

THE AFRICAN PARLIAMENTARIANS NETWORK AGAINST CORRUPTION (APNAC)

What is APNAC?

African Parliamentarians Network Against Corruption (APNAC) is a network, which aims at coordinating, involving and strengthening the capacity of African Parliamentarians to fight corruption and promote good governance. The network was formed in 1999 in Kampala, Uganda during a regional workshop on "Parliament and Good Governance". Participants acknowledged that corruption could best be controlled by strengthening systems of accountability, transparency, and increasing public participation in the governance process of African nations.

They further appreciated the great value of information sharing, maintaining contacts with each other, and reaching out to other parliamentarians and parliamentary organizations, throughout Africa on the issue of corruption.

The instrument chosen was the formation of a network called " African Parliamentarians Network Against Corruption" (APNAC).

Objectives of APNAC

The stated objectives of APNAC are:

- To build commitment and capacity of Parliaments to exercise their oversight role especially in relation to financial matters.
- To share information on best practices.
- To undertake projects to control corruption.
- To cooperate with organizations in civil society with shared objectives.

Roles of APNAC

- To strengthen the commitment and capacity of Parliaments to exercise accountability with particular relation to the management of public funds.
- To advocate for and encourage improvement of state capacity to timely address and handle matters related to corruption.
- To advocate for inclusion of anti-corruption measures in government priority programmes,
- To liaise with national and international organizations and institutions on matters of corruption.
- To mobilize internal and external resources to promote anti-corruption programmes.
- To develop links with oversight committees of Parliament and parliamentarians across Africa.
- To serve as a contact point, connect and support the work of Parliamentarians related to fighting corruption. The network builds the commitment and capacity of Parliaments to exercise accountability, transparency, and oversight functions.

- Encourages information sharing on lessons learned and good practice.
- To undertake projects to control corruption.

Activities of APNAC

Since its establishment, APNAC has registered some successes and faced many challenges.

The network has been able to carry out some activities, which include:

1. Information sharing through the use of a newsletter and website.
2. Organizing both in country and regional workshops.
3. Participating in anti-corruption workshops and seminars.
4. Liaising and cooperating with the organization from the civil society with shared objectives.

To date, APNAC has published three issues of her newsletter, and this has enabled members to share information on best practices.

APNAC has also organized national and international conferences. In November 1999, APNAC organized a one-day workshop at the 9th Annual Anti-corruption Conference in Durban, South Africa.

Discussions in this workshop focussed on the role of Parliament in ensuring accountability and transparency.

APNAC together with GOPAC participated in the 10th IAAC in Prague, Czech Rep.

In January 2000, APNAC Tanzania Chapter organized an Anti-Corruption Seminar on the Role of Parliamentarians in curbing corruption. APNAC South Africa has been participating in the meeting of the association of PACs of South Africa.

APNAC members have also participated in various conferences, seminars, and workshops where the role of Parliament in ensuring accountability and good governance has been discussed; APNAC, participated in the Al Gore anti-corruption initiative in Amsterdam in 2001

In 2000, APNAC members participated in the AGF IV (African Governance Forum Four) and APNAC was given an observer status. The Chair APNAC has been representing the network and in 2001, he represented the APNAC at the Second World Movement for Democracy at Sao Paulo, Brazil.

At this Assembly, APNAC was officially accepted as a regional component of GOPAC, This year the chair APNAC participated in a workshop in Nairobi on the constitutional review process in Kenya.

Two videoconferences have also been held and they were incredibly useful. They kept members updated on developments and ideas taking place from different Chapters.

Establishment of National Chapters

Some countries have already established national Chapters, though some of the Chapters are not very active, the main reason being limited funding. Some of the countries, which established APNAC chapters, are: Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana and South Africa. Some other countries have expressed interest and are planning to establish APNAC Chapters.

Challenges

From its humble beginning as an advocate for transparency and accountability, APNAC has faced many challenges and stands ready to face any new challenges. Most if not all of the activities of APNAC planned for the financial year 2001/2002 have not been implemented due to limited funding. The Regional Secretariat has not been fully functioning and this has greatly affected the work of APNAC.

It has been very difficult to trace and communication with some APNAC members. To make matters worse, many members lost their seats in Parliament making it very difficult for them to continue actively participating in APNAC's activities.

It should however be noted that APNAC has partly made an impact in relation to fighting corruption. The different Chapters have served as contact points in addition to connecting and supporting the work of other anti-corruption fighters. The establishment is a clear indication that through networking is a new concept it can highly enhance Parliament's performance.

Recruitment and Formation of National Chapters

Recruitment can either be through the National Chapter or by filling a membership form which can be accessed from the APNAC website www.anac.org

APNAC National Chapters may be established in countries with one or more parliamentarians holding APNAC membership.

More information about APNAC membership and formation of National Chapters can be retrieved from APNAC Constitution at www.apnac.org.

**CHAIR APNAC
APNAC SECRETARIAT, KAMPALA
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