

ATLANTIC FEDERATION OF AFRICAN PRESS AGENCIES (FAAPA) - STATUTES -

PREAMBLE:

Considering the will to gather within a professional framework in order to breathe a new impetus to cooperation ties among the news agencies of the countries of Atlantic Africa, the Director Generals and responsible of these news agencies held a constitutive general assembly on October 14, 2014 in Casablanca (Morocco) on the sidelines of the Forum on the theme: “The News Agencies of Atlantic Africa in the Multimedia Era: What Future?”;

The Director Generals and responsible of these news agencies:

- Being aware of the key and strategic role played by news agencies and their impact at national and international levels as poles of reference in the media field;
- Recognizing the necessity to establish a strategic partnership among the news agencies of the region and create a formal frame of consultation and action allowing them to deal with issues of common concern;
- Convinced of the necessity to join their efforts to exchange their experiences, coordinate their activities in different professional fields and keep pace with the rapid evolution of information technologies and deep changes of the communication sector;
- Underlining their determination to take up, in an efficient manner, the multifaceted challenges of globalization and promote cohesion and cooperation among the countries of the region;
- Aware of the importance of information exchange among the news agencies of Atlantic Africa and their contribution to the development of communication in this region part of the free flow of information;
- Convinced that periodic meetings among the news agencies of Atlantic Africa are key to deepening dialogue and promoting cooperation amongst them;
- Aware of the need to widen the scope of cooperation to other areas of shared interest with a view to finding together appropriate solutions allowing for taking up the challenges of the century and achieving the expected objectives in light of the deep changes the media field is undergoing;

Have unanimously decided to create a professional association, baptized “Atlantic Federation of African Press Agencies”, in abbreviation (FAAPA), which shall be governed by the unanimously adopted statutes, in order to translate into reality the ambition of these news agencies in the fields of information and communication, as part of an evolutionary process of strategic cooperation and partnership.

TITLE I- FROM CREATION TO OBJECTIVES

CHAPTER 1 – CREATION- NAME- NATURE-HEADQUARTERS-DURATION

Article 1: Creation-Name

A professional association, baptized “Atlantic Federation of African Press Agencies”, in abbreviation (FAAPA), is created between the news agencies of the countries of Atlantic Africa.

“FAAPA” shall be governed by;

- The present statutes;
- The internal regulations and
- Any other ensuing document.

Article 2: Nature

“FAAPA” is an autonomous, apolitical, non-denominational and non-profit association. It enjoys an organizational and financial autonomy.

Article 3: Headquarters

The Federation shall be based in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco, 122, Avenue Allal Ben Abdellah. The Federation’s headquarters may be moved upon a decision by the General Assembly.

Article 4: Duration

“FAAPA” shall exist for an unlimited amount of time, except in the event of voluntary or involuntary dissolution.

CHAPTER 2: PURPOSE-OBJECTIVES

Article 5: Purpose

The Federation aims to promote cooperation and the exchange of experiences among its members in all areas of common interest, including information, training and multimedia products.

Article 6: Objectives

The Federation shall seek to:

- Lay down the foundation for a strategic cooperation and promote professional relations among the news agencies the countries of Atlantic Africa;
- Promote the exchange of information and multimedia products among its members ;
- Consolidate the free circulation of information in the region;
- Collect, process and disseminate all information concerning the region;
- Highlight the activities in the countries of the region in different fields;
- Organize training sessions and seminars on topics of common interest to members;
- Lay down the foundations for a fruitful cooperation and complementarity in all common interest fields, particularly in the fields of editing, training and new technologies;
- Safeguard and promote common interests of the member news agencies in all key fields;
- Favor the exchange of experiences and know-how among member news agencies as well as consultation and coordination in regional and international fora.

TITLE II: COMPOSITION AND MEMBERSHIP

CHAPTER 3 – MEMBERS OF THE FEDERATION

Article 7: Member categories

The Federation shall be made up of founding members, full-fledged members and observers.

Article 8: The founding members

The founding members are the following news agencies:

- The Moroccan News Agency (MAP) ;
- Agence Mauritanienne d'Information (AMI) ;
- Agence Sénégalaise de Presse (APS) ;
- Agence Guinée Presse (AGP) ;
- Agence Ivoirienne de Presse (AIP) ;
- Agence Congolaise d'Information (ACI) ;
- Agence Benin Presse (ABP) ;
- Agence Camerounaise d'Information (CAMERPRESSE) ;
- Agence de Presse Bissau-Guinéenne (ANG) ;
- Ghana News Agency (GNA) ;
- Liberia News Agency (LINA) ;
- Agence Malienne de Presse et de Publicité (AMAP) ;
- Agence d'Information du Burkina (AIB) ;
- Agence Nigérienne de Presse (ANP) ;
- Agence Tchadienne de Presse et d'Édition (ATPE).

Article 9: Full-fledged members

Full-fledged members are the news agencies which approve and sign the statutes of the Federation.

Article 10: Observing members

The Federation may admit observers.

The observers may be an Alliance/ Federation/Union/ Forum / News Agencies, Newspaper Editors' Association or having objectives similar to those of the Federation. Observers may be admitted upon a resolution by the General Assembly.

The observers participate in the General Assemblies, without a right to vote; however, the observers may not be elected to the Federation bodies.

CHAPTER 4: MEMBERSHIP TERMS AND LOSS OF MEMBERSHIP

Article 11: Membership Conditions

To be member of the Federation, the candidate must submit a written application to the executive Council and pay pending contributions until the end of the ongoing fiscal year during which the application was submitted.

Admission as member of the Federation of any candidate meeting the required conditions shall be made by a decision of the General Assembly upon a proposal by the executive Council.

11.1 A news agency that applies for membership to the Federation shall meet the following conditions:

- Accept and sign the statutes of the Federation.
- Be recognized as the news agency of the country recognized internationally.
- Represent a country belonging to the region of Atlantic and West Africa.

11.2: The membership application shall be submitted to the executive Council, which shall be submitted to the General Assembly.

11.3: The Admission of new members and observers shall require a resolution of the General Assembly which shall be adopted by a majority of three-quarters of members present.

Article 12: Loss of Membership

12.1: Any member shall be free to withdraw from the Federation at any time provided that they send a signed letter to the executive Council and pay all past contributions including contributions for the year of withdrawal.

12.2: The General Assembly, at the request of the executive Council, may take a decision to exclude a member or suspend the rights thereof as member in the event of:

- Loss of conditions required for membership;
- Serious violation of the statutes;
- Delay in payment of annual contributions without any particular reason.

12.3: The resolution related to the exclusion or the suspension of a member shall require a majority of three-quarters of members present at the General Assembly.

Article 13: Membership Fees

The General Assembly may set, upon a recommendation of the executive Council, the amount of annual contributions based on the different categories of members.

TITLE III – ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONNING

CHAPTER 5: STRUCTURES AND BODIES

Article 14: Structures

The Federation shall be structured as follows:

- The General Assembly;
- The Executive Council;
- The President and two Vice-President;
- The Secretary General.

Article 15: The General Assembly

15.1: The General Assembly shall be the highest body of the Federation.

15.2: The General Assembly shall be made up of all members of the Federation. Its decisions shall be binding to all.

15.3: The Assembly meetings shall be ordinary or extraordinary. They shall be held in the country where the Federation is headquartered.

Ordinary or extraordinary sessions may be held in another country of the Federation provided that a member news agency undertakes voluntarily to host one of these sessions with the consent of the General Assembly.

15.4: The Federation shall hold at least one ordinary General Assembly each year.

15.5: The President may convene an extraordinary session of the General Assembly in the event of exceptional circumstances, upon a proposal by the executive Council or upon a written request from at least one-fifth of member agencies, submitted to the Secretariat General of the Federation.

In this event, the meeting shall take place within three months following the submission of the request to the Secretariat General of the Federation.

15.6: The General Assembly sessions, be they ordinary or extraordinary, shall be summoned and chaired by the President, or, in the event of incapacity or unavailability, by one of the two vice-Chairmen.

15.7: The General Assembly shall not be convened unless with a quorum of half of the members of the Federation.

In the event of lack of quorum, the Assembly shall be summoned anew, at least fifteen days later. The Assembly, in this event, shall deliberate whatever the number of members present.

15.8: The sessions of the General Assembly shall be open. They may be held behind closed doors without the presence of observers, after approval of a majority of members present.

15.9: When voting at the General Assembly, each member agency shall have one (1) vote. Decisions shall be taken by a show of hands unless a secret ballot is requested by the executive Council or a quarter of the members present.

15.10: Any member who fails to fulfill financial obligations thereof vis-à-vis the Federation within one year from the date due, shall not be entitled to vote at the General Assembly and the Executive Council, unless the General Assembly, at its discretion, waives this provision.

15.11: Decisions shall be taken by simple majority vote of the members present except for decisions that must be accepted by a three-fourths vote of the members present. These relate to the following issues:

- Admission of new members;
- Exclusion or suspension of members;
- Amendment of statutes;
- Dissolution of the Federation.

15.12: In the event of equality of votes, the President or the person presiding at the meeting shall enjoy a casting vote.

15.13: For the vote on the admission of new members, a member organization that cannot attend the General Assembly may grant a proxy vote to another organization member or President.

The proxy must be in writing and presented to the President and the Secretary General when the assembly establishes the quorum.

15.14: Attendance and presentations shall be recorded on an attendance sheet that must be initialed before the proceedings begin.

15.15: The deliberations of the General Assembly shall be recorded in a report prepared by the rapporteur of the session and signed by the President and the Secretary General. A copy of the minutes shall be sent to each member of the Federation.

Article 16: The ordinary session of the General Assembly

16.1: The ordinary General Assembly:

- Elect the President, two Vice-Presidents, the Secretary-General and other members of the Executive Council;
- Adopt the annual activity report of the Federation;
- Approve the budget and the accounts of the Federation
- Decide on the amount of membership fees;
- Decide on the admission, exclusion or suspension of members;
- Appoint, when required, ad-hoc commissions for specific tasks including to review disagreements over the interpretation or application of the Statutes;
- Rule on all matters related to day-to-day management of the Federation;
- Give full power to the Executive Council and the President to implement actions in accordance with the Federation objectives and for which the powers provided to them by the Statutes would not be sufficient.

16.2: Resolutions of the Ordinary General Assembly are adopted by a majority of attending members. While the admission of new members to the Federation, exclusion or suspension of members, must be adopted by a majority of three-quarters of the members present.

Article 17: Extraordinary session of the General Assembly

17.1: The Extraordinary session of the General Assembly:

- Take decisions on all urgent matters referred to it and which do not fall under the jurisdiction of the ordinary General Assembly;
- Make proposals of amendments to the Statutes;
- Decide on the dissolution of the Federation.

17.2: During an extraordinary session of the General Assembly, resolutions shall be adopted by a three-fourths majority of the members attending.

Article 18: The Executive Council

18.1: The Council is the executive body of the Federation. It enjoys full powers to manage the affairs of the Federation, so far as they don't come under the competence of the General Assembly.

18.2: The duties of the Executive Council are as follows:

- Prepare the meeting of the General Assembly;
- Determine the place and the date of the General Assembly and the Executive Council meetings;
- Draft the provisional agenda of the meeting and communicate it to members prior to the General Assembly meeting;
- Submit the activity reports of the Federation between sessions during the ordinary sessions of the General Assembly;
- Present the budget to the General Assembly, including membership fees and contributions;
- Submit to the General Assembly requests for membership or exclusion as well as applications for nominations to the respective bodies of the Federation.
- Make recommendations to the General Assembly.
- Implement the resolutions of the General Assembly and take decisions on matters that don't come within the General Assembly prerogatives.
- Consult, if necessary, with member organizations on matters related to the affairs of the Federation.

18.3: The Executive Council consists of seven members: The President, two Vice-Presidents, the Secretary-General and three other members.

18.4: All Council members, except the Secretary, shall be employees of a member news agency.

18.5: The President, the two Vice-Presidents, the Secretary-General and the three other members of the Executive Council, are elected for a three-year- term.

18.6: Except for the Secretary General, the Council members can be re-elected only for two (2) consecutive mandates.

18.7: The Secretary-General may be re-elected for three (3) consecutive terms.

18.8: The President convenes and presides over the Executive Council. In the event of his absence, he is replaced by a vice-president, in a hierarchical order of the vice-presidents.

18.9: The Council shall meet at least twice a year at the request of the President or at least one quarter of its members.

18.10: The Council must meet three months before the General Assembly, to prepare the agenda in advance and communicate it to member agencies at least three weeks prior to the General Assembly meeting.

The Council may hold an extraordinary meeting, when necessary.

18.11: The quorum fixed of the Council meetings can convene with four (4) members including the President. If a quorum has not been achieved, the meeting shall be postponed for fifteen days. In this case, the Council meeting requires a quorum of three (3) members including the President.

18.12: Decisions and recommendations of the Council are adopted by a simple majority of members present.

In case of a tie, the President shall have the casting vote.

18.13: If a vacancy occurs on the Council between two General Assembly meetings, it may be filled as follows:

- If the President is absent, the 1st Vice-President automatically succeeds him;
- If the position of the senior Vice-President is vacant, it is filled automatically by the second Vice-President;
- If the vacancy affects the position of the second Vice-President or another Council member, the Council may fill the vacancy by co-opting a qualified member for the remaining term.

The following General Assembly meeting shall decide on the validity of the nomination. Even in case the appointment is not approved, decisions taken by the Council during the period when the co-opted member was present remain unchallenged.

A co-opted member of the Council may apply for re-election to the General Assembly for a three-year term.

18.14: The Executive Council may establish commissions or working groups, when required by the Federation.

The Presidents of these commissions or working groups may, if necessary, attend the meetings of the Executive Council, in an advisory capacity. They shall submit reports to the Council on the missions conferred upon them.

18.15: The Executive Council shall appoint one or two auditors to assess the Federation accounts and draft, for this purpose, a report that will be part of the financial statements to be submitted to the annual General Assembly.

CHAPTER 6: FUNCTIONING

Article 19: The President and the two Vice Presidents

19.1: The President shall represent the Federation at different events and activities and shall have all the powers to do so.

The President convenes and presides over the Executive Council and the General Assembly meetings.

19.2: The Federation is officially represented by the President who has its authority.

In his absence, the President may be replaced by one of the vice-presidents by virtue of hierarchical order.

19.3: The President may conclude agreements, conventions or executive arrangements regarding the relations of the Federation with other organizations, institutions and professional bodies.

19.4: The President and the two vice-presidents shall be appointed for a (3) three-year term, renewable only once

19.5: The President and the two Vice-Presidents may delegate authority to a representative of the Board of their respective organizations.

Article 20: The Secretary-General

20.1: The Secretary General is responsible for coordinating the activities of the Federation and its general management.

20.2: He oversees the day-to-day running of the Federation under the supervision of President of the Executive Council. He is also responsible for the Federation accounts.

20.3: The Secretary-General has the following responsibilities:

- Ensure the continuity of management between general meetings;
- Ensure the coordination among the Federation members;
- Take part in general meetings and the work of the Council and, where necessary, the meetings of experts;
- Prepare the meetings of the General Assembly, in coordination with the President and the members of the Council;
- Prepare the meetings of the Executive Council and all the documents relating to the General Assembly;
- Submit to the General Assembly an annual report on the activities and accounts of the Federation;
- Submit the annual budget to the General Assembly;
- Ensure the publication and distribution of the Federation documents and newsletters;
- Follow-up on the resolutions and recommendations of the General Assembly;
- Promote cooperation with professional groups, similar institutions and other regional and international organizations in order to fulfill the objectives of the Federation;
- Maintain the budget of the Federation with the written consent of the President and ensure its implementation within the limits of the authorization granted by the General Assembly;

20.4: The Secretary General is elected for a three (3) years mandate, renewable twice.

20.5: The salary and the condition of employment of the Secretary General are fixed by the President of the Executive Council.

20.6: Applications for the position of the Secretary General should be sent to the President of the Executive Council before being submitted to the General Assembly.

20.7: Should the position of the Secretary General become vacant between two General Assembly sessions, the President of the Executive Council may fill it in the manner it deems appropriate, pending the following General Assembly.

20.8: The Federation shall use the Secretary General's address.

The Federation may speak and act on behalf of its members, through the President thereof, Secretary General or designated representatives, on questions pertaining to the objectives and the fields of interest to its members.

TITLE IV: FINANCIAL RESOURCES

CHAPTER 7: FINANCE

Article 21: Funding sources

The Federation's financial sources shall come from:

- Contributions and membership fees;
- Exceptional contributions by member agencies for the holding of conferences and seminars;
- Subsidies;
- Donations;

Article 22: Donations

The Federation may accept donations and subsidies from member news agencies as well as regional and international organizations and institutions.

Article 23: Special funds

The General Assembly may set up special funds to finance joint activities in the fields of information and communication as well as training. Each member organization should provide its share of the costs generated by such activities.

Article 24: Bank account

Membership fees and contributions, exceptional contributions and donations shall be placed in a bank account opened in convertible currency in the name of the Federation in the country where the Federation is headquartered.

Article 25: Budget

The annual budget is determined by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Executive Council which presents a draft budget to that effect to the General Assembly.

TITLE V - GENERAL PROVISIONS**CHAPTER 8: REPRESENTATION- COOPERATION- LANGUAGES****Article 26: Representation**

The organization members of the Federation shall be represented at the General Assembly and the Executive Council meetings by their respective Director Generals.

In his absence, the Director General may delegate one of the members of his senior management, who will then represent the organization.

During the General Assembly and the Executive Council meetings, each Director-General may be accompanied by another member of the concerned organization without the right to vote. Hence, a maximum two members per delegation.

Article 27: Cooperation

The Federation may sign cooperation and exchange of information agreements with other professional bodies as well as specialized institutions. These agreements are signed by the President in office upon approval of member agencies.

Article 28: Languages of the Federation

The languages of the Federation shall be French, English, Arabic, Portuguese, and Spanish. However, the working languages of the Federation shall be French and English.

The statutes are drawn up in French and English. In the case of a disagreement related to translation, the English version shall prevail.

CHAPTER 9: DISAGREEMENT-MODIFICATION- DISSOLUTION

Article 29: Disagreement over the Statutes

Should disagreement over the interpretation of the statutes occur, the General Assembly, convened either in an ordinary or extraordinary session, establishes a commission tasked with resolving the matter. The commission, comprising three delegates elected among the members of the Federation, shall inform the member agencies of its decision within two months. The decision shall be submitted to the following General Assembly.

Article 30: Disputes

Any dispute within the Federation shall be settled amicably in a spirit of cooperation, dialogue and mutual understanding. Otherwise, the law of the host country shall apply at the Headquarters.

Article 31: Modification of the Statutes

Only the General Assembly convened in an extraordinary session may amend the articles, through a resolution adopted by a majority of three-quarters of the members present.

Any draft proposal to amend the statutes shall be communicated by the Secretary General to all members at least six months prior to the General Assembly.

Article 32: Dissolution

Only the General Assembly convened in a special session may dissolve the Federation by a resolution adopted by three-quarters of the members present.

Article 33: Internal provisions

Internal provisions shall specify and complete the statutory provisions. They bear the same power as the statutes.

Article 34: Date of implementation

The present Statutes enter into force as of the day of their adoption by the constitutive General Assembly.

Adopted in Casablanca, October 14th, 2014