



Udenrigsudvalget (2. samling)
URU alm. del - Bilag 52
Offentligt

Hon. Christian Mejdahl
Speaker of the Danish Parliament
Fax: + 45.33.32.85.36

Amsterdam, 4 March 2005

**RE: Conference on Parliamentary Democracy and Peace in the Great Lakes Region,
Nairobi, 14-16 April 2005.**

05/19-jns/gh/nl

Honourable Speaker,

I have the honour to inform you that AWEPA, the North South Centre and the AMANI Forum are organising a Conference, entitled

**Parliamentary Democracy and Peace
in the Great Lakes Region
14-16 April 2005, Nairobi, Kenya**

While prospects for peace are improving in the Great Lakes Region, its inhabitants are still suffering the serious effects of ongoing conflicts. These conflicts undermine the political stability and weaken the capacity of political leaders to combat poverty and protect human rights. Parliamentarians have the power to help break the cycle of violence and faltering development.

In November 2004, under auspices of the United Nations and the African Union, the first summit of Heads of State of the *International Conference on the Great Lakes Region* took place in Dar es Salaam. It was concluded with a declaration which called upon political leaders to 'individually and collectively work towards reconstruction and development of the region and to promote a future of peace, stability and prosperity' and to build cooperation in the areas of Peace and Security, Democracy and Good Governance, Economic Development and Regional Integration and Humanitarian and Social Issues.

**www.awepa.org
International**

Prins Hendrikkade 48-G, 1012 AC Amsterdam, The Netherlands, Phone 31.20.5245678,
Fax 31.20.6220130, E-mail amsterdam@awepa.org, Chamber of Commerce # 34106722

**Brussels
Bujumbura
Cape Town
Kampala**

E-mail info@awepa.senate.be
E-mail awepaburundi@usan-bu.net
E-mail awepact@wn.apc.org
E-mail awepaug@parliament.go.ug

**Kigali
Maputo
Nairobi**

E-mail awepakigali@yahoo.fr
E-mail awepa@tv cabo.co.mz
E-mail awepakenya@accesskenya.com

This Parliamentary Conference is a follow up to this call for political cooperation. Another main focus of the conference will be the harmonisation of legislation to reduce small arms. The role of women in the promotion of Parliamentary democracy and peace in the Great Lakes Region will be discussed as well. Furthermore, the role of parliament as an instrument for peace in general will be discussed.

The conference is intended for parliamentary consultation aimed at dealing with the regional security and developmental issues in the Great Lakes region in a concerted manner.

On behalf of AWEPA, I have the pleasure to invite you to designate a delegation from your Parliament to attend this Conference. Where possible, please ensure that your delegation is gender- and political party-balanced.

For your information, the draft programme and terms of reference are attached, together with a participation form. We would be grateful if you would fill in the participation form, one for each member of your delegation, and return them as soon as possible to the AWEPA office in Amsterdam at the following fax number:

+31.20.6220130, or by email to: amsterdam@awepa.org

AWEPA is making arrangements for hotel rooms for participants, at the special rate of USD 105 per night, including accommodation and breakfast.

If you wish to benefit from this special rate, please send the enclosed booking form, dully filled in, to the AWEPA office in Amsterdam.

We hope to welcome your delegation in Nairobi and we look forward to your early reply.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Jan Nico Scholten
President of AWEPA

Enclosures: Draft programme
 Terms of reference
 Participation form
 Booking form

Cc: Hon. Jeppe Kofod, MP

www.awepa.org
International

Prins Hendrikkade 48-G, 1012 AC Amsterdam, The Netherlands, Phone 31.20.5245678,
Fax 31.20.6220130, E-mail amsterdam@awepa.org, Chamber of Commerce # 34106722

Brussels
Bujumbura
Cape Town
Kampala

E-mail info@awepa.senate.be
E-mail awepaburundi@usan-bu.net
E-mail awepact@wn.apc.org
E-mail awepaug@parliament.go.ug

Kigali
Maputo
Nairobi

E-mail awepakigali@yahoo.fr
E-mail awepa@tvcabco.org.mz
E-mail awepakenya@accesskenya.com



DRAFT PROGRAMME

**Regional Conference on
Parliamentary Democracy and Peace in the Great Lakes Region
Nairobi, 14-16 April 2005**

Organised by AWEPA, the North-South Centre, and the Amani Forum, in partnership with UNIFEM and UNDP, and supported by the governments of Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden

Thursday 14 April

08:30-09:00 **Registration**

09:00-09:10	Session 1
-------------	------------------

Chair: Dr J.N. Scholten, President of AWEPA

09:10-10:00	Session 1a: Opening Plenary
-------------	------------------------------------

Welcome remarks by:
AMANI Forum
North South Centre

Keynote speech: Agnes van Ardenne, Minister of Development Cooperation of the Netherlands and co-Chair of the Group of Friends of the Great Lakes

Official opening by: Hon. Speaker F.X. Kaparo, Kenya

10:00-10:30	Session 1b: Presentation of the Dar es Salaam Declaration and an update on the preparations for the Security, Stability and Development Pact. Keynote Speaker: Amb. Ibrahim Fall, UN Special Representative GRL
-------------	--

10:30-11:00 **Coffee Break**

11:00-12:30

Session 1c: Discussions on the following themes

- Dar es Salaam Declaration
- Country situational updates (Uganda, DRC, RC, Rwanda, Burundi)
- Strategic partnerships

12:30-14:00

Lunch Break

14:00-15:30

Four parallel working sessions on the four pillars of the International Conference for the Great Lakes Region:

- | | |
|---|------------|
| • Peace and Security | Rapporteur |
| • Governance and Democracy | Rapporteur |
| • Economic Development and Regional Integration | Rapporteur |
| • Social and Humanitarian Issues | Rapporteur |

15:30-16:00

Coffee Break

16:00-18:00

Session 2: Parliament as an Instrument for Peace

Chair: Hon. Dr. Mose Tjitendero, Namibia
Rapporteur: AWEPA
Keynote speaker: Mr. Pär Granstedt, Vice-President of AWEPA
Panel: Member of PAP (Benin)

Introduction of discussion on the following issues:

- Resource scarcity and ethnic tensions as sources of conflict: What can parliament do?
- Effective representation, inclusion of needs of interest groups and early warning
- Pro-active budgetary re-allocation by parliaments to direct resources toward priority needs
- Protection of the rights of vulnerable groups and prevention of human rights abuse and impunity
- Parliamentary Democracy in the GLR; Challenges and Opportunities

18.00:

end of day 1

19:00

Cocktail

Friday 15 April

08:30-10:30 Session 3: The Kigali Declaration of the Great Lakes Regional Women's meeting

Chair: AMANI
Rapporteur: UNIFEM
Keynote speakers: Hon. Loice Bwambale, Uganda, Chair of the Committee on Gender, Youth, Family and People with Disabilities of the Pan African Parliament
Hon. Amina Abdalla, Reporting on the AMANI workshop on strengthening the role of women Parliamentarians in peace and security
Panel: Mrs. Gumbozvandi, UNIFEM Director
RFPAC Representative
Mrs. Monique Kande, Gender Adviser

Discussion on the following theme:

- Strategies for promoting the role of women MP in the Great Lakes Peace Process

Discussion

10:30-11.00 **Coffee break**

11:00-13:00 Session 4: Small Arms Reduction project

Chair:
Rapporteur:
Keynote speakers: Mr. Luc Dhoore, Honorary Vice President of AWEPA
Mr. Gilbert Barthe, Programme Manager UN-SARP
Mr. Francis Sang', the Nairobi Secretariat on Small Arms

Discussion on the following themes:

- Small Arms Reduction project
- Harmonisation of legislation: areas for parliamentary action
- Situational update by the parliaments of Rwanda, Burundi and DRC

13:00-14:30 **Lunch break**

14:30-15:30 Session 5: Reporting on session 1c

14.30-16.30 **Session 6: Working Group Session**

Working groups on the following themes:

- 1 Parliament as an Instrument for Peace. Rapporteur:
- 2 The Summit of Heads of State in Dar es Salaam, follow-up for parliamentarians. Rapporteur:
- 3 The role of women in promoting parliamentary democracy and peace. Rapporteur:
- 4 The role of parliamentarians in reducing small arms: legislation and oversight. Rapporteur:

17:00 end of day 2

Saturday 16 April

08.30-10.30 **Session 7: Report back from Working Groups**

Chair: AMANI

Rapporteur Working Group 1:
Rapporteur Working Group 2:
Rapporteur Working Group 3:
Rapporteur Working Group 4:

Discussion

10.30-11:30 **coffee break**

Committee prepares concluding documents

11.30-12.30 **Session 8: Presentation of parliamentary action plan**

Chair: North – South Centre **Rapporteur:**

12:30-13:00 **Session 9: Closing Session**

13:00 – 14:00 **Lunch and departure of participants**



Terms of reference for the

Conference on Parliamentary Democracy and Peace
In the Great Lakes Region
Nairobi, 14-16 April 2005

Organised by AWEPA, the North-South Centre, and the Amani Forum, in partnership with UNIFEM and UNDP, and supported by the governments of Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden

Background

Prospects for peace are improving in the Great Lakes region, yet its inhabitants are still suffering the serious effects of ongoing conflicts. Unequal access and distribution or mismanagement of the already scarce resources, unequal access to political power and basic human rights have led to economic decline and ethnic tensions. Political stability is undermined and the capacity of political leaders to combat poverty and protect human rights has been weakened.

The region is home to some 5 million of the world's 25 million internally displaced persons. Conflict exacerbates food insecurity and worsens the HIV/AIDS pandemic through increased transmissions. The region's children are the primary victims of the ongoing conflict as many are forced into becoming child soldiers and otherwise disadvantaged. Human rights abuses are rampant, and women and girls are particularly vulnerable to widespread sexual violence. Perpetrators of human rights violations are very rarely brought to justice and the lack of accountability and culture of impunity exacerbates the cycle of violence.

The illicit distribution of small arms and light weapons, and their easy availability and accumulation exacerbates conflict and suffering in the Great Lakes region. Even if the small arms are not being used by rebels, militants or other combatants in war-like situations, they can cause untold harm. The use of weapons or their mere presence, represents a threat which causes fear and hinders economic and human development.

Parliamentarians have the power to help break the cycle of violence and faltering development. As elected representatives they can encourage public debate and ensure that the views and interests of all competing groups of the population are mirrored in their work, while focusing on early warning detection of potential sources of conflict. As legislators and by controlling the budget they can work towards a fair distribution of political, economic and

social powers. Effective legislation will better protect the rights of vulnerable groups and will be an obstacle for large-scale abuse of human rights in conflict situations. Through a system of checks and balances Parliament can control the actions of government and can promote good governance. When Parliament functions as it should, it renders violence as a political method obsolete.

Main themes

'The role of parliament as an instrument for peace' is one of the main attention areas of AWEPA, and it has been dealt with in a number of its publications and seminars. In response to the urgent situation in the Great Lakes region, AWEPA has launched a programme of regional and national consultation meetings and seminars in the region, in order to mobilise the role of parliamentarians herein. In this programme, AWEPA strives to liaise as much as possible with other initiatives that also call for urgent political action in the region.

The most important of these initiatives is the 'International Conference on the Great Lakes', launched by the United Nations and African Union that urges governments in the region to deal with the regional political, security and developmental issues in a concerted manner. The first Summit took place in November 2004 in Dar es Salaam, which was concluded with a declaration that, among others, called upon political leaders to 'individually and collectively work towards reconstruction and development of the region and to promote a future of peace, stability and prosperity' and to build cooperation in the areas of Peace and Security, Democracy and Good Governance, Economic Development and Regional Integration and Humanitarian and Social Issues. The parliamentary conference in Nairobi is a follow-up to this call for political cooperation.

A major step in the struggle against the proliferation of illicit small arms in Africa has been the Small Arms Reduction Programme (SARP) of UNDP. In 2003 AWEPA concluded a partnership with UNDP in order to promote the role of parliamentarians in this programme. Since then, AWEPA and UNDP facilitated several meetings of parliamentarians from the Great Lakes region to elaborate action plans to reduce the spread of small arms in the region. An important component of the action plans is harmonisation of legislation against small arms, which will be one of the agenda items during the parliamentary conference in Nairobi.

Another main theme of the Conference will be the role of women in the promotion of parliamentary democracy and peace in the Great Lakes Region, and in particular the follow up on the Kigali Declaration of the Great Lakes Regional Women's meeting.

Objective

The principal objectives of the seminar are:

- To raise awareness among parliamentarians from the region on their role in promoting democracy and peace in the Great Lakes region
- To promote a more prominent role of women political leaders in peace building and democratisation
- To give (parliamentary) follow-up on previous initiatives and declarations
- To promote strategic alliances and concerted action among the various stakeholders

Focus of the conference

The seminar will focus on four key thematic areas:

- Parliament as an instrument for peace
- The results of the First Summit of Heads of State and Government, Dar Es Salaam 19-20 November 2004
- The Kigali declaration of the Great Lakes Regional Women's meeting, 9 October 2004
- The Small arms project: follow-up on the UNDP-AWEPA Mombasa Conference, 29 November 2003

Conference Partners and Participants

In order to strengthen the impact and support base of this Conference, AWEPA partnered with the North-South Centre and the AMANI Forum, UNDP, UNIFEM, and the Women's Parliamentary Network of Central Africa (RFPAC).

The conference offers a platform for approximately 80 participants consisting of representatives of:

- Members of Parliaments of the Great Lakes region
- Members of Parliaments of African countries that are related to the peace process in the Great Lakes region
- Members of RFPAC
- Members of European Parliaments
- Representatives of UNDP, UNIFEM, and other organisations working in the field of peace and democracy in the Great Lakes region

