



AFRICA FORUM OF TEACHING REGULATORY AUTHORITIES

(Le Forum d' Afrique d'Enseigner Régulateur Autorités)

HEADQUARTERS: Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria

(Federal Ministry of Education)

12 Oda Crescent, off Aminu Kano Crescent Wuse 2,

PMB 567 Garki, Abuja, Nigeria

e-mail: infoaftra@trcn.gov.ng



MINUTES OF THE 5TH AFTRA STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING AT THE MENSVIC HOTEL, ACCRA GHANA, OCTOBER 16, 2013

1. ATTENDANCE

SN	NAME	DESIGNATION	ORGANISATION
1	Rej Brijraj	AFTRA President/SACE CEO	South African Council for Educators
2	Prof Addison Mark Wokocha	AFTRA Secretary General/TRCN CEO	Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria
3	Prof Joseph Ghartey Ampiah	Dean, Faculty of Education	University of Cape Coast
4	Prosper Lubuva	Head of Educ. & Training	Tanzania Teachers Union
5	Irene Duncan Adanusa	General Secretary	Ghana National Association of Teachers
6	Thomas Baafi	Deputy General Secretary	Ghana National Association of Teachers
7	Dr. Steve Nwokeocha	AFTRA Executive Director	Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria

2. ABSENT WITH APOLOGY

- Education Service Commission, Uganda
- Teachers Service Commission, Kenya
- Ministry of Basic Education, Cameroon.

3. COMMENCEMENT:

The meeting started at 9.am with self-introductions. This was followed by opening remarks by the Chair. He began by sharing his feeling about Ghanians who he said are honesty, hard-working and friendly. He appreciated officially the assistance received from the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) and by extension the Government and people of Ghana in the process of hosting the Steering Committee in Ghana.

He called on members to pause and reflect on incessant violence all over the African continent and charged members to pray for peaceful co-existence and tolerance.

He recalled the successful AFTRA events of June 2013 held in Kenya and said that the Steering Committee (SC) meeting was mainly to set the agenda for next year's events and other matters. He said in future at the Roundtable or Conference, such issues as the role of private schools, safety in schools, the full development of teachers and learners, the promotion of African ethics and values, etc should be discussed.

He said the AFTRA Secretariat led by Prof Wokocha and Dr. Wokocha deserves AFTRA's highest commendations for taking AFTRA to every nook and cranny of the continent and beyond. He said they have invested so much of their time and financial resources to the cause of AFTRA.

He reiterated professionalization of teaching, setting of minimum standards for teaching, catering for students, and promoting learning as being among the aims of AFTRA.

4. PRESENTATION BY AFTRA SECRETARY GENERAL

The Secretary General, Professor Wokocha read minutes of the last (4th) SC meeting in Kenya, held April 10-11, 2013. The minutes were unanimously adopted and the Chair thanked the Secretariat for what he described as the good documentation of the minutes.

The Secretary General then read his progress report which covered the following subheadings:

- *AFTRA contacts and interactions with the African Union and international bodies working with the African Union;*
- *Dissemination of AFTRA 2013 Roundtable and Conference Communiques*
- *Cameroon as host of 2014 AFTRA events;*
- *The Steering Committee Meeting in Ghana;*
- *AFTRA International Journal;*
- *Appreciation to Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT);*
- *General Documents attached to the Secretary's Report.*

The details of the Secretary General's Report were as follows:

i. AFRICAN UNION AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL BODIES

The AFTRA Secretary General, Prof. Addison Mark Wokocha and Executive Director, Dr. Steve Nwokeocha attended a meeting of the African Ministers of Education held at the African Union Headquarters, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, July 14-17, 2013. The Conference was organised by the African Union and Nigeria's Minister of Education which is Chair of African Ministers of Education presided at the Conference. These two AFTRA officers attended the Conference not as AFTRA officials but accompanied the Nigerian Minister to the Conference.

African Correspondences received before the Conference showed that every important African association except AFTRA was part of the Conference, which showed that those other associations have truly earned the recognition of the African Union and are now entrenched and institutionalised by the AU. Again, the subject matters of the Conference ranging from teacher development to teacher qualification framework, teacher mobility protocol, etc were also matters that AFTRA have been dealing with.

In order to fast-track the integration of AFTRA in the African Union and the Conference of the Ministers of Education, the AFTRA Secretary General got the approval of the AFTRA Chair to write the African Union Commission and its relevant organs to inform the about the existence and mandates of AFTRA. These letters were personally delivered by the Secretary

General at the African Union (AU). However, the relevant AU organs could not take action stating that the later came to late to the Conference and also due process had not been followed by AFTRA to seek recognition of the AU. The due process was to pay a high-level visit to the leadership of the AU interaction and specific request for recognition. Thereafter, AFTRA may be given opportunity to be part of the relevant AU organs and Conferences. This will give AFTRA opportunity and advance notice to freely circulate its information materials and address the relevant AU Conferences.

However, the Secretary General was able to mount pressure and succeeded in addressing the AU Conference of Ministers of Education on behalf of AFTRA. The Secretary General further approached the international bodies at the Conference for one-on-one contact and discussions. Following the great success of these manoeuvres at the Conference, AFTRA is now very well known at the level of the AU which is a very important development. Also some of the international bodies have entered into correspondence with AFTRA since that time and some these correspondences are presented in this meeting. Among the international bodies (working with the AU) which are now corresponding with AFTRA are:

- UNESCO International Task Force on Teachers for EFA based in Paris, France – This UNESCO body is now taking up the case of getting UNESCO to approve AFTRA as a member of the International Task Force. It has invited AFTRA to attend its Conference/Dialogue in Kinshasa, DRC, in the week of November 25, 2013 where the Executive Officials of the UNESCO Task Force are expected to take decision about AFTRA membership.*
- Africa Council for Distance Education (ADCE) with Headquarters in Kenya – This body has requested AFTRA to formally become its member and has sent its constitution, and relevant information which are attached to this report.*
- UNESCO Office for Teacher Development and Education Policies based in Dakar, Senegal – This organisation has formally request AFTRA to join it in the execution of important assignments given to it by the AU Ministers of Education, which includes development of Teacher Qualification Framework and related matters.*
- Education International based in Accra Ghana*
- UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICA) based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.*
- The Tuning Project with Headquarters at the University of Pretoria, South Africa.*
- Permanent Delegation of Nigeria to UNESCO based in Paris, France.*
- Department of Education, Culture, Science and Technology, Economic Community of West Africa*

The Secretary General at the AU meeting also interacted with several Ministers of Education and Teachers Union, intimating them about the importance of AFTRA. It was based on the good relationship established there with the General Secretary of the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) and the Ghana Deputy Minister of Education that AFTRA decided to hold this Steering Committee meeting in Ghana with the logistical support of GNAT.

Finally, the General Secretary has sought approval of the AFTRA Chair to concretize relationship with the African Union Commission (AUC) by arranging AFTRA Steering Committee courtesy call on the AUC leadership as advised at the AU meeting last JULY. The courtesy call is proposed for November 26-27, 2013.

ii. DISEMINATION OF AFTRA 2013 ROUNDTABLE & CONFERENCE COMMUNIQUEES

On return from the June 2013 AFTRA Roundtable and Conference, AFTRA Secretary General has translated the communiqués of those two events to French and mailed both the English and French versions to all Ministers of Education in Africa and all other relevant

Teaching Regulatory bodies in Africa whose contact are within our reach. The mails also included a special brief on AFTRA, AFTRA Roundtable and Conference Brochures and proceedings; and other materials. The letter requested that the Ministers and Teaching Regulatory bodies should put AFTRA on their mailing list and also to designate an officer as AFTRA Desk Officer and send particulars of the person to us. All these mails were sent by courier, and later again electronic copies of all the letters were sent by email. Though so much effort and money were spent on organising and getting the mails couriered, there has not been corresponding appreciable response in this particular case. But AFTRA Secretary and his team will not relent in the efforts to get the name of AFTRA across to the rest of the world.

iii. CAMEROON AS HOST OF 2014 AFTRA EVENTS

AFTRA Secretary General has followed up Mr Julius Nuh who represented the Ministry of Basic Education, Cameroon at the 2013 Roundtable where he pledged to get his Ministry to host the 2014 events. Couriers have been used to send all relevant letters, AFTRA brochures and conference proceedings and other relevant briefings to the Minister through Mr. Nuh. However, till this time, Mr. Nuh indicated that the political situation in Cameroon has not allowed the Minister to take a decision; Mr Nuh continued asking for more time. He was also invited to this Steering Committee meeting as the next host but he said he could not attend. We therefore strongly advise that the Steering Committee decide an alternative hosting country in this meeting to avoid delay that may make next year's events impossible. Cameroon may still be given the opportunity in future to host when it is ready.

iv. THE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING IN GHANA

As stated earlier, Ghana was chosen to host the Steering Committee meeting as a result of the good relationship established with GNAT and the Ministry of Education. To further the relationship, the Committee scheduled courtesy calls on the following offices in Ghana:

- Minister of Education*
- Ghana National Association of Teachers*
- Ghana Education Service*
- Ghana Teachers Professional Agency, and*
- Education International.*

Each of these offices have been written officially and couriered directly from AFTRA Headquarters in Abuja to them. Copies of the letters were also sent to the General Secretary of GNAT who is the Facilitator of the Steering Committee meeting and logistics here in Ghana. The GNAT made good progress but the whole arrangement was disrupted by the public holiday which was declared in Ghana for October 15, 2013 being the date slated for the courtesy calls. The new option is for the Steering Committee to hold its meeting on October 16, 2013 and also use part of the day to pay courtesy call on any of the offices that give clearance.

v. AFTRA JOURNAL

At the last Roundtable, decision was taken to establish the publication of AFTRA International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Africa. To this effect, each AFTRA Steering Committee member was requested to forward to AFTRA Headquarters the name and curriculum vitae of one nominee who must be a Professor of Education to enable the constitution of Editorial Consultants for the journal. Several reminders have been sent to members but only the TSC Kenya had sent its nominee. The Kenya nominee has also been issued letter of appointment as she accepted to serve.

Furthermore, we request the AFTRA Chair to use his good offices to secure ISSN from South Africa to give the journal the international nature it deserves rather than concentrating most

of its features in Nigeria. We shall need the ISSN as soon as possible because the journal is billed to be presented at the AFTRA events and has several due processes to go through.

vi. APPRECIATION TO GNAT

The GNAT Secretary General, Ms. Irene Duncan-Adanusa, used her good offices to facilitate this meeting and make all necessary contacts and follow up on behalf of AFTRA. We therefore recommend that the Chair should commend her spirit of solidarity and support possibly in writing.

vi. OTHER DOCUMENTS

Other documents attached to the Report:

- *Minutes of the 4th AFTRA Steering Committee held April 10-11, 2013 in Kenya*
- *Resolutions of the 4th AFTRA Steering Committee held April 10-11, 2013 in Kenya*
- *Communique (English and French) of the 4th AFTRA Roundtable (Kenya 2013)*
- *Communique (English and French) of the 2nd AFTRA Teaching and Learning in Africa Conference (Kenya 2013)*
- *Minutes of the 4th AFTRA Roundtable (Kenya 2013)*
- *Other correspondences with international bodies.*

5. RESPONSE BY THE CHAIR AND GENERAL COMMENTS

The Chair once again commended the Secretary General for a good Report. He made his comments regarding all the presentations and also asked members to comment freely too. The Chair specifically asked for members' approval for AFTRA to visit AU on November 26-27, 2013 and this was unanimously approved.

The President nominated Prof Maggi formerly a member of SACE Governing Board as Editorial Consultant.

The Chair drew attention to the need to make contacts with Ghana Stakeholders who would have been visited except for the public holiday that disrupted the plans. He appealed to the Dean of Education, University of Cape Coast, Prof Ampiah to assist AFTRA to reach out to the stakeholders in Ghana. He said that Ghana is so important that it could not be left behind in AFTRA affairs.

He also requested the Dean to join the Editorial Consultants of AFTRA International Journal which the Dean accepted.

The Dean of Education, Cape Coast University, Prof Ampiah, said he was very happy to be invited and he was very enthusiastic to see how AFTRA was fairing. He said he came the previous day all the way from Cape Coast to Accra only to be told that due to the public holiday, the meeting was postponed to the next day. He went back and came again to join the meeting. He said he is a member of the Ghana National Teaching Council (NTC) representing his University but the NTC was just starting operations. He said he would do his best to get the NTC on board, stressing that once Nigeria is part of any effort, Ghana would also wish to be part of it. He said he did not know some of the bodies in Ghana mentioned by AFTRA like the Education International. He said part of the problem in Ghana was very little co-operation but that he would try to reach out to all. He said that better collaboration of all the education bodies with common interest was crucial for success. He said that AFTRA will most likely provide opportunity for all partners to come together to promote teacher professionalism and welfare. He repeated that he was really happy to attend to observe what was happening and to be part of it.

TTU Mr Prosper speaking made the following observations and comments:

- *Said he was so much happy the way Nigeria and particularly TRCN was promoting teacher professionalism not only in Nigeria but also in Africa. He said the mandates and activities of*

TRCN implied that the country was very serious to sanitize the teaching profession in order to promote teaching and learning.

- He said in Tanzania those with high level of education could teach even without teaching qualification which was wrong. He said the TTU has been criticizing the situation. He said even Education students in the universities at times were supervised by senior academics without teaching qualifications. He said the TTU has been doing its best to ask universities to respect teaching as a profession and not send academics without teaching qualification to supervise Education students.*
- TTU was also supporting a move in Tanzania that before someone should establish a school he or she must have teaching qualification.*
- How TTU is promoting teacher professional development – in Tanzania at primary school, Kiswahili is language of instruction while at the secondary level English is the medium of instruction and there is serious problem at the secondary level. Most of the books are written by foreigners without focusing on African culture. So the TTU is working on a project to develop teachers ability to write books not only for secondary schools but also for primary schools and it is doing this in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Education International and other bodies.*
- Teachers' Regulatory body – TTU started this move several years back and doing so in collaboration with NGOs, Ministry of Education, etc. A bill was produced and the Ministry was mandated to take the law to Parliament. However, the Ministry has been foot-dragging saying it needed to carry out some fact-finding first. So delegations were sent to South Africa and Nigeria but till now the Ministry has not come up with anything. He said he hoped that the delegations learnt alot from South Africa and Nigeria and that some progress would be made.*
- Big Results Now in Six Areas and Education is one of the initiatives and in Education, nine areas have been identified. One of the nine issues under Education is funding for improving schools and hiring teachers.*

The Chair requested the AFTRA Executive Director to make his remarks. The Director made clarifications regarding the Education International (EI) and Ghana Teachers Professional Regulatory Agency (GTPRA), which the Dean said he did not know about. The AFTRA Executive Director said the EI Africa Regional Office is in Ghana and its Head, Ms. Assibi Napoe is very well known to AFTRA. But for the GTPRA, the Director explained that it refers to the Ghana National Teachers Council (GNTC). The Director went further to suggest that the title AFTRA Chair be changed to AFTRA President so as to be in line with international best practices and to give the Head of AFTRA all the prestige the office deserves. This suggestion was endorsed by members and the AFTRA Secretariat was mandated to change all nomenclatures to reflect the international status of AFTRA and the fact that it had come to stay. So for purposes of references henceforth, the following shall obtain:

- AFTRA Steering Committee is changed to AFTRA Executive Board
- AFTRA Chair is changed to AFTRA President
- AFTRA Director of Operation is changed to AFTRA Executive Director
- The Secretary General title remains.

AFTRA Secretary General's Remarks:

Said he was concerned with the report from the Dean of Education about poor collaboration among stakeholders in Ghana. He said the opposite was the case in Nigeria especially for TRCN which has 23-member Governing Board. The Board consists of all supervisory agencies, Federal and State Ministries of Education, Teachers Unions, Nigerian Academy of Education, Committees of Deans, Rectors and Provosts, etc. This wide spectrum of stakeholders ensures broad-based consultation and collaboration. He advised that Ghana could try such strategy and emphasized that collaboration was very necessary.

The AFTRA President gave update of the visit of Tanzania delegation to South Africa and said it was very productive. He once again appealed to the Dean to link up AFTRA with the Ghana NTC. He said that henceforth, AFTRA would list the Ghana NTC as AFTRA member and trust that the Dean would take care of actualising the NTC's membership in AFTRA.

6. KEY MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RT AND CONFERENCE COMMUNIQUE & MINUTES

(a) Hosting of 2014 AFTRA RT and Conference

The President stated that resolution of the last RT was that the Executive Board would hold in October and April and the April meeting would be to finalise preparations for the RT and Conference. The meeting reviewed lack of progress made so far by the Ministry official in Cameroon, Mr. Julius Nuh, to secure Ministerial approval to host the AFTRA 2014. The meeting noted that the venue of the Executive Board meeting in Ghana was very suitable for the kind of AFTRA events and therefore endorsed holding the 2014 RT and Conference in Ghana at the Mensvic Hotel Accra Ghana which was venue of the Executive Board meeting. The Dean was urged to take up the mobilising aspect for the conference but stressed that being part of AFTRA in the organisation of the conference did not imply committing the Dean or his university financially.

The meeting decided on the following matters regarding the 2014 RT and Conference:

Host: Ghana Education Service

Co-Host: Ghana National Teaching Council

Partners: University of Cape Coast and GNATs

Patron: Minister of Education

Conference Theme: Holistic Education for Contemporary Africa

Subthemes:

- i. Current methods of teaching: Prospects and challenges*
- ii. Language of Instruction*
- iii. Ethical issues in the teaching and learning process*
- iv. Roles and responsibilities of private schools*
- v. Safety in schools*
- vi. Teacher Qualification Framework for Africa*
- vii. Total Teacher Professional Development*
- viii. The education of learners in conflict areas*
- ix. The education of learners with special needs*
- x. Education for good governance in Africa*
- xi. Other related matters*

Date: Monday – Saturday June 10-15, 2014.

June 10 (Monday) = Arrival

June 11-12 (Tuesday – Wednesday) = Conference

June 13 (Thursday) = Tour & Cultural Evening

June 14 (Friday) = RT/Departure of Conference participants

June 15 (Saturday) = Departure of AFTRA members

The Roundtable must have country reports, including progress reports since the last RT. Roundtable will at the end of the meeting make resolutions regarding important issues concerning the teaching profession. After paper presentations, there should be plenary session to come up with resolutions/communiqué.

The organisations proposed as hosts, partners and patron for the Conference are to be written officially regarding their roles. The meeting also decided to thank Cameroon for eagerness to host and to give the country opportunity any time in future, say 2015.

The President also emphasized that at the end of syndicate presentations in AFTRA Conference, each group must present at a plenary session the key resolutions of the group. The resolutions would then be published as communiqué.

Hosting of the next Executive Board meeting:

This would be hosted by SACE, South Africa in April 2014.

Agenda for the Steering Committee would be the review of the 2014 Conference & RT preparations.

7. CONCLUSION

The President thanked everyone for the success of the meeting. He recalled the way the idea of AFTRA was born at the 3rd IFTRA Conference held in Wales in 2009. He said that AFTRA is a wonderful thing that happened to Africa and emphasized the need for Africans to be the ones to develop Africa. He said Africans should not continue to see Africa from the point of view of others but to have self-confidence that we could do much for ourselves.

He thanked the AFTRA Secretary General and Executive Director for their hard work and commitment. In his vote of thanks, he greatly appreciated the Dean, Prof Ampiah, who travelled a long distance of over two hours' drive to attend the meeting, haven come and gone back the previous day due to the postponement caused by the public holiday. The Secretary General reiterated that AFTRA would not fail and on the part of TRCN, he would never rest to ensure the success of AFTRA. He said that membership of AFTRA had tremendously benefitted TRCN through giving it the opportunity to interact with Teaching Councils all over the world. He said with the inauguration of Ghana NTC, and also with the existence of the Ghana Education Service, Ghana could now become both member of AFTRA and IFTRA and this carries a lot of benefits for teachers of Ghana.

The President declared the meeting closed by 12.41 pm.

NOTE:

The General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary of GNATS arrived just after the adjournment of the meeting, having taken excuse earlier that they would be late. Another round of very fruitful discussions ensued again with their arrival. The GNAT team expressed great for AFTRA and readiness to be partners in the 2014 events. Indeed GNATs undertook to do a good mobilisation work and to serve as key facilitator of the events. The AFTRA President and Secretary General had great commendation and inspiring words for GNATs regarding the very friendly nature and ready-to-assist posture of the General Secretary.

Rej Brijraj

AFTRA President

Professor Addison Mark Wokocha

AFTRA Secretary General