

**African Road Maintenance Funds Association  
(ARMFA)**

**Association des Fonds d'Entretien Routier Africains  
(AFERA)**

**General Assembly**

22nd – 23rd April 2004

Lome , Togo

Statement by Acting President: Eng. Raphael MABENGA, MSc (Eng.), MIHT,  
MBIE, MEIZ, R. Eng.

**Executive Secretary, National Roads Board, Zambia**

Master of ceremonies, Hol Minister, second Vice President, distinguished guests, SSATP members, fund managers, ladies and gentlemen. All protocols observed.

It is a pleasure to welcome you also to this General meeting. Firstly, I would like to state that the President of this Association, Mr LEYAMA resigned on the 10<sup>th</sup> February 2004. His resignation letter was copied to various people including the President of the Gabonese Republic, Head of State, donors and national and international press. A copy is available with me. There was no reaction from his employers and as such I can not comment on his resignation.

**Article II, clause 7:** Gives power to VP to act of the status, state, “the Vice president shall replace the president in case of the absence of the president in order of rank”. Currently, Zambia is holding the position of 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President and the Côte d’Ivoire second Vice. Standing in an acting capacity, Zambia took over from Gabon.

The objectives of this meeting are:

- a) to review the statutes
- b) come up with a sustainable plan of actions and key indicators (Strategic plan)
- c) to elect a new President if need arises
- d) agree on the location of the Secretariat

As we look at these objectives, we should also look at the vision and objectives of the Association. Co-ordination is the main problem that I found with this Association. Hosting general meeting is also expensive and the time consuming. Therefore, we need to come up with tangible strategies that will be acceptable to our employers and Government.

I am unable to give a report on the achievements of the Association since its inception because I never got handover notes as Mr. LEYEMA did not have chance to do so. The venue for this meeting was selected in December 2003 in Gabon.

With the help of the SSATP, video conferences were held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Mach 2004 at witch a lot of issues were discussed. The objective of the meeting was to plan on how to move forward after the resignation of the President. It was not possible to invite everybody and we are sorry if some people were “hate” by this exclusion. Minutes were sent to everybody for comments and information.

After the videoconference, Togo, Cameroon, and two Vice Presidents formed a core-team group to prepare for this meeting. SSATP were requested to assist us financially and with some logistics. Let's give them a "big hand". Togo has also contributed a lot in hosting this meeting. Let's give them a "big hand". This is an indication of good relationship between ARMFA and SSATP and should be strengthened further to active our objectives.

Franco and Anglophones have produced a "baby", which we named ARMFA AFERA. I wish to appeal to all members that we should strengthen the relationship between Franco and Anglophones so that this "baby" ARMFA AFERA could "grow up" well. We need to handle ARMFA AFERA like an egg. This relationship should go beyond meetings only. We need to learn culture of one another; languages and we should be able to visit one another.

The Agenda is long but is good for the Association, as we need to come up with a tangible action plan and critical indicators for measuring ARMFA AFERA as she "grows" up. We need to have statutes that will withstand the taste of time, learning from the past experience. TOR were submitted to SSATP with a request to fund a legal expert who will review the statutes and advise us accordingly. I thank SSATP for the assistance.

It will be very difficult to moving ARMFA AFERA from country to country every two years. She needs a permanent home, while the parents could be rotating. The "baby" will need financial contributions. We should also consider on how to finance future meetings.

As an association, we should have a mission statement, goal and strategies to achieve the objectives.

Finally, Road Funds play a very important role in the African economy. We could use these funds to trigger other economic activities that could empower local inhabitants throughout Africa. We need to go for appropriate interventions that use labour, which is abundant in Africa.

### **Brief on Zambia National Roads Board**

To share my experiences with you, Zambia has come up with a 10-year road maintenance programme that is aimed at "nipping poverty in the bud" at a cost of US dollar 1.6 billion. We need to learn from each other on how we can address poverty in Africa through road maintenance. Several African and Asian countries have visited and learnt from the Zambia National Roads Board the orderly way of managing resources. Reforms have now been completed and Zambia National Roads Board has been transformed into a Road Fund Agency.

You are all welcome to Zambia to go and see how legal, financial and institutional reforms have been achieved.

Thank you for your attention.