



*Parliamentary Centre
Le Centre parlementaire*

Report and Evaluation: APNAC Conference, Nairobi, November 2003

1. Background: The African Parliamentarians' Network Against Corruption (APNAC) was founded in 1999 in Kampala, Uganda, with M.P.s involved from 10 countries (Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Ghana, Uganda, South Africa, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Benin and Tanzania.) It has developed quite vibrant National Chapters in the three East African countries of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania – and has played an active anti-corruption role with significant results in each of these. The Africa-Canada Parliamentary Strengthening Program (ACPSP) has begun working with APNAC in order to widen the work of the network, and spur formation of more National Chapters. A key step in this process has been provision of financial and organizational support for a Pan-African conference of the network, held November 3-5, 2003, in Nairobi, Kenya.

2. Description and Review: The conference was organized through long-distance communication, including a video-conference among APNAC leaders and a planning meeting held in Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia; key players were the APNAC executive members, the Transparency International chapter in Kenya (which became responsible for much organization and agenda planning,) the Africa program of the Parliamentary Centre, and the leadership and staff of GOPAC (the Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption.) The theme was “New Challenges in the Fight Against Corruption,” with a focus on issues such as establishing greater fairness in electoral systems, and achieving greater freedom of information and dissent in societies. The format relied on panel presentations to plenary sessions, usually utilizing non-parliamentary experts to provide starting perspectives, then having M.P.s present reviews based on their country situations. Short question and answer periods from the floor followed. There were six plenary sessions, as follows:

- The role of Parliamentarians in the fight against corruption
- The role of Open government and Citizen's participation: Access to Information as an anti-corruption mechanism
- International instruments against Corruption and the African parliamentarian (with a focus on the AU Convention on Preventing Corruption)
- Funding of Political Parties: Problems and Challenges in Various Countries
- The role of Parliaments in creating and sustaining the political will to fight Corruption
- The role of Parliamentarians in Preventing Corruption in Public Procurement.

3. There were several important opening speeches to the Conference. Of these, the most significant was by President Mwai Kibaki of Kenya, who used the meeting to review his government's emphasis on fighting corruption as "our top priority." Judicial reform has been a key step; a Code of Conduct has been established for all public office holders; and an Annual Declaration of Wealth will be required from each – those who do not make the declaration will lose their jobs and face prison. An Anti-Corruption Commission has also been established to investigate cases and arrange civil recovery of corruptly-gained assets. A Public Procurement bill and a National Audit bill are before Parliament. Kibaki also used the speech to stress:

- His own leadership role in the corruption fight
- The steps taken in conjunction with Transparency International and the World Bank to launch a National Campaign Against Corruption, with a five-year goal to "stigmatise corruption in Kenya"
- A strong focus on youth, including work through education and religious leaders
- The reliance he will place on civil society and the media to carry forward the fight, and
- His strong support for APNAC as an organization spreading throughout Africa. (This speech and several other presentations from the Conference are available on the TI Kenya website – <http://www.tikenya.org>)

4. APNAC has developed an annual award which it will present for leadership against corruption in Africa, using the selection process for this as a review mechanism for assessing country efforts to counter corrupt practices. The first of these awards was presented to President Kibaki for the vigorous initiatives which he has taken since his government came to power in the election this past year.

5. The policy thrust in the panel discussions was quite detailed, and explored a variety of relatively new areas in the anti-corruption effort in Africa:

- Prof. Moustafa Hassouna (from the UN) analysed the African Union Convention on Preventing Corruption for delegates – explaining how the instrument defined corruption, outlined prevention methods that should be utilized, established cooperation among states, and stressed monitoring of enforcement. It was noted that ratification by 15 states was required to have the Convention enter into force – and suggested that emerging National APNAC Chapters should make such ratification one of their key goals.
- Dr. Steven Langdon (from the Parliamentary Centre) discussed the importance of Freedom of Information laws in parliamentary oversight, noting the thousands of requests annually in countries like Canada and Ireland; examples showed how access can reveal project irregularities, ministerial conflicts of interest and unauthorized spending. A culture of open government also permits whistle-blowing on government abuses of power. Key implementation points required include an independent Information Commissioner to enforce the system, limited exemptions, and easily used steps to access sources.
- Gichuru Kibara (Centre for Governance and Democracy) outlined the importance of building viable political parties to overcome years of one-party

rule in Africa. Party funding is a crucial issue in this context, since reliance on a few rich donors can lead to corruption or elite dominance. Irregular funding practices can also lead to vote buying and rigging of results, undercutting confidence in democracy. So public disclosure of funding is crucial as well as campaign expenditure limits. Public funding for political parties is also a possible route, though there are challenges in such a system from the encouragement given to proliferation of small parties to obtain funds.

- David Ong'olo (from Spellman and Walker in Nairobi) outlined the importance of new systems of public procurement to prevent corruption, especially since present systems often lead to bribes being paid when large contracts are being awarded. New approaches stress public disclosure of awarding criteria, emphasis on anti-bribery laws, professional requirements for procurement staff, and vigorous monitoring by parliamentary public expenditure committees. There have also been movements in some countries toward "e-contracting" in which transparency of bids is obtained through reliance on internet submissions.
- APNAC Chair Augustine Ruzindana led a discussion of the parliamentary role in fighting corruption, stressing the new challenges Parliaments must face – fighting electoral fraud, efforts by powerful leaders to change constitutions so they can stay in power, and difficulties of exercising parliamentary oversight. GOPAC Chair John Williams, M.P. (Chair of the Canadian Public Accounts Committee) followed up, stressing that this oversight role relied on parliamentary institutions being beyond the control of government – Parliament then has such responsibilities as approving legislation, approving the budget, reviewing and approving estimates of expenditure, and dealing with required government reports to Parliament.

6. Beyond the policy deliberations, the other important development at the Conference was the election of an effective new APNAC executive. Uganda M.P. Augustine Ruzindana continued as chair, with Senegal M.P. Haoua Thiam as Vice-Chair. Eight regional representatives were elected: Dr. Zainabu Gama from the Tanzania Parliament, M.P. Jimmy Ang'wenyi from Kenya, M.P. Louis Chimango from Malawi, M.P. Thokozani Khupe from Zimbabwe, M.P. Sambou Sangaré from Mali, M.P. Nduese Essien from Nigeria, Dr. Patchili Bouzabo and Tourgoudi Ouchar from the Parliament of Chad. Of the 10 executive members, 3 are women; both government and opposition side M.P.s are represented. The Convention also voted to establish APNAC as the African regional component in GOPAC, and agreed that the next activity would be a West African regional meeting to be held in Nigeria in January, 2004.

7. Evaluation: The Program Implementation Plan for the ACPSP identifies the expected results of this APNAC Conference at the output level as "revitalized Parliamentarians Network Against Corruption (APNAC,) with stronger policy influence over regional corruption issues;" this is, in turn, expected to result at the outcome level in "increased Parliamentary strength on anti-corruption efforts, spurred by Parliamentary Action Groups involved in the APNAC network." The following points are relevant in analysing the Nairobi Conference in terms of these results:

- The Planning session in Addis Ababa identified 20 countries from which delegates should be invited to Nairobi; in the end, delegates were there from 14 – a large group from Kenya, sizeable groups from Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia, Niger, Chad, Ghana, Malawi and Nigeria, and smaller groups from Mali, Burkina Faso, Zimbabwe, Senegal and South Africa. These numbers and breadth of representation were very good, and provided a very solid basis for expansion of APNAC into Francophone West Africa, plus a number of other countries.
- The quality of representation was also high, and participation by these leading figures was energetic and engaged. M.P. Doudou Wade is head of a major anti-corruption network in Senegal, for instance; M.P. Nduese Essien is Chair of the Nigeria House of Representatives Anti-Corruption, National Ethics and Values Committee; Ms. Thokozani Khupe is Deputy Chief Whip of the Opposition in the Zimbabwe Parliament; M.P. Louis Chimango is Chair of the Finance Committee in the Malawi Parliament; M.P. P.C. Ofori-Appiah is chair of the high-profile Government Assurances Committee in the Ghana Parliament; and M.P. Vincent Smith is Chair of the South African Association of Public Accounts Committees. Priscilla Misihairambi is Chair of the Zimbabwe Public Accounts Committee. Musikari Kombo is now the Kenya Minister of Regional Development, and Wangari Mathai is the Kenya Assistant Minister for the Environment.
- There was also considerable enthusiasm evident among new M.P.s involved for the first time with APNAC. This seemed particularly the case with Nigerian M.P.s, and also with many of the M.P.s from Francophone countries – many members voiced intentions of returning home with the aim of launching National APNAC chapters. The fact that the next event planned was to be in West Africa was also a big plus for reinforcing the newly-kindled interest of parliamentarians from that region. (Note that almost half the countries represented were in West Africa.)
- One area of some disappointment was the gender balance of the Conference. A decision had been made in Addis Ababa that delegations should be asked to reflect gender balance in their makeup. But this was generally not observed. The number of Kenyan women M.P.s present was quite low. And of the 37 M.P.s present from outside Kenya, 10 were women (27%.) The Zimbabwe delegates were both women, and there was balanced representation of women M.P.s from Uganda, Senegal and Burkina Faso (Mali also attempted to send a delegation with a majority of women, but only one of three M.P.s could obtain aircraft seats because of the press of pilgrims on their way to Mecca.) Ethiopia, South Africa, Niger, Nigeria, and Malawi sent all-male delegations, and delegations from Tanzania, Ghana and Chad contained a minority of women. There were also concerns expressed by women delegates that the representation of women amongst panel chairs and welcoming groups for President Kibaki (et al) was unacceptably low. These concerns, however, did lead to positive responses later to include more women in the program structure.

8. Taken as a whole, these points suggest the conference was quite successful in its immediate results. The revitalization of APNAC was emphasized in the closing sessions, and there was widespread satisfaction among APNAC leaders and organizers with how a much broader and enthusiastic base had been built for ongoing and expanded work. The presentations made in the policy panels were also very helpful in providing a basis for stronger policy efforts in the future. The detailed analysis provided by key policy experts (on the AU Anti-Corruption Convention, on funding of political parties, on Freedom of Information laws, and on public procurement issues) will be very helpful for APNAC members and Chapters in their work in individual countries. And the energetic question and answer periods after presentations showed how well discussion of individual country cases by other M.P.s could spark interest and commitment among delegates. The new executive includes a much stronger and more representative leadership than in the case of APNAC's initial formation in 1999; and individual executive members consulted from outside East Africa expressed strong commitment to establishing vigorous activity at the national level elsewhere in the continent. The enthusiasm in West Africa seems especially strong.

9. It is not possible to expect results at the outcome level at this point. But monitoring of future developments among the countries at the Conference will be undertaken to assess the longer-term results of this quite successful revitalization conference.

10. Other Developments: A gathering of M.P.s from across Africa also permits related parliamentary strengthening work to take place, including the following:

- It was possible to have detailed discussions with Priscilla Misihairambi, one of the Gender Equality Network leaders, regarding her participation in the forthcoming Africa Leadership Forum meeting in Kampala on the African Peer Review Mechanism – and on network development issues in general; she arranged a meeting regarding the gender equality network with other women M.P.s who were at the conference;
- Detailed discussions also took place with the two co-chairs of the ACPSP Coordinating Council, Haoua Thiam from Senegal and Steve Akorli from Ghana; the latter conveyed concerns from some Conference participants that policies on honorariums seem to vary among conferences with respect to preparation of papers – we need to clarify conditions for participants in the case of different events, in which different approaches have been adopted by varying event organizers;
- There were also discussions with several leaders of the Southern African organization of Public Accounts Committees; they are organizing a meeting in Capetown for which they need some support, and will be contacting the Centre in more detail with plans for these activities, to which we agreed a positive response would be a possibility;
- Discussions also took place with representatives of the Amani Forum, a peace-building network of M.P.s from six countries around the Great Lakes – Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia, Burundi and Rwanda; we discussed several areas where we might be able to undertake joint activities, such as work related to poverty reduction in the context of conflict, and gender equality activities with

women M.P.s aimed at building conflict-resolution skills. Forum leaders also noted that they had done some work with Sudan, and were able to provide insights into that situation to the Centre;

- There was also extensive work with representatives of the Kenyan parliament after the conference, to follow up possible related project development in that country. The Deputy Speaker, various key M.P.s and staff training committee members worked with us to pull together a proposed exploration of staff training needs in the Kenya Parliament. This is to be supported by the CIDA Kenya program, and should take place over the next four months.

11. Conclusions and Lessons Learned: The Nairobi APNAC Conference has been considered a crucial activity for the Africa-Canada Parliamentary Strengthening Program, since APNAC is the one existing network that the Program is supporting, and a successful meeting was needed to extend the organization and generate new energy and enthusiasm for future work outside East Africa. Considerable financial and human resources were devoted to the event. As noted, the evidence suggests that very good results were obtained, and the allocation of considerable resources was important to achieve this. Intervention from Parliamentary Centre staff was very helpful at several points in assuring stronger participation by the women M.P.s who were there, in establishing the bilingual nature of proceedings, in assisting the emergence of a strong, well-balanced new executive, and in contributing certain policy inputs. Efficient implementation of financial and other points was also assured by the PC role.

12. Certain other important lessons were also learned from this event that can improve future work of the Africa Program and the Parliamentary Centre:

- There needs to be more attention to agenda planning prior to events such as this that are organized by third parties; certain lessons that the Centre has already learned about the importance of delegate participation should be carried into agenda planning in a more energetic way than was done in this case.
- Clearer lines of communication also need to be established within the Centre for interaction with APNAC and its representatives; there was some confusion that resulted from diverse messages received from GOPAC staff, the GOPAC chair, and the Africa Program in Ottawa (which was actually responsible for sponsoring and supporting the event.)
- Now that TI Kenya and the Africa Program have developed good lines of communication and understanding, there is a good case for TI Kenya developing an ongoing working relationship with APNAC as its secretariat (in the same way that TI Kenya and APNAC Kenya relate effectively to each other.)
- The commitment of the ACPSP to gender equality must be underlined forcefully in all events with which the program is involved. Participation patterns in this case could have been significantly better, especially for those countries that sent no women M.P.s. Stronger expressions of this priority would also have avoided some of the expressed concerns by women M.P.s that emerged in this case.

*Africa Program, Parliamentary Centre,
November, 2003.*

Parliamentary Delegates at the Conference:

Burkina Faso: Maria Coulibaly (f); Mahama Sawadogo

Chad: Marie Ngadala (f); Dr. Patchili Bouzabo; Tourgoudi Ouchar

Ethiopia : Tesfaye Dessie; Girmayhon Gimedhne; Eshetu Teshome; Aklilhon Yirgu

Ghana: Steve Akorli; P.C. Ofori-Appiah; Jacob Arthur; Akua Sena Dansuah (f)

Malawi: S. Bwanali; Louis Chimango; J.J. Langa

Mali : Sambou Sangaré

Niger : Abdourahim Balarabé; Gado Boureima; Nomaou Ibrahim

Nigeria : Nduese Essien; Napoleon Gbinije; Shabaan Sani

Senegal : Haoua Thiam (f); Doudou Wade

South Africa: Don Gumende; Vincent Smith

Tanzania: Dr. Zainab Gama (f); Ireneus Ngwatura; James Wanyancha

Uganda : S.S. Namabidde (f); Johnson Nkuuhe; Sarah Nyombi (f); Augustine Ruzindana; Beatrice Rwakimari (f)

Zimbabwe: Thokozani Khupe (f); Priscilla Misihairambi-Mushonga (f)

Kenya: (selective list) Jimmy Ang'wenyi;; G.G. Kariuki; Uhuru Kenyatta; Musikari Kombo; James Magara; Prof. Christine Mango (f); Prof. Wangari Mathai (f); Justin Muturi; Henry Obwocha; Soita Shitanda; Dr. Noah Wekesa