the rules are comprehensive, let us use them and the structure in regard to articulation of roles, controls, and responsibilities, like wise use the same to revisit and re-assess how the Council should work. Charles was later tasked to look into this situation and make recommendations to the Council to consider reforms.
- Sisay thanked all and commented that achievements were remarkable to date, and added as follows:
 - Appreciation of the committees' elections so far done, thank you John for leadership role in this matter.
 - Suggested to have the PAADN's Council election of the Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary be done soon. A resolution on this matter is to wait a bit, perhaps to do it at the next Council meeting.
 - Noted that despite the need for the developments, in order to avoid failure, we need to slow down a bit and examine well all our grounds and workings to ensure that they are right.
 - Noted that the opening of the PAADN's account will need having elected the PAADN's office bearers. All agreed on this matter but the delay is crucial in this circumstance.
 - He was reminded that PAADN has an account operating under David's names until other one is opened in the organisation's name, members are still comfortable with this arrangement. An account in the organisation's name is something all Council want to see happening, but the new Council members are on a three months' probation.
 - He emphasised that the key and critical need of developing PAADN, is to be with lots of accountability and controls; not to be a vehicle some people could easily use for their convenience or interests without ramifications. John supported this and referred to the rules as being comprehensive in these regards. However, in case there are some weak-ends, things can be tightened up.
- Teresa as a new member, this was her first meeting, also appreciated so far done.
 - Asked a number of questions in regard to PAADN's promotional material and how to best reach the targeted audience, given echoes earlier advanced by members!!! She sought to know how such has been handled in the past.
 - As mentioned above the outlets of Celebrate African Australians Inc. has been one of the main vehicles of PAADN's promotion through e-mail and internet, plus immediate interactions; the introduction give an estimate of those reached.
 - She offered to work on the promotions through social medias, and in the planning of events and publicities.
 - Perhaps to use TV and Radio channels like SBS or Channel 31 community TV or others.

- John came last and he equally wholeheartedly thanked all, and acknowledged that though more can and is to be done, further articulation is necessary so as to work out:
 - What exactly has been done so far and what exact improvements are needed?
 - We have had Consultations State by State, thus in relative terms people should be aware of PAADN.
 - Encouraged Chairs to be more active and mobilise their committee members into designing and executing projects. Reiterated that PAADN's credibility lies on the extent at which the diaspora is mobilised and projects are accomplished. Therefore, each Chair was encouraged to think of a project that pushes their button and run with it. Assuring that, Chairs would be supported to go ahead with project implementation even if they have to do it alone in the event members are not contributing enough. Nevertheless, members need to be carried along and kept in the loop about action taken and progress made.
- **To examine and set mechanisms for central accountability and responsible governance; as well as exploring strategies to energise, engage and motivate members, Charles to review the current PAADN rules or help to produce a policy and procedure stand to enhance what is required as highlighted above.**

Agenda 3 - Updates on Meeting the PM & Matters of Public Relations Role

- PM's Office acknowledged receipt of the letter, a response to the request of meeting him is yet to come through.
- David was advised to follow up on it seeking to get some response especially as 2016 is a Federal election year.
- A reminder was raised that to keep with the law yet ASIC is very strict on legal compliances, therefore within 30 days of a resignation or a change in the Board members' composition; such must be up-dated with ASIC.
 - A resolution was passed that *“resigned Board Member Maria Osman be removed from the list and names of the new Committee Chairperson be added. These members are for Professionalism and Volunteerism, Diplomatic and Internationals Relations, Gender, and Population, Health, and Ageing”*. This motion was proposed by Sisay, seconded by David and it was unanimously carried.

Agenda 4: Proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the AU

- Sisay and John informed that Eiman Kheir; Desk Officer, Middle East, Asia, and Oceania of the Department of Citizens and Diaspora (CIDO) of the African Union Commission, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; acknowledged of their plan of holding a Diaspora Regional Conference in Sydney, (Australia) in November 2016. That, CIDO/AU and PAADN need to work together along with other agencies from the region: Australia, New Zealand, Oceania and Asia to ensure success, also the occasion will be for recognising any growing diaspora initiatives in the region.

- The PAADN Council members discussed the nature and type of the relationship between the CIDO/AU and PAADN, which need to be articulated by a MOU. In this regard, CIDO/AU has provided template used by other similar organisation(s) to arrive at a MOU. Given the foregoing, the following points came out here in regard to the proposed MOU:
 - That it must clearly define the relationship even if such has been provided for in the CIDO/AU rules similarly to those of PAADN. The provisions in the MOU must reflect a two ways bridging relationship, collaboratively working together supporting each other. It was emphasised that the dealings must hold to the fore going principles of growth and prosperity to the African continent and our countries of resident.
 - It was observed that to remain in the above claimed status, PAADN has to prove itself to CIDO/AU. Also, CIDO/AU has clearly stated that it has a high regard and support to PAADN, and the roles it is playing in the region.
 - It was mentioned that a copy of template had been passed to Apollo on the 14th March 2016 (two days ago) and he would be going through it making appropriate changes to fit PAADN's vision, mission, and goals as well to remain consistent with CIDO/AU aims and objectives as initiated by the undertakings of the 25th May 2012 Sandton, Johannesburg, South Africa Global African Diaspora Summit.
 - Apollo to advise the Council soonest of the proposed changes and inclusions in the MOU, then a meeting to be convened next to no time for reviewing the draft MOU proposals pending delivery to Addis Ababa for re-assessing for a deal, if the Council adopts the proposals.
 - The following observed notes for the CIDO/AU conference as well are relevant to PAADN's MOU proposals, thus need consideration while developing a response.

Agenda 5: Proposed AU Regional Consultative Sydney Conference

- As mentioned above, CIDO/AU elucidated of their plan of holding a Diaspora Regional Conference in Sydney, Australia in November 2016.
- Notes were made about the proposed conference that through activities like this one:
 - CIDO/AU want to reach, fit with and in, engage and encourage, consolidate, re-define itself and its roles, market itself, help and be assertive, delegate, be consulting, justify the creation of the 6th Diaspora Regional Market of AU, and assess what could be achievable from the Australasian (Australia, New Zealand, Pacific, Oceania, and Asia) region both in the short and long term.
- That the above notes are well illustrated by the recent “AU Communiques” issued, posted and broadcasted including the one on the PAADN's launch at Victoria State Parliament (Australia) on the 6th November 2015. See:

<http://pages.au.int/cido/events/landmark-launch-pan-african-australasia-diaspora-network-paadn-melbourne-victoria6-novem>

- CIDO/AU is extremely happy and supportive of the developments of PAADN, one of the reasons wanting to work with the network to stage the conference. Thus, hurrying to finalise the MOU is viewed urgent here.
- The MOU will define the nature, contents, type, and the operation of the relationship btw PAADN and the AU.
- Agreed to work hard and have PAADN's projects recognised and be awardable at the proposed CIDO/AU conference.

Agenda 6: Expanding PAADN beyond Australia

- Though some members viewed this as a sporadic action (i.e. expanding too soon and being thinly spreading), others saw it as the nature and basis of how PAADN network need to operate given its name, set vision, mission, goals, objectives and aims. These need to be addressed as we move/grow and CIDO/AU has hinted on this matter for the proposed November 2016 Sydney conference.
- Council members were invited to think and propose ways as to how expansion should be happening, or more so within the committee areas since the nodes or strands are of expertise an easier way of making such links.
- Teresia as she came from New Zealand, promised to link with the Chair New Zealand Kenya Association seeking to see whether a link could be secured through this organisation
- Apollo was asked whether his link with the African Studies Association of the Australasia and the Pacific (AFSAAP) could be used in this regard, through New Zealand AFSAAP members. He promised to try and see can be one. He informed of his contemplation of writing a short PAADN promoting message for "HABARI" a quarterly AFSAAP News Letter usually circulated to all active members including those in New Zealand, Asia and Pacific/Oceania countries.
- If Council members know individuals or organisations and their contact details of whom/what can be contacted, please forward the relevant details to John. He will make the initial contact approaches.
- At this juncture, Teresia excused her-self from the meeting to attend to other pressing family matters then.

Agenda 7: Any Other Business (AOB)

- In regard to encouraging growth, efficiency and effective operation of the committees, including Committee-Council interrelationships; along with the need of tightening up controls, responsibility and accountability mechanism, all added to ensuring that PAADN operates as a credible entity; then Charles was tasked to examine our rules,

operationalise them and recommend the type of action in “a policy manual” to be adopted by the organisation at some stage later.

- For unity in actions whilst maximising productivity outcomes from the semi-autonomous nature of committees, roles descriptions, PAADN’s membership criteria and fees structure, Apollo & Charles will complete the work already started on.
- For strategic planning, motivational sustenance and PAADN’s promotion/marketing undertakings, a lot and decisions have been made highlighted in the above discussions. A strategic planning forum will be organised, in the meantime let us move while thinking doing things that keep the steam up e.g. acknowledging and encouraging contributions/commitments.
- It had been agreed that each Council member would contribute \$100.00 towards developing the Website, Sisay and Apollo have already contributed. A resolution was passed that *“those who have not yet met their commitment of sending \$100.00 the account, they do so by or before the 31st March 2016”*. Moved by Sisay and seconded by Charles.
- Again each committee is encouraged to come with a project and endeavour to get it done so that by November 2016, PAADN has projects to report on. This is also for proving ourselves to CIDO/AU that we can deliver soon on our promises.

Resolutions Passed During this Meeting of the 16th March 2016

- 1. That PAADN, its Council and Committees seek some funds to run its activities and projects. That a mechanism be put in place of financially leveraging a portion or a small percentage from the respective committee projects for the central Council’s running.**
2. That *“for making it easy and workable, PAADN’s formal bank account should be opened in a location (broadly State-wise) where a good number of Council Members live”*. At the time of making this resolution, Melbourne has the largest number of Council Members. Also, this resolution is made before the election of the Council’s Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and other positions. The resolution motion was raised by David and it was seconded by Charles and was passed unanimously.
3. A resolution was passed that *“those who have not yet met their commitment of sending \$100.00 the account, they do so by or before the 31st March 2016”*. Moved by Sisay and seconded by Charles.
4. **A resolution was passed to thank through a formal communication to Mimmie, Ellen, and Maria for their participation in the formative stages of PAADN.**
5. **A resolution was passed that “resigned Board Member Maria Osman be removed from the Board Members list and the names of the new Committee Chairpersons be added. These members are for: Professionalism and Volunteerism, Diplomatic and**

Internationals Relations, Gender, and Population, Health, and Ageing". This motion was proposed by Sisay, seconded by David and it was unanimously carried.

Key Outcome of the meeting, and among others, are to:

- Quickly finalise a draft MoU between PAADN and the African Union;
- Follow up with a proposed meeting with the Prime Minister;
- Intensify engagement with committee members and passionately execute projects as soon as possible;
- Expand PAADN's penetration into New Zealand and other Asia Pacific Countries as soon as possible;
- Commence necessary step toward hosting an African Union's Regional Consultative Conference;
- Create PAADN's website and social media platforms as soon as possible;
- Pool resources and brain power towards achieving tangible outcomes;
- Examine and set mechanisms for accountability and responsible governance; and
- Explore strategies to energise, engage and motivate members.

The meeting closed at about 9.30pm with interesting jokes and fun, a symbol of commitment and resilience of the Council members in regard to this task.

Notables about the Projects

- The primary focus is for each committee to mobilise resources and expertise from the diaspora to carry out projects in Africa. However, some projects could be started here, as long as it brings benefit to Africa.
- Each committee is semi-autonomous; meaning, they source and manage their own funds. Further, each committee can apply for sponsorships and grants. They could also seek donations from members and the public.
- Each committee will generate ideas for its own project. Chairs are to present a project proposal to their team, and update the council on progress. Most importantly, each committee is required to design and execute a project before November.
- The African Union is eager to see PAADN carry out project(s) in order to honour our achievements at the AU assembly and the Regional Consultative Conference.

Minutes composed by Dr Apollo Nsubugba-Kyobe, and reviewed by John Nze-Bertram