

## **REPORT OF ACTIVITIES OF ARMFA**

Dear Members of ARMFA,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to present the report of activities of our association since the last general assembly held in Nairobi from 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> November 2004. You will remember that at this meeting we adopted a programme of activities based on three principal points, namely:

1. General, Institutional and Administrative Activities,
2. Urgent Short Term Actions, and,
3. Medium Term Projects.

My report will be focusing on these activities and how far we have gone during the last year to fulfilling the objectives which we set for ourselves at the last general assembly.

### **GENERAL REMARKS**

Permit me, however, to say that the accomplishment of the objectives set out by all of us for the good of our association is in effect the collective responsibility of all members under the impulsion of the President and the Executive Bureau. During this past year, despite the efforts made by the President and the Coordinator to contact and inform members of the activities of the association and seek information from them, the response of nearly all members was not very discouraging. There are members who have never replied to any email from the Executive Bureau of the association. This attitude of members must be condemned in strong terms as it hinders the advancement of the objectives of our association.

After the Nairobi general assembly, with the Interim Coordinator, we started writing to our Kenyan colleagues to send us the report of the general assembly for publication and dissemination to all members. We only had a reaction to our many request in July after the Coordinator and I had made many frantic telephone calls to Kenya. This is why you received your copies of the report quite late. The form in which this report was presented is not in keeping with the standards we set for our association in Libreville and Lomé. I hope, however, that you were able to go through it for its adoption later today.

The President designated our colleague, Mr. DIALLO Aliou, the Director General of the Road Maintenance Fund of Guinea to represent the association at the workshop organised by AGEPAR on the Technical Tender Documents for Performance Based Road Maintenance Contracts held in Ndjamena from the 11<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> of January 2005. He made a very good report which was translated and circulated to all members. I want to take this opportunity to thank Mr. DIALLO on your behalf for representing us so ably.

In May this year the President participated at the general assembly of our sister organization, AGEPAR, which held in Niamey, Niger from the 26<sup>th</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup> of that month. The President made a speech at the opening ceremony. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President also attended on the financing of the association. The President took advantage of a group of five members present at this assembly to discuss the draft internal regulations which had been sent to him by the 1st Vice President; Mr. Raphael MABENGA. A final draft was arrived at in Niamey. It was later translated and disseminated to all members in French and English. In the course of this general assembly the members of the Executive Bureau present (the President and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President) and the Coordinator held a meeting with some members of the SSATP management team (Mr. Guillossou and Mr. Benmaamar). The discussions centered on the partnership with SSATP, the programme of the Coordinator and the preparation of the next general assembly. The Road management and financing course in Nairobi, Kenya was also discussed and the mode of participation of ARMFA secretariat in recruiting potential candidates for the course.

I now wish to turn to the execution of specific items on our programme of activities which we adopted last year.

## **I. GENERAL INSTITUTIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES**

### **I.3 Preparation of draft Internal Regulations:**

The draft Internal Regulations were prepared by Mr. MABENGA's committee set up at the general assembly of Nairobi in November 2004. The Coordinator used this document to propose a draft to the Executive Bureau. After debating the draft at the meeting of the Executive Bureau enlarged by three members from Ghana, Benin and Mali which held in Niamey, Niger, at the instance of the holding of the General Assembly of AGEPAR, the Coordinator proceeded to update the draft Internal Regulations. This final draft has been disseminated to all members of ARMFA in English and French

by the order of the President of the Association on the 20<sup>th</sup> of July 2005. It will be debated and eventually adopted at this general assembly.

#### **I.4 Recruitment of a Titular Coordinator:**

The Titular Coordinator was to be recruited in November 2004. After a long selection process, Mr. Jerome OBI ETA was recruited on the 18<sup>th</sup> of April 2005 and assumed duties immediately. He has since been inundating us with messages and phone calls. Since his recruitment, we have been able to carry out many of our activities and objective despite the poor response from members.

#### **I.5.1 Management of Information and Communication:**

This activity was started after the recruitment of an interim Coordinator and has continued with the titular Coordinator. There was, however, a minor hitch in this activity because the recruitment of the Coordinator coincided with a temporary situation which prevented the Coordinator from going to work with the President in Togo. The Coordinator had to start work through emails but was able to visit Togo at the end of July, during which time most of the information was communicated to members. A few members could not be reached by email as they are having problems with their servers. Considerable effort was made to communicate with such members by telephone and fax.

#### **I.5.2 Publication of a quarterly bulletin (ARMFA Review):**

This activity presents certain difficulties which are not easy to overcome. This is because communication with members of the Association is one-sided. The President and the Coordinator send out information to the members but feed backs are very rare. It appears some of them do not open their mail often enough. Gathering material from them is therefore very difficult, as has been seen from their reaction to a questionnaire and even the request for volunteers to present papers at the next general assembly. Given that there is now a website, perhaps the solution for now is to place such information on this medium as has already been started with the opening of a current affairs page of the website. It remains to be seen whether members visit the website at all.

#### **I.5.3 Establishment of a Website:**

The ARMFA Website ([www.armfa.org](http://www.armfa.org)) has been established in March 2005, and is being regularly updated by the Coordinator. The information for

each country will be enriched with the relevant data of each Road Fund after you would have all filled the form which will be circulated at this meeting.

#### **I.5.4 Publication of a Directory of Members:**

The Directory of Members was drawn up and published after the general assembly of November 2004. The Coordinator is presently updating this directory in the form of a database and it would have been republished at this general assembly except that a considerable number of member countries have not yet provided the relevant information. At the end of this meeting, the Coordinator will place this directory on the website by country.

#### **I.5.5 Conception of a Booklet presenting ARMFA:**

This activity has not been started. The Executive Bureau does not think that this activity is really necessary given that such a document would be intended to inform potential members of the importance of the Association. ARMFA is already made up of twenty of a possible thirty members. For such a document to be produced economically, one needs to print over a thousand copies. To who will these thousand copies be distributed? This issue needs further reflection before its implementation.

## **II URGENT SHORT TERM ACTIONS**

### **II.1 SOURCE study:**

The SOURCE survey did not take off. The consultant for this work, Mr Francis HAPPY returned from ISTED in France in mid May and announced that, because of the rainy season, the survey will have to be delayed since the measurement of average and travel speeds have to be done in good weather. It is now probable that this survey will take place towards the end of the year or the beginning of next year. This activity has, as a result, been postponed till early 2006.

#### **II.1.1 SOURCE study in Cameroon:**

As above, the pilot survey in Cameroon will be programmed for early next year.

### **II.2 Establishment of a Data Bank based on the exploitation of SOURCE:**

This activity awaits the results of the survey in II.1.

### **II.3 Setting up and management by Members of ARMFA of the databanks:**

This activity also awaits the survey as above.

### **III MEDIUM TERM PROJECTS 2005 – 2006**

These activities have not yet been started.

### **WORK OF THE SECRETARIAT**

The titular Coordinator has made two trips to Togo to work with the President. He was to make eight trips but due to budgetary constraints these were reduced to two. However, he continued to work with the President from Yaounde by emails and telephone to ensure the activities of the association were not retarded by the problem of budgetary constraints. During his visit, the themes which were proposed for the workshop of this general assembly were confirmed and sub themes were proposed to all members by email with a request for volunteers for the presentation of papers. After consultations, nine member countries were selected to present papers at the technical workshop in French and English with Cameroon presenting two papers. We also prepared a questionnaire for the update of the RMI matrix which was dispatched to all members for completion. The response was, as usual, very slow and some members have still not replied up to this date. The first results are available but the SSATP Project Management team has decided to review the entire process and further action will depend on the decision of the project management.

The visit of the Coordinator also provided the occasion for the review and identification of Performance Indicators relevant to our institutions. These have been prepared and presented to the SSATP management for comments as they also touch institutions other than ARMFA.

The secretariat was involved in disseminating information to members and other stake holders of the Road Management and Financing course scheduled for Kenya last October. The flyer and registration forms were circulated to all members (English speaking) and engineers from relevant ministries of all member countries to participate at this course. There was no feed back, as usual.

The secretariat sent out letters inviting members to pay their contributions. The response has not been very encouraging. These letter were sent in March and reminders in July, yet as of date only 8 members have paid. No organisation can function without funds. The rate of contributions was agreed

upon by all of us and there is no reason why some members should refrain from paying up. I therefore urge all those who have not yet honoured their responsibility to do so today.

### **MEETINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE BUREAU**

In the course of the year, the Executive Bureau met once by chance in Lome (the President, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President and the Auditor). The Auditor was a Lome in February to verify the accounts of 2004 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President happened to be in town for other business. This allowed us to hold a physical meeting at which we discussed the programme of activities following the departure of Mr. Brushett from SSATP.

### **CONCLUSION**

Despite the difficulties of communication amongst members it can safely be said that a great deal of information was passed between the office of the President and the members thanks to the ardent efforts of the Coordinator who not only wrote many messages but also followed up with faxes and telephone calls to wake up some of us. I wish to thank the Coordinator for his complete availability. I urge members to keep information flowing between them and the secretariat of the association. This is perhaps the simplest way in which we can share our experiences – one of the objectives of our association.