

REPORT OF THE WORKSHOP FOR THE CENTRAL AFRICA REGION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON THE PRINCIPLES AND VALUES OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF THE ADMINISTRATION RELATING TO THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION IN THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

INTRODUCTION

On September 3 and 4, 2019, the regional consultation meeting on the implementation of the provisions of the African Charter on Principles and Values of Public Service and Administration relating to the Fight against Corruption in Public Administration for the Central African Region was held at Best Out Look Hotel, in Bujumbura.

I. PARTICIPANTS TO THE WORKSHOP

The meeting was attended by delegates from Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, the Republic of Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe and Chad, as well as representatives of the African Union Advisory Board on Corruption (AU-ABC) and the Secretariat of the African Union (AU). The President of the Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities in Africa (AAACA), Mr Emmanuel Ollita ONDONGO, a Member of the Executive Committee, Professor Mwendambali St Augustin and a member of the Association, Mr Samuel FOGHTUNG TANGANG were invited to moderate the consultation.



Group photo of participants with Ministers respectively in charge Labour (1st right) and Minister in charge of Good Governance (2nd right)

II.1. TOPICS PRESENTED BY AAACA MEMBERS

II.1.1.1. Communication on "Preventive measures and mobilization in the fight against corruption in the public administration"

II.1.1.1.1 Presentation of the communication

This presentation was introduced by Professor MWENDAMBALI St Augustin, Expert from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In his presentation, the expert first highlighted that African countries have a legal framework to fight corruption in public administration, including the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption and the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration. He also pointed out that despite this legal framework, Africa remains one of the most corrupt continent. He credits several reasons for this.

- Lack of political will and where it exists, it is not expressed;
- The misguided methodology and in adopting a convergent education.



Figure 1 Prof. St Augustin MWENDAMBALI during his presentation

Referring to the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo, he said that the challenges in the fight against corruption in the public administration were huge, but that thanks to his action, past practices were beginning to disappear. He also welcomed the support of His Excellency Felix Tshisekedi, President of the Democratic Republic of Congo for his political commitment in the fight against corruption, who had promised to ratify the African Union Convention on the Prevention and Fight against Corruption.

Talking about operational concepts, he said that to effectively fight corruption, the following approach was needed:

- **Awareness-raising:** he said that awareness plays a key role in the fight against corruption but is not enough to effectively fight corruption;

- **Mobilization:** for an effective fight against corruption, the expert believes that all actors in social life (clergy, civil society, traditional leaders, etc.) must be involved;
- **Monitoring:** here it suggests looking at whether there is a code of conduct in the public administration, whether there is an independent anti-corruption body, whether officials charged with corruption are punished. If politics does not interfere in the governance of public administration.

In his opinion, once these three phases are respected, the State will be able to set up independent and effective anti-corruption bodies,

The public official is also accountable to the citizen and must set up mechanisms to be informed about the use of public goods. To this end, the public official must regularly declare his assets and the government must adopt standards allowing the seizure and confiscation of stolen assets. He also suggested some recommendations for the proper performance of public administration

II.1.2. Presentation on legal frameworks for the fight against corruption and the enhancement of professionalism and ethics in the public service

II.1.2.1. Presentation of the Communication

It was presented by Honourable Jean Louis ANDRIAMIFIDY, member of the African Union Advisory Board on Corruption. In his introductory remarks, he stressed that the fight against corruption is complex and that the implementation of the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration is a key area for fighting against corruption.



Hon. Jean Louis ANDRIAMIFIDY, right during his presentation

In his presentation, he made extensive reference to the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption, its history and objectives. He reported that since the adoption of the Convention, progress had been made in the areas of good governance and the fight against corruption. But that challenges still remain, particularly those related to the institution of good governance and the building of strong Government in Africa.

He also pointed out that there are sub-regional anti-corruption instruments that are anti-corruption protocols in SADC and West Africa.

With regard to the Charter for the Public Service, it has shown its origin, content and the difficulty of implementing its principles so that they meet the expectations of citizens in order to be able to benefit from a quality public service.

Discussions

After the two presentations, the discussions were opened.

During the discussions, stakeholders provided comments. They highlighted the lack of harmonization of initiatives taken by Governments in the fight against corruption.

They also stressed that although there is political will in Africa, it is not being implemented. They also asked themselves why in the penetration table Central Africa was more corrupt compared to other parts of Africa, they also wanted to know if Africa had a vision to fight corruption.

In responding to his interventions, speakers replied that the fight against corruption must be coordinated and that all African countries must combine their effort to fight this scourge and that, at the national level, institutions must work in synergy for an effective fight against corruption and involve all social components (civil society, the media, traditional leaders, religious faiths, etc.) in the fight against corruption. The two experts also indicated that for an effective fight against corruption, there must be mechanisms for the punishment, seizure, freezing and recovery of stolen assets.

In their opinion, a culture of peace must be introduced in Central Africa because, he stressed, wars are a breeding ground for corruption. Also, according to the experts, certain practices related to African culture (offering of gifts) should not be allowed to be introduced into the public service for them, gifts must be regulated in the same way as in developed Countries.

II.1.3. Communication on "Strengthening legal and enforcement instruments for the effective implementation of anti-corruption frameworks in the public service"

This theme was presented by Mr Samuel FohitungTangang who demonstrated the legal framework for the fight against corruption in Cameroon and also reviewed the progress made in the implementation of the provisions of the Convention and the provisions of the African Charter on the Principles and Values of Public Service and Administration. He also pointed out that corruption is a major obstacle that poses serious threats to the development of African countries. It affects all levels of society and all sectors of activity. Public administration is seriously affected.



Mr. Samuel FohitungTangang during his presentation

By the scourge of corruption. He also pointed out that corruption in the public service is a major obstacle to development and one of the main causes of poverty in Cameroon. In response to this situation, the Cameroonian government and other African states have taken initiatives aimed at eradicating corruption in the public administration through the simultaneous application of dissuasive and punitive measures supported by good governance and strong legislation.

In conclusion, he said that the effectiveness of the fight against corruption in the African Public Service and Administration requires the adoption of laws and realistic mechanisms to internalize all the provisions of the African Charter on Public Service and Administration Values and Principles.

But, he stressed, these strategies must integrate the cultural, anthropological, sociological environments and specific legislation of each State party to the Charter.

Discussion

For the speakers, the concept of good governance should take into account the political context of each country and not the broad concept of corruption.

II.1.3 Communication on "actions to be taken to assist Central African Member States to implement more effectively the provisions of the African Charter on the fight against corruption in African public administration".

This theme was presented by Mr Emmanuel OLLITA ONDONGO, President of the AAACA. In his presentation, he began by taking an overview of governance and the problem of corruption for him, there are too many challenges to be met in terms of governance (governance, political, administrative, macroeconomic and financial,...)

In order to effectively combat corruption in the public administration, certain actions should be taken, including the declaration of assets on entering office and during and at the end of their term of office, the development and implementation of a code of conduct, awareness-raising and training of public officials on ethical conduct in the public service, the adoption of disciplinary measures and investigation procedures in the case of corruption and related crimes; transparency, equity and efficiency in the

procurement and recruitment process in the public service, strengthening international cooperation, independence of national anti-corruption agencies while strengthening the capacity of public officials.



Mr. Emmanuel Ollita ONDONGO, President of 'AAACA right during the presentation.

With regards to complementary measures; he proposed, inter alia, to protect whistleblowers and witnesses, reduce administrative barriers and improve administrative availability through the implementation of simpler, faster, and more transparent procedures, ensure the independence of the judiciary. He ended by proposing suggestions.

ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY THE PRESIDENT DURING THIS CONSULTATION WORKSHOP

In the meantime, the President of the Association held talks with the representative of the African Union Commission, Mr Garba ISSAKA ABDOU, with whom they discussed the modalities of accreditation of the Association to the African Union. This meeting was fruitful because it provided specific information on the conditions required for accreditation. Mr.Issaka found it useful to work closely with the AAACA. As for the President of the African Union Advisory Board on Corruption, Mr Begoto Miaron, he expressed the wish that the AAACA and CCUAC share the same general theme for any flagship activity this year

Also, it was discussed to meet a delegation from Madagascar, Honourable Jean Louis ANDRIAMIFIDY, currently a member of the AU-ABC and former Director General of the Independent Anti-Corruption Bureau of Madagascar to discuss the organization of the 5th Annual General Assembly of the AAACA and the 7th Executive Committee meeting scheduled in Madagascar in 2020;

The members of the AAACA Executive Committee present exchanged views with the delegate of Madagascar who was accompanied by the President of the AU-ABC on the modalities of organizing the Executive Committee meeting as well as the points that will be analysed at the Executive Committee meeting during its evidential meeting in Tananarive in November 2019. Members separated by promising to inform each other on the progress of the preparations.

IV.IV. CLOSING OF ACTIVITIES

The activities were closed with a word of thanks to the participants of the representative of the African Union Commission Mr.IssakaAbdou GARBA and in his closing remarks, Mrs. Jeanne d'Arc KAGAYO, Minister of the Presidency in charge of Good Governance thanked the African Union for having chosen Burundi to host the consultation workshop and invited the participants to take the statement from that workshop as theirs.