



African Parliamentary Union

45th CONFERENCE
80th Session of the Executive
Committee

Abidjan, 11-15 December 2023



Parliament of Côte d'Ivoire

CE/80/RPT

REPORT
of Proceedings of the
80th Session of the Executive Committee

The 80th Session of the Executive Committee of the African Parliamentary Union (APU) was held in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire) on 11 and 12 December 2023 under the presidency of Right Honourable Mabel Memory CHINOMONA, President of the Senate of Zimbabwe and Chairperson of the APU Executive Committee.

Representatives of the following parliaments took part in the proceedings: Algeria, Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Morocco, Nigeria, Uganda, Rwanda, Chad, Togo and Zimbabwe.

Representatives of the Consultative Council of the Arab Maghreb Union and the Youth Organization for the European and African Union attended the proceedings as observers.

I – OPENING SESSION

The opening session took place in the presence of RtHon. Adama BICTOGO, Speaker of the National Assembly of Côte d'Ivoire, RtHonourable Mabel Memory CHINOMONA, President of the Senate of Zimbabwe and Chairperson of the APU Executive Committee, Hon. Vanderpuije Alfred Okoe, Member of the Parliament of Ghana, Rapporteur of the Executive Committee, and Mr. IDI GadoBoubacar, Secretary General of the APU.

The opening ceremony was marked by the welcome address of the Speaker of the National Assembly of Côte d'Ivoire as well as that of the Chairperson of the Executive Committee.

In his speech, **Hon. Adama BICTOGO, Speaker of the National Assembly of Côte d'Ivoire**, started by extending a cordial welcome to Abidjan to the Members of Parliament who are meeting on the occasion of the 45th Conference and 80th Session of the Executive Committee of the APU.

The Speaker conveyed the warm greetings of the President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, His Excellency Alassane OUTTARA, who is delighted by the choice of his country to host this event.

Addressing the APU Chairperson, Speaker Adama BICTOGO praised the quality of her leadership and her commitment at the head of the organization since her election in November 2022 during the 44th Conference held in Victoria Falls.

To the heads of delegation and Members of Parliament, he expressed deep gratitude for honouring Côte d'Ivoire with their presence.

Lastly, he commended the APU Secretary General and his staff for their efforts in organizing the Abidjan meetings at short notice.

Addressing the political situation in the sub-region and particularly in Niger, which was to host the present sessions, the Speaker of the National Assembly echoed the President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire's ardent wish for a return to constitutional order in the brotherly country and in other countries in the sub-region. He indicated that peace and stability are necessary to pursue progress towards development.

The Speaker also noted that political changes in Europe, the Middle East and Africa are significantly impacting African economies, particularly causing food and energy crises, as well as rising prices of basic commodities. To address them, we must act from a regional perspective through greater solidarity and pool our efforts, he added. He pointed out that the African Union has adopted this dynamic since 2002 by considering solidarity as an essential value of integration, which makes it possible to compete with other economic blocs and powers in the world.

The Speaker expressed delight at the APU for moving in this direction by promoting solidarity as evidenced in the themes of its 45th Conference relating in particular to intra-African trade and the African Continental Free Trade Area.

Given that peace, stability and the rule of law are essential requirements, he called on the Members of Parliament to examine them earnestly and with objectivity.

Interparliamentary cooperation will also be on the agenda of this session through the examination of the annual work programme, the Speaker indicated.

In reference to the ongoing conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, with its unprecedented humanitarian consequences, the President called for a truce and dialogue between the parties to resolutely commit to the path of sustainable peace.

On the eve of the African Cup of Nations that Côte d'Ivoire is preparing to host, the Speaker invited his colleagues to come and commune with the Ivorian people on the occasion of this great African sporting event.

Before the end of his speech, the Speaker of the National Assembly of Côte d'Ivoire wished fruitful proceedings to the Members of Parliament, adding that recommendations from this meeting would be capable of advancing the APU and promoting African unity.

Taking the floor, the **Right Hon. Mabel Memory CHINOMONA, President of the Senate of Zimbabwe, Chairperson of the APU Executive Committee**, on behalf of all the delegates, first expressed thanks and gratitude to the Ivorian authorities for having agreed to host the APU meetings and for the warm welcome and consideration given to the participants since their arrival in the beautiful city of Abidjan, on the green banks of the Ebrié Lagoon.

She recalled that Niger, which had committed to hosting the 80th Session of the Executive Committee as well as the 45th Conference of the APU, was unable to materialize this commitment due to the military takeover that took place in the country and the dissolution of the National Assembly.

Faced with this situation and the difficulties that could arise in urgently seeking a host country, the Chairperson then welcomed the rapid reaction of the Ivorian Parliament, through His Excellency Adama BICTOGO, who agreed to take up the challenge by organizing the meetings in Abidjan. She then asked the delegates, as a sign of recognition, to thank with loud applause the Speaker of the National Assembly of Côte d'Ivoire as well as Hon. Kandia Kamissoko CAMARA, the President of the Ivorian Senate.

The Chairperson underscored that it is always with fervour and enthusiasm that African Members of Parliament meet to pursue dialogue, strengthen interparliamentary cooperation, share experiences and good practices, harmonize and reaffirm their positions on the challenges facing the continent and play their role in strengthening peace and democracy in Africa. She added that their meetings are always an opportunity for mutual enrichment and sharing a context characterized by a spirit of conviviality and dialogue, which are specific to Africa and the APU and reinforce the resilience of Members of Parliament in an international context marked by multiple challenges.

Concerning this Executive Committee Session, the Chairperson indicated that in addition to financial issues, the session will examine the implementation of the Conference's recommendations as well as the annual work programme. The Executive Committee will thus be able to assess if the objectives have been achieved and possibly make corrections and improvements.

The Chairperson expressed the hope that parliamentary delegations should be more present at Union sessions and that member parliaments should make sure to pay their statutory contributions. Effective participation in meetings and payment of contributions remain the two essential pillars that enable the APU to develop its activities and scope and to consolidate the place it occupies on the continental parliamentary landscape.

The Chairperson insisted on the statutory commitment of Member Parliaments by appealing to those who are not up to date with their contributions to comply with their obligations. This commitment is all the more urgent and necessary given that the APU is at a real turning point marked by unprecedented openness and the development of partnerships, suggesting a strengthening of its role at the international level and in the defence of values consistent with the aspirations of the African populations, she added on this point.

In this dynamic, the Chairperson invited Member Countries to work to strengthen their organization and transform it into the preferred instrument in their struggle for good governance, peace and sustainable development.

Returning to the proceedings of this Executive Committee Session, the Chairperson indicated that it will be necessary to prepare and adopt the draft agenda of the 45th Conference. She recalled that the Conference will debate the promotion of intra-African trade and the fight against terrorism which is a major concern for several States on the African continent. She urged Members of Parliament within the APU to play their role in helping to meet these challenges.

In this regard, the Chairperson of the Executive Committee urged Members of parliament, as Representatives of their people, to work ceaselessly for the preservation of peace or its re-establishment in times of conflicts, for the deepening and strengthening of friendly and fraternal relations, and lastly for the dignity and unity of Africa. She added that now was the time to be more active in political, economic and social issues so as to promote good governance, peace and sustainable development across Africa.

The Chairperson, recalling that her mandate was coming to the end on the occasion of the 45th Conference, expressed gratitude to Members of Parliament for their support. She also made proposals for strengthening the APU. In this regard, she requested that the General Secretariat be reinforced with human and material resources in order to facilitate implementation of the recommendations of the Executive Committee.

The Chairperson also proposed a revision of the statutes so that the Conference bureau can fully play its role. She suggested the establishment of a forum of Secretaries General of Parliament so that they can come together and discuss issues raised by the Executive Committee. Lastly, the Chairperson proposed the establishment of thematic committees such as a women's caucus, a youth caucus, a caucus on climate change and a caucus on sustainable development.

Before closing her speech, the Chairperson, wished fruitful proceedings to the Members of Parliament, reiterated warm thanks to the Ivorian authorities for the hearty welcome, the hospitality and the arrangements made to guarantee the proper conduct of this session of the Executive Committee, of the meeting of women Members of Parliament and the APU Conference.

Finally, she declared open the 80th Session of the Executive Committee of the African Parliamentary Union.

After this address, the session was suspended.

Resumption of the session

II – ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Chairperson gave the floor to the Secretary General to read out the items on the agenda.

The Secretary General presented the following draft agenda:

1. Consideration of the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the Conference
2. Consideration and adoption of the annual work programme for 2024
3. Consideration and adoption of the draft budget for the 2024 financial year
4. Consideration and adoption of the draft agenda of the 45th Conference
5. Draft agenda of the 81st Session of the Executive Committee
6. Date and place of the 81st Session of the Executive Committee.

The draft agenda was adopted.

III – CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA POINTS

A – Consideration of the implementation of decisions and recommendations of the Conference

The Secretary General proceeded to present his report on the implementation of decisions and recommendations of the Conference.

The Executive Committee, having no observations, adopted the report.

B– Annual work programme for 2024

Following the presentation by the Secretary General of the Annual Work Programme for 2024, a question was raised about the absence of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Francophonie (APF) among the organizations with which the APU maintains cooperation ties.

The Secretary General remarked that a memorandum of understanding with the organization was under preparation and would pave the way for interparliamentary cooperation between the APU and APF.

The members of the Executive Committee observed that certain Member Parliaments do not take part in APU meetings and there are African Parliaments which are not yet members of the Union. Therefore, it is urgent to consider the situation in order to strengthen the organization. They proposed that the question of strengthening the APU through more memberships and increased participation be included as a leading item in the work programme and the objectives of the Union.

Following these observations, the Executive Committee approved the Annual Work Programme for 2024.

C – Examination and adoption of the draft budget for financial year 2024

Following the presentation of the draft budget for the 2024 financial year by the Secretary General, the Chairperson of the Executive Committee adjourned the meeting, which resumed in the afternoon.

At the resumption of the session, and before giving the floor to the members of the Executive Committee, the Chairperson invited the Secretary General to provide the necessary information on the draft budget presented.

The Secretary General thus explained the variations made to certain budget items compared to the previous financial year, without an impact on the overall amount of the budget. These variations, he specified, are intended to respond as much as possible to the needs appeared in the execution of the budget and to maintain the working capital at a level that is consistent with financial standards. He also emphasized the difficulties in executing the budget due to the low recovery of financial contributions from Member Parliaments. He therefore urged the Contributions Monitoring Committee to examine the issue in view of proposing solutions.

When some members of the Executive Committee took the floor, they considered that the draft budget presented did not reflect reality by relying on the execution of expenses from previous years. In this regard, the Secretary General once again highlighted the issue of the payment of contributions, hence of very limited resources amounting to 50% of the budget forecasts. Besides, in compliance with the principle of balancing the revenue and expenditure, and in order to preserve the functioning of the organization, even with the budget execution difficulties it encounters, it was agreed to be optimistic and therefore have forecasts that reflect the obligations of members as provided for in the Statutes of the Union, namely the payment of their obligatory annual contribution.

Faced with the difficulties in recovering contributions owed by certain Parliaments, the members of the Executive Committee suggested that the governing bodies of the APU could reach out to the countries concerned in view of finding solutions that would allow for better participation in APU activities.

Following these observations, the Executive Committee approved the draft budget for the 2024 financial year which is balanced in revenue and expenditure at 1,138,177 Euros.

D – Draft agenda for the 45th Conference

The Secretary General presented the following points of the draft agenda of the 45th Conference:

1. Report by the Chairperson of the Executive Committee
2. Activity report by the Secretary General
3. Report of the Committee of Women Members of Parliament
4. ***The fight against insecurity and terrorism, factors of political instability and recession.***(Political Commission)
5. ***The development of intra-African trade in view of the effective implementation of the African regional integration agenda..***
(Economic and Sustainable Development Commission)
6. Date and place of the 46th Conference
7. Election of the Chairperson of the Executive Committee - *(Article 10, paragraph 6 of the Statutes)*
8. Elections:
 - a) of members of the Executive Committee *(Art. 10, paragraph (5) of the Statutes)*
 - b) of other members of the Bureau: Three Deputy Chairpersons and a Rapporteur *(Article 14, paragraph (3) of the Statutes and 40 of the Internal Regulations)*
 - c) two Auditors for financial year 2023 *(Art.17, paragraph (p) of the Statutes)*
 - d) Regional Representatives *(Art.40, paragraph (3) of the Statutes)*

The Executive Committee approved the draft agenda of the 45th Conference

E – Draft agenda for the 81st Session of the Executive Committee

The Secretary General presented the following draft agenda:

1. Consideration of the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the Conference
2. Consideration of the audited management account for financial year 2023
3. Development of the draft agenda for the 46th Conference
4. Draft agenda of the 82st Session of the Executive Committee
5. Date and place of the 82st Session of the Executive Committee.

The draft agenda was adopted.

F– Date and venue of the 81st Session of the Executive Committee

The Secretary General indicated that the session is scheduled to be held around April or May 2024.

The President tasked the members of the Executive Committee to look into this issue of fixing the location of this 81st Session and hoped that in this regard, a country could offer to host by the end of the meetings in Abidjan.
