



AFRICAN-EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARIANS INITIATIVE

e-Newsletter

The African European Parliamentarians Initiative



It is just over one year since the African European Parliamentarians Initiative (AEPI) was founded. It seems therefore a good moment to launch our first newsletter and take the opportunity to update our many friends and well-wishers from both continents.

So much has taken place it is hard to imagine it was only just over a year ago that AEPI's predecessor, AWEPA, came to an end. Many people expressed consternation and disappointment that the effective programmes AWEPA was implementing would cease. Therefore, in response to requests, and from the wish to see the work continue, Dr. Jan Nico Scholten rose to the challenge of founding a new organisation. He promised to take on the role of interim President for a year to do his utmost to save the good work.

Celebrating AEPI's first year in November the Trustees reflected on the myriad of activities that had taken place in such a short space of time and expressed their appreciation for the fact that Dr. Scholten was willing to come out of retirement. The Trustees unanimously elected Dr. Scholten as an Honorary Life President of AEPI. He will remain involved with a less intense engagement. The Trustees also unanimously elected Mr. John Corrie to become the new AEPI President.

John Corrie, was a Member of Parliament in the United Kingdom from 1974-1987 where he also served as a nominated Member of the European Economic Community from 1975-1976 and from 1977-1979. He then served as a Member of the Council of Europe from 1983-1987. He

www.aepi-international.org



In November Dr. Jan Nico Scholten retired as Interim President and Mr. John Corrie was elected as the new President of AEPI.



John Corrie and Joseph Lukyamuzi in Rwanda.



John Corrie receives a certificate after the Trustees and staff completed a training in effective NGO good governance.



Speaker Ngoga K. Martin of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) and the President of AEPI sign a Memorandum of Understanding.

was elected a Member of the European Parliament from 1994-2004, and was Co-President of the ACP/EU Parliamentary Assembly from 1999-2002. John has visited most of the countries in Africa, and he and his wife, Sandra, have helped to build a school in Kilosa, Tanzania. John farms in Schotland.

Partnership

An African European partnership is also a corner stone of the new organisation. AEPI was registered in Uganda in November 2017 and has it's headquarters in Kampala. The Trustees are both African and European. AEPI Europe was registered in the Netherlands in November and has a Ugandan, Joseph Lukyamuzi, as one of its board members. In this way AEPI aims to be a true partnership.

Effective Good Governance

A focus this year has been to form AEPI as a transparent and secure organisation. The new President: *"Donors and partners never expressed doubts on our ability to implement important and effective programmes. We need now to demonstrate that we have learnt from the mistakes of AWEPA and rebuild confidence in our transparency and secure processes."*

In November the Trustees, joined by staff, participated in a training in effective NGO good governance as part of establishing AEPI with strong fundamentals.

Programmes

Starting with limited resources meant that decisions needed to be made on which programmes to focus. This took some brainstorming in the early months leading to writing overviews and proposals for the most promising and effective programmes.

Partners

A number of former AWEPA partners expressed a wish to work with AEPI so communication was had with some former partners. Many institutions were visited, reviewing current needs and Memorandum of Understandings with regional and national parliaments have been signed and are in process.

Donors

The birth of AEPI was received positively by former AWEPA donors. All were contacted to discuss possibilities of saving programmes that everyone agreed, were very effective. It was heartening to meet so many friends who believe in the work and its value. Dialogue is ongoing, and 2019 will begin with planning visits to introduce AEPI to those who have met a delegation from AEPI.



During a meeting in May the European Parliament an AEPI EP Group was launched.

European Groups

Our friends around the political world of Europe are very important to us. It has been heartening to receive the warm support of so many. AEPI support groups have been already formed in the EP and Sweden and we hope more will be formed soon.

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Looking Forward

AEPI has the intellectual property rights of AWEPA and a small amount of funding. We are currently considering possibilities of hosting one or two small conferences in the first half of 2019.

Communication is very important to us, friends such as yourselves want to be kept informed, and we want to keep you informed. Hence, we are launching this newsletter, which we envision will be a twice yearly communication. In 2018 a first level website was set up, and in the coming months the aim is to put more energy into developing it.

Having focused first on rescuing programmes that were running prior to October 2017, we are now starting to look at possible new programmes in response to the needs we meet.

When we started a year ago we were first aiming to see if AEPI was viable. So in many ways 2018 was a feasibility study year. We feel confident that with your help 2019 will be the year of establishment.



AEPI Trustees and staff wish you a prosperous and healthy 2019.