

AFRICA FORUM OF TEACHING REGULATORY AUTHORITIES (AFTRA)

MINUTES OF 2ND AFTRA STEERING COMMITTEE (SC) MEETING HELD ON MARCH 19-20, 2012 AT THE GARDEN COURT HOTEL, ISANDO, KEMPTON PARK, SOUTH AFRICA, UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR EDUCATORS (SACE)

1.0 ATTENDANCE:

SN	NAME	DESIGNATION	COUNTRY
1	M.L. Maphila	Chairperson	South Africa
2	Rej Brijraj	Chairperson	South Africa
3	Thembinkosi Ndhlovu	Member	South Africa
4	Prof. A.M. Wokocha	Secretary	Nigeria
5	Dr. Steve Nwokeocha	Secretary	Nigeria
SPECIAL DELEGATES FROM SACE			
6	Prof. V.N. Magi	Special Member	South Africa
7	Tsedi Dipholo	Special Member	South Africa
8	John Jeftha	Special Member	South Africa
9	Walter Hlaise	Special Member	
ABSENT WITH APOLOGY			
10.	Dr. G. J. Mbabazi	Member	Uganda
11.	Mrs. Beatrice Kabwa	Member	Uganda
ABSENT WITHOUT APOLOGY			
12	Kutol Kipkoge	Member	Kenya
13	Hilary Lukhafwa	Member	Kenya
SECRETARIAT			
14	Mr. Adamu Bello	TRCN	Nigeria
15	Mr Mackay Eze	TRCN	Nigeria

2.0 OPENING

The meeting began by 10.30 a.m. with the introduction of members. The Chair warmly welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the Secretariat for the impressive compilation of meeting documents. He then invited members to consider the meeting agenda for adoption and this was done. The meeting took apologies for members who were unable to attend, particularly the delegation from Uganda who wrote to state that they could not attend due to prior commitments. It was also reported that the delegation from Kenya did not reply to any mails sent to them regarding the meeting.

3.0 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes were read and adopted. As matters arising, a member expressed concern over inability of Kenya to attend or to give response to invitations. However, another member suggested that the issue of Kenya be discussed together with the preparation for 2012 AFTRA Roundtable. It was noted that specific reports had been written concerning some matters arising. It was therefore agreed that the progress reports be taken while the remaining matters arising be treated under "Other relevant matters."

4.0 REPORTS

4.1 Progress Report on Mobilisation of AFTRA member countries by TRCN and SACE

TRCN Registrar/Chief Executive read written report on the progress made by TRCN to mobilise African countries. TRCN in particular sent emails (with strongly worded letter and AFTRA communiqué attached) to all Ministers of Education and Teaching Regulatory Authorities in Africa. It further sent hard copy letters and communiqué through couriers to all African countries as well. TRCN therefore reported that some countries including Cameroon replied positively.

Mr. Thembinkosi Ndhlovu of SACE also gave report about efforts of SACE to mobilise South African Development Community (SADC) and other international bodies. Consequently, SACE made efforts to publicise AFTRA in several conferences and among several organisations which included the following:

- Education International conference held 2011 in South Africa
- Zimbabwe Teachers Union
- Zambian Ministry of Education

The Chair of the Steering Committee moved a vote of appreciation to TRCN for showing the way forward through its concerted efforts. He stated that TRCN strategy which involved extensive use of emails and couriers services to African countries could be adopted by SACE over and above the use of physical contact only.

A member noted that the response of African countries has been very slow and poor despite efforts made so far by TRCN and SACE. He expressed concern that with the absence of Kenya and Uganda from the Steering Committee meeting, it does appear that only SACE and TRCN are for now committed members. Another member observed that perhaps part of the reason for poor response by African countries is that only South Africa and Nigeria have Teaching Council. He however urged SACE and TRCN not to be discouraged, saying that good things are usually difficult at the beginning. He was supported by another member who narrated how difficult it was to bring SACE into reality, but which later became successful.

A member suggested that the AFTRA Steering Committee should come up with a communiqué in this meeting that could again be sent round Africa to mobilise countries towards the 2012 Roundtable. This was seconded by a member who stated that the communiqué should be non-threatening to any side (unions, established authorities, etc) . He stated that emphasis should change in the way we communicate to emphasize that teacher professionalism is key goal of AFTRA.

A member suggested also that AFTRA could speak with specific persons in some countries or embassies. Another advised reaching other countries through teacher unions and their contacts with other countries.

4.2 Progress Report on AFTRA–ICWE Partnership and Organisation of 1st AFTRA Teaching and Learning Conference presented by TRCN

The progress report was read by Dr. Steve Nwokeocha. The report covered the AFTRA-ICWE memorandum of understanding (MoU), the agreement signed, and the specific offers made by ICWE to AFTRA for the hosting of the Conference. Basically, the contract asserted that ICWE will assist AFTRA to organise the conference and both sides would publicise each other on their

respective websites. It was also agreed that participants at AFTRA conference will pay 90 Euros if they are also registered for e-Learning Africa conference or 120 Euros for those attending only AFTRA conference. ICWE also offered AFTRA opportunity for exhibition at cost of 2,150 Euros and for further partnership packages at a cost of 6,000 Euros.

The report was presented with several documents including the agreements, printed call for papers for the AFTRA conference, responses from intending participants, copy of letters written to Nigerian universities and colleges of Education inviting them to the conference, etc.

The chair called for suggestions on how AFTRA could raise the 2,150 Euros and 6,000 Euros (total of 8,150 Euros). A member opined that SACE and TRCN could equally share the cost and get refunded if there was surplus fund after organisation of the conference. After redeeming this debt, other remaining surplus fund could be kept as seed money for AFTRA for which an account would be opened. A member also suggested that information on accommodation costs should be included in the call for paper, particularly for papers to be circulated in South Africa.

A member suggested that adequate preparations should be made regarding the exhibition, posters, kind of messages to use in the exhibition, the publication of brochures, general conference materials, etc. This he said, would require having advance party to visit venue of conference and to arrive early ahead of the conference to put things in place.

Conference speakers were also discussed. A member clarified that the members of the Steering Committee constituted the core of speakers whereas other speakers would be authors whose papers are accepted. There was a suggestion that the Minister of Education of the Republic of Benin, Nigeria and/or South Africa and other high ranking officials of the Education sector be contacted to play the role of key speakers and to declare the conference open. It was agreed that a letter to Minister of Education of the Republic of Benin should be signed by the CEO's of SACE and TRCN and advance delegates from TRCN and SACE should deliver the letter in Benin and make critical advance contacts with the Ministry of Education in the Republic of Benin and also to finalise logistical arrangement for the conference.

5.0 PREPARATION FOR 2012 AFTRA ROUNDTABLE

A member recalled that at the 2011 AFTRA Roundtable, Kenya was selected to host the 2012 Roundtable and regretted that Kenya has been reluctant ever since that time and had not attended any meeting or responded to any mail. He therefore called for alternatives. He said based on this, the preparation for the 2012 Roundtable has not started in earnest.

A member suggested that Kenya be written formally and given one month to see whether or not it could respond. Alternatively, the AFTRA Teaching and Learning Conference might provide opportunity to seek volunteer to host the 2012 Roundtable. Another member suggested that Uganda be also written to see if it could host the Roundtable in case Kenya fails. A third option is for SACE and TRCN to lobby a neighbouring country to host, for instance, TRCN could visit/contact the Inspector General of Education, Cameroon who has shows interest in AFTRA affairs to lobby for hosting by Cameroon, or SACE to contact Botswana which has also shown interest in establishing a Teaching Council. It was resolved that the letters be written immediately after the meeting for Kenya, Uganda and Benin as agreed.

6.0 OTHER RELEVANT MATTERS

6.1 Funding

It was recalled that members during the 1st Steering Committee meeting in 2011 agreed not to stress financial obligations among member countries as that might discourage them. It was therefore agreed that the matter be kept at the background. However, if a country agrees to host the Roundtable, costing of the Roundtable could be done and used to source for sponsorship of the Roundtable.

6.2 Africanisation of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol

The Chair stated that this could be kept for the next Roundtable, but SACE and TRCN could get in touch to begin preliminary arrangements. So this is seen to be work in progress.

6.3 Communication with other African entities

The Chair stated that this was another work in progress and reiterated that SACE should take steps to forward the AFTRA communiqué and other correspondences to the relevant bodies. He said it is important for SACE to have concrete progress to report at the next Roundtable. A member from SACE however suggested that it should be a shared effort with other members of the Steering Committee as in the mobilisation of AFTRA member countries.

6.4 Composition of AFTRA Steering Committee

The Chair opined that given the reluctance of Kenya to attend Steering Committee meetings, there is need for the next AFTRA Roundtable to discuss the composition and functionality of the Steering Committee.

6.4 Preparations for 2013 IFTRA conference

A member called for update on the preparations for the next IFTRA conference. The Chair recalled that Jamaica had not been in touch with SACE which is IFTRA Chair. However, the Chair stated that SACE would do all it could to kick-start the preparations and reiterated that TRCN would serve as member of IFTRA Steering Committee as earlier captured in the 2011 AFTRA Steering Committee minutes of meeting.

6.5 Opening of SACE new building

The Chair informed members that SACE would be opening its new building as part of the ceremonies to mark the 2012 World Teachers Day. He stated that as a last resort, if other countries failed to host the AFTRA 2012 Roundtable, SACE could host it in its new building as part of the celebrations, stating that such would even underscore the SACE building as a building for teachers of the whole of Africa.

Mr. Magope Lucas Maphila
Steering Committee Chair

Professor Addison Mark Wokocha
Steering Committee Secretary