

General Meeting and Strategy Conference



25-27 May 2013

Addis Ababa - Ethiopia

In Cooperation with the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)

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I. OPENING SESSION



Welcoming Remarks:

Mr Omar Faruk Osman, Secretary General of the Eastern Africa Journalists Association (EAJA) welcomed delegates to General Meeting and Strategy Conference and noted that for the first time, affiliates had made commendable efforts by including more female delegates making a significant step in improving gender mainstreaming in the association's activities and General Meeting.

He thanked all the delegates for making time to attend the conference and made special recognition and welcome to the partner organizations attending the meeting. These included Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA), represented by its Board Chairman Mr Luckson Chipare, and the International Trade Union Confederation –Africa (ITUC-Africa) represented by Mr Joel Odigie and Mr Stanis Nkundiye, the president of Union des Syndicats des Professionnels de la presse d'Afrique centrale (USYPAC).

Mr. Omar also recognized the attendance of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) Africa Director, Mr Gabriel Baglo adding that the presence of the partners was an important recognition of the role EAJA was playing in the region and that the conference would benefit from their input to help the association chart its way forward.

The EAJA Secretary General also thanked the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) for its support to the General Meeting and Strategic Conference saying EAJA was committed to nurturing the partnership.

Omar Faruk Osman told delegates that these three days will be “your opportunity to tell us on our faces where we have deviated. This is your general meeting to point out where EAJA has done right and where it needs to consolidate. An Organisation becomes stronger by purging itself”.

“Day in and day out we wake up to the painful reality wherein the living and working conditions of journalists is worsened whilst media freedom is increasingly eroded,” said Omar.

Speaking directly to the delegates, the Secretary General of EAJA said “in the last General Meeting in 2010, you gave us your regional association to lead and when you gave it to us it was intact. And in this general meeting, it means we have come to give it back to you and we can say without any equivocation that your association is still as intact and as sharper as when you gave it to us”.

In his welcome remarks, Anteneh Abraham Babanto, President of the Ethiopian National Journalists Union (ENJU) welcomed the delegates to Addis Ababa and said ENJU was committed to supporting other sister unions in the region through hosting of meetings among other forms of support. He urged the other unions and associations which are affiliated to EAJA to nurture the spirit of cooperation and comradeship for the benefit of the journalists in the Eastern Africa Region.



EAJA President Dr. Muheldin Ahmed Idris Titawi welcomed delegates to the meeting adding that the association had made significant gains with the support from the affiliates and partners. He said all affiliates and officials had the duty to work hard to make EAJA more successful in championing the rights of journalists.

Of course there have always been attempts to weaken and destroy EAJA but you members always rose and defended your organization, said Titawi. “It is through your victorious struggles that have made this Association an attractive protective shelter for the journalists and the media in general”.

EAJA President further said “this is your general meeting to table your views on how we should together build and strengthen this organisation into an even sharper regional organization which has the capacity of taking up the problems and challenges facing journalists and the media community as a whole”.

“Distinguished delegates, even during this challenging moment confronting our association, we must never compromise principals to achieve shortcut solutions. We must continue to call for and work towards unity of the journalists based on a dynamic approach which combines firmness on fundamental principles”.

Solidarity Messages:

Mr Stanis Nkundiye from Democratic Republic of Congo and president of the Union of Central Africa Press Syndicates (USYPAC) thanked EAJA for the invitation to be part of its General Meeting and to share ideas and views from Central Africa with colleagues from the Eastern Africa Region.

He said the many challenges facing African journalists could only be overcome through joint effort and collaboration among journalists and their unions and associations. He urged EAJA leadership to work hard at strengthening the organization if it was to achieve its objectives.

MISA Trust Board Chair, Luckson Chipare, delivered a message of solidarity from the organization’s Regional Director Miss Zoé Titus. He said MISA recognized EAJA’s efforts and visibility in championing the rights of journalists in the Eastern Africa Region.

He stressed the need for stronger partnership ties and commitment by the EAJA leadership and its affiliates unions and associations if it were to effectively address the challenges facing journalists.

Mr. Chipare, said in reading MISA’s solidarity message, “MISA supports EAJA’s vision to recognise, expand and protect freedom of expression in Eastern African countries, as a basic human right and vital ingredient of democracy. This is key to good governance, economic, social and political development”.

“We stand in solidarity with EAJA and commend you for this initiative to strengthen your institution and improve the situation of your members. You are building the blocks of an institution that has the potential to positively influence the democratic fibre of the Eastern African region”.

In his remarks, Joel Odigie said ITUC-Africa remained committed to fight for the safety of journalists in Africa. He called for greater solidarity among journalists and their unions to confront the challenges facing them, especially the violation of their labour rights. He said

workers; including journalists had to continuously organize through strong unions in order to be effective in their struggles against exploitation.

He said Africa's wealth was being plundered by strong foreign interests adding that the continent required strong committed advocates to not only ensure the people benefitted but that workers were protected in such situations.

Opening Remarks:

Mr Gabriel Baglo, IFJ Africa Director, expressed how pleased he is to attend the General Meeting of EAJA in a very tight timeframe. He said they have been proud to stand at EAJA and its affiliates' side in solidarity against attacks and through the birth and growth of EAJA.

He congratulated the leadership of EAJA for the hard work that was achieved, and looked forward in defence of our shared values in journalists' struggles everywhere in the continent.

The IFJ Africa Director Gabriel Baglo emphasized the need for peace to enhance solidarity, and the need to listen and address those who want to articulate their views. It is normal in democracy that there are divergences of views, he added, but they need to be sorted out in friendly manner and as a family. The unity of all the members of EAJA was important in dealing with the challenges facing the region.

Mr Motuma Temesgen, an official of the Ministry of Information of Ethiopia who represented his Minister Bereket Simon, welcomed delegates of the EAJA conference and assured the association and all the delegates of the support from the government.

II. ADOPTION OF THE GENERAL MEETING PROGRAMME

The general meeting programme was adopted with an amendment that statutory agenda items first exhausted and then panel discussions will be commenced.

III. RATIFICATION OF 2010 GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

The minutes of the 2010 General Meeting were confirmed and adopted as the true record of the proceedings in that General Meeting.

IV. CHALLENGES JOURNALISTS FACE IN THE LINE OF DUTY: REPORT ON PRESS FREEDOM IN EASTERN AFRICA

Moderator: Gabriel Baglo, Africa Director, International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)

Alexander Niyungeko, the Vice President of EAJA and also the President of the Union of Burundi Journalists (UBJ) gave a report on the safety and security of Journalists in the Region. He said many journalists had been killed especially in Somalia while in Eritrea, a number of journalists remained in jail. He said the journalists in Burundi, Uganda, Ethiopia and Sudan faced continuous attacks from government and security forces and had continued to face restrictive laws, which hampered their work.



Alexandre Niyungeko is presenting overview situation

Burundi:

In Burundi, Annick Ndayiragije, delegate from Burundi and Secretary General of Union of Burundian Journalists, said in her presentations of Burundi country report that the relationship between the journalists and the government remained strained due to harassments, arrests and even jailing of journalists on trumped up charges. He said the union had organized demonstrations to protest over the assault on media workers and bad laws but the situation had not improved yet. He said the union would continue in its campaign for a dignified life for journalists.

Djibouti:

The President of the Djibouti Journalists Association (ADJ) Kenedid Ibbrahim reported that all media was state owned and that national media statutes discouraged private investors. He said all journalists enjoyed social security but there were areas that required greater advocacy for improvement.

He said there were media laws including those dealing with print and audio-visual journalists of 2007 which allowed media personnel to join form or join a trade union. Freelance journalists had been formally absorbed as media workers and enjoyed social protection.

Kenedid said there was a need to encourage the emergence of private media to contribute to plurality of information. He said there was also need to encourage public media to be more objective in the treatment of news.

The Djiboutian Journalists Association was formed in 2009 and had tried to educate journalists and media professionals on their rights and duties. This had been done through workshops on the safety of journalists and human rights.

Sudan:

Sudanese Union of Journalists (SUJ) President Dr. Muheldin Ahmed Idris Titawi said the union was actively involved in the reform of the media laws in Sudan. There remained a number of threats to media freedom including banning of newspapers by the security authorities but no journalist was currently in jail.

He said the union had continued to engage the government each time there were threats to media freedom but added that the reform of the media laws would help to improve the situation by repealing the sections of the laws that the security often used to intimidate journalists and the media generally.

Titawi expressed the undue interference of government forces to alienate the union of journalists and empower the government-controlled media council to register journalists who are joining the profession.

Kenya:

Kenya Union of Journalists (KUJ) Secretary General Jared Obuya who was invited to make a case for the union's re-admission to EAJA said the union was back on its feet although it still faced challenges. He said the union had gone to court and had successfully challenged attempts to bar journalists from joining the union.

He said KUJ has negotiated Collective Bargaining Agreements with the state Broadcaster - Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC), BBC, Nation and Standard newspapers. He said KUJ was now strong enough to negotiate with media owners.

On the KUJ relations with the Kenya Correspondents Association (KCA) Obuya reported that not much discussion had taken place to clarify issues and perception by KCA that the union had attempted to undermine its legitimacy and existence within the Kenya media industry. The KUJ Secretary General said he would initiate more discussions with KCA to find ways of working together more and lessen the rivalry.

KCA Chairman William Oloo said many Kenyan journalists remained under threat with and the working conditions had not improved for correspondents, most of whom were paid little money despite working for long hours. KCA still felt KUJ had not demonstrated a desire to work in harmony with KCA but the situation was improving. There was need for further discussions between the two journalists' organizations to lessen the perceived hostilities and areas of disagreement for the benefit of Kenya journalists.

Rwanda:

Rwanda Journalists Association (RJA) Secretary General Jane UWIMANA said that journalists in Rwanda after 1994 work in a climate of self-censorship for the uninitiated in order not to be in the way of the process of unity and reconciliation to all Rwandans.



In Rwanda, defamation is still a criminal sanction and is punishable by six-months to three years jail term. Journalists have recommended that, prison terms be removed only fines maintained as probable penalty in circumstance of a media practitioner being accused of defamation.

The Rwandan Journalists Association has also been able to come up with a media ethics manual book which illustrates DOs and DONTs in journalism. Rwanda's Media however, needs to focus more on ways of reinforcing lasting solutions to these challenges.

The Rwandan Journalists Association being the main driver for the self-regulation process, needs strong support to install correctly the self regulation committee which is to come up in September, 2013.

There numerous financial problems affecting the media in Rwanda and it is especially due to the fact that the private sector in Rwanda has not yet come out to work closely with the media industry.

This situation has led to journalists in Rwanda working under difficult situations including working without contracts because no media boss can dare to give a contract to a journalist when they are not sure whether they will be able to publish the next issue.

This has made journalists to be prone to the brown envelope syndrome which at times compromises the quality of their work. It has also led them to work under uncertainty and sometimes leading to serious professional blunders.

Ethiopia

Anteneh Abraham Babantu, President of Ethiopia National Journalists Union (ENJU), highlighted the problems and challenges journalists in Ethiopia are facing. Since Ethiopia's anti-terrorism law was adopted in 2009, the independent media have been decimated by politically motivated prosecutions under the law. Number of journalists have been convicted and sentenced since 2011 under Ethiopia's anti-terrorism law.



The authorities have thwarted attempts by journalists to establish new publications. Blogs and Internet pages critical of the government are regularly blocked, and printing houses came under threat for printing publications that criticized the authorities. Members of the Swedish media have also been charged under the anti-terrorism law, but they were now released.

Reeyot Alemu Gobebo, a journalist for Fetehe, was convicted on three counts under the terrorism law for her writings. Her sentence was reduced from 14 years to 5 years on appeal, and she remains in prison. Reeyot was recently awarded the prestigious 2013 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize.

Somalia:

Ahmed Mohamed Mohamud, Secretary for Labour Issues of the National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ) said the past three years saw deliberate violence, impunity and injustice against journalists and media in Somalia in a widespread and systematic manner, involving a variety of perpetrators. 18 journalists were killed in 2012 alone he said.

The National Union of Somali Journalists confirmed through regular and systematic documentation of attacks on journalists that 2012 was the deadliest year in history for Somali media. Five journalists were wounded in this same year.

He described that the causes of deaths range from suicide blasts and shootings by politically agitated forces, to targeted attacks by the Al-shabaab and attacks by criminal elements. Mogadishu emerged as a deadly place for Somali media practitioners in the past three years. The murderous attacks heightened in September 2012, when seven journalists were murdered.

Despite repeated calls for accountability and justice, a veil of impunity exists and almost no credible action has ever been taken following violence against journalists, Ahmed added.

The majority of Somali journalists are either underpaid or unpaid. Some media houses have not issued letters of appointment and IDs to media workers. Without the appointment letters, the employees feel their jobs are insecure. Others are deprived of even these necessities.

Ahmed observed that poor working condition is detrimental to professional journalism. These journalists make those seeking coverage pay. Some journalists even charge for covering events and publishing press releases. NUSOJ deems that the unpaid jobs in journalism are promoting yellow journalism which presents little or no legitimate well-researched news and information. Poor working conditions push poor journalism.

Uganda:

John Oprong, General Secretary of Uganda Media Union (UMU), said Ugandan government officials are threatening and intimidating journalists in an effort to curb criticism of the government.

Independent media is facing intimidation, harassment, and in some instances, government-inspired criminal charges. The cases involved journalists who had reported critically about the government, presented opposing political views, or exposed state wrongdoing, such as corruption or failure to investigate crimes, particularly in rural areas.

Also, Oprong said Uganda's media regulatory system is partisan and does not tolerate criticism of the governing party. They have broad powers to seize radio equipment and close stations without prior notification, court orders, or any evidence of criminal wrongdoing.

What you see from the media of current raids on two newspapers and two radio stations are linked to a legal dispute in which the police have sought to obtain the source for an article by the Daily Monitor about the "Muhoozi Project," an alleged plot to usher into power the son of President Yoweri Museveni.

Tanzania:

Saphia Ngalapi of Tanzania Union of Journalists presented TUJ report. She said despite the high and lows of market unpredictability, more newspapers continued to hit the streets daily. A total of 32 publications, mainly advertising newspapers, were registered during the period

ending December 2011. This brings the number of newspapers and journals published in the country to 723, of which 13 are dailies while 63 are weeklies.

The country has more than 60 radio stations and 25 TV stations and more are to be licensed by Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA). Either, there has been a definite increase in media outlets since the introduction of a multi-party democratic system of government in 1992.

In Tanzania likewise in other Eastern African Countries, journalists are not secured from physical harm, be it by public forces or burglaries. They are always target of politicians, businessmen and other people in the society. Following recently incidents one of shoot and dead of Daudi Mwangosi by policeman, invaded of Chairman of Tanzania Editors Forum, Absalom Kibanda and interrogation of the parents of journalist Eric Kabendera.

In general, journalists in Tanzania are not safe as it is in other countries as they do not wear protective gears while reporting in dangerous areas. They even do not have insurance to cover for any damage to happen. This remains the challenge for government and media owners to put on place.

Majority of Tanzania journalist are working and faced a big challenge of payments, especial for those who are freelance, who are paid after published their stories. They don't have contract and they are working as casual workers. Many journalists in Tanzania are receives low salaries that cannot cover their living costs, this situation forced them to take corruption and goes against journalism ethics. Sometimes even forced by their editors to do that in order to be published their stories. So, when they get brown envelopes their lives goes on a little smoother.

It shows that the journalists working environment is very unfriendly to the extent that those who are well trained, tend to get experience and ran away in search of 'greener pastures' in other fields and organizations.

V. INSIDE EASTERN AFRICA'S NEWSROOM: WORKING CONDITIONS AND TRADE UNIONS IN THE MEDIA INDUSTRY

Speakers:

Mr. William Oloo, Chair, Kenya Correspondents Association (KCA)

Mr. Joel Odigie, Coordinator, International Trade Union Confederation – Africa regional organization (ITUC-Africa)

Moderator: Jane Uwimana, Secretary General, Rwanda Journalists Association (RJA)

In his presentation, Oloo said the working conditions in most media houses in Eastern Africa remained unfriendly to journalists and union organizing. Most editors and media owners are reluctant to allow journalists to organize or join trade unions and in some cases, they actively either undermine the unions by intimidating journalists or plant their own people in union leadership. In some cases, they bribe union leaders either in cash or through promotions to stop agitation for better pay or to fight for journalists' welfare.

In most countries in the region including Kenya, journalists have been so intimidated or socialized not to get involved in union activities. In some of the countries, the labour laws are unfriendly while some of the labour officers are bribed by media managers.

Odigie made his presentation from the standpoint of a non-journalist unionist but who understood the challenges of organizing within hostile environments. He said journalists, unlike other category of workers faced both external and internal challenges in organizing. He noted that the level of commitment to organizing as workers was much lower among journalists' union leaders and their members and this called for more effort and capacity building.

The unionist said the situation of weak journalists unions was a common phenomenon across Africa adding that no unions had no choice but step up their efforts at organizing and promoting "social dialogue and engagement" with the employers.

He said ITUC –Africa was committed to supporting journalists unions in Africa to up their game in organizing and recruiting more members to join their ranks. He said unions could only be vibrant and strong if they had more members who owned the unions and felt committed to the fight for improved labour conditions.

Odigie said journalists unions must make effort to make the unions serve their members through relevant activities and projects to endear them to the unions. If the leadership of the unions were not accountable, and remained aloof to members then they would remain weak and vulnerable to employer manipulation.

VI. ACTIVITIES REPORT

Presenter:

Omar Faruk Osman

EAJA Secretary General on behalf of Executive Committee

Moderator:

Alexandre Niyungeko

Vice President

Eastern Africa Journalists Association (EAJA)

EAJA Secretary General Omar Faruk tabled the association's activities report detailing activities from 2010 to 2012 highlighting achievements and challenges. "I want to use this opportunity to thank the membership of EAJA for entrusting us, the Executive Committee, with the enormous task of leading the Association," he started with.

Omar Faruk Osman said EAJA focused on four areas: Protection and Promotion of Press Freedom; Advocating for the safety of journalists; Trade union development; and Professional capacity building.

EAJA implemented trade union programs focused on promoting freedom of association, collective bargaining, precarious working conditions and strategic research and planning capacity. Activities were organized in this regard with the help of Solidarity Centre, FES and IFJ.

EAJA conducted a field survey of working conditions of freelance journalists in Uganda and Tanzania. This internal EAJA survey analysed compensation, expense reimbursement, and safety issues as well as the effect of freelance journalists on the working conditions of salaried journalists. As a follow-up to this survey, EAJA, IFJ, ITUC and the Solidarity Center held a two-day regional workshop on plight of freelance journalists in Bujumbura, Burundi. The workshop, in conjunction with the survey, informed the development of an EAJA action plan to expand its membership and representation of freelance journalists, while publicizing the study results to regional media through the EAJA affiliates and their network of media, trade unions and civil society organizations.

The Regional Secretariat particularly built the journalist union's capacity in Tanzania, Burundi, Rwanda and Somalia to address issues of collective bargaining, organizing, capacity building, and leadership training. Meetings were held with key local organizers and union leaders in each country to identify a membership organizing drive which includes plans to integrate freelancers into the union. Participating unions received training and assistance in campaign planning, organizing skills, and collective bargaining strategy. These activities helped create stronger, more sustainable unions able to fight for free speech and expression.

The association regularly reported on violations to press freedoms, supported its affiliate members with training and outreach to collectively engage governments and non-state actors who violated press freedoms; issued press releases when journalists were arrested. This has raised the profile of EAJA as a reliable source of press freedom violations. This also increases EAJA capacity to advocate for its members in concrete ways.

For the first time, EAJA started to engage South Sudanese journalists and conducted a fact-finding mission to Juba, South Sudan. EAJA carried out a set of activities including press freedom monitoring.

In the past three years, EAJA was able to sustain pressure on national and regional policy making institutions within their relevant context, through listening to the voices and expertise of Eastern Africa Journalists themselves.

EAJA conducted some 10 activities on human rights and conflict reporting for more than 150 journalists in the region as well as 10 capacity building activities on safety of journalists which were benefited by more than 160 journalists.

In the past three years, EAJA has been taking part sessions of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights as well as UN Human Rights Council. The situation of journalists and press freedom problems in the region were strongly highlighted during the sessions of the inter-governmental human rights bodies. Resolutions on Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Sudan were secured from the sessions that EAJA attended.

The Executive Committee of EAJA had regular meetings in the past three years to execute its constitutional duties, thanks to member organizations for hosting these meetings that took place in Djibouti, Khartoum, Addis Ababa, Kigali, Nairobi and Bujumbura.

Omar Faruk Osman reported to the General Meeting that EAJA went through institutional audit which was commissioned by African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF). The Executive

Committee welcomed the outcome and approved most of the recommendations to improve finance and governance capacities of EAJA. He asked the delegates to support the implementations of these institutional audit recommendations.

It is important to celebrate these achievements, said Omar Faruk Osman, but “we need to avoid complacency or triumphalism, which only serve to mislead ourselves, rather than our adversaries”.

Omar Faruk Osman underscored that a careful assessment of the past three years reveals a mixed picture of progress & setbacks, bold action to achieve what was decided in the last General Meeting in many areas, & inaction on other fronts.

Highlighting the challenges facing EAJA, Omar Faruk Osman stated that there are high expectations that EAJA will fund all activities that affiliates want to organize locally; lack of regular payment of membership dues to EAJA; donor dependence and lack of diversity in funding; fundraising continues to be significant challenge as there is no dedicated staff to handle this work; and malicious campaign led by individuals in the region.

The report included the problems that had led to the suspension of Stephen Ouma Bwire, Uganda Journalists Union (UJU) General Secretary from and eventually, the union from EAJA. The issue of Bwire undermining and antagonizing the EAJA leadership and unions in the region through wild defamatory allegations via emails came up and the court cases lodged by Omar Faruk in Kampala Courts.

In reaction to the report, it was clarified that EAJA did not completely abandon dealing with Uganda journalists and indeed helped them to benefit from the two trainings on human rights reporting and safety training conducted in 2012 in Kampala.

While it was agreed that the report had highlighted major achievements by EAJA, participants pointed out that there was need to re-engage with UJU and bring them back on board to strengthen solidarity among journalists in Eastern Africa as long as they respect colleagues in the region and are not out to harm the solidarity and unity of the region.

Joel Odigie said ITUC Africa had engaged productively with EAJA and FAJ with a lot of mutual benefits. He said there was need to appreciate what EAJA had done and focus more on the positive aspects of the report. He said EAJA had remained the most visible of the African Sub-Regional Organizations, which had helped ITUC Africa in its work. He said EAJA had expanded and should deepen activism and openness.

It was noted that union affiliates had improved on their gender consciousness and had for the first time significantly improve gender representation to the EAJA General Meeting with most affiliate bring more women delegates than before. However, it was noted more could still be done to improve the situation.

It was also pointed out that an organization such as EAJA with diverse membership could not escape politicization, which in any case was part of trade unionism. Politics is part of trade unionism. It was however important to develop clear internal rules to guide trade union activities and relations to ensure discipline prevailed in the conduct of the association’s affairs.

It was pointed out that trade unions were membership driven, hence the need to get all the EAJA affiliates to pay their dues and develop a sense of ownership.

After exhaustive discussions, the EAJA report was adopted by the General Meeting with a proposal for adoption being moved by Safari Gaspard from Rwanda and was seconded by Kenedid Ibrahim from Djibouti.

VII. MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Presenter:

Omar Faruk Osman
Secretary General
Eastern Africa Journalists Association (EAJA)

Moderator:

Judith Basutama
Regional Gender Coordinator
Eastern Africa Journalists Association (EAJA)

Omar Faruk briefed the meeting about the Uganda Media Union application to join EAJA. He said following the application, there had been allegations that had to be investigated. He said investigations into allegations and status of the UMU were done with various authorities in Uganda including the police, the local trade union national centre, NOTU and the Labour Commissioner who confirmed that John Oprong was the General Sec and that he had no criminal case as had been alleged by Stephen Ouma Bwire and of his union.

A vote for admission of UMU was therefore taken which returned a result of 12 in favour of admission, 1 vote against and 1 abstention.

In the case of KUJ application for re-admission, the relationship between KCA and KUJ was clarified following allegations of non-cooperation back in Kenya and of previous instances when KUJ was deemed to have acted in a manner that undermined KCA. EAJA had made efforts to support the revival and strengthening of KUJ and the new Secretary General, Jared Obuya, including securing funding from IFJ for its congress.

KUJ Sec General Jared Obuya was invited to make a commitment to respect the EAJA Constitution, respect and cooperate with EAJA affiliates in the region including KCA. Obuya said KUJ was committed to being part of EAJA and would remain an active member, making input or raising questions where necessary.

A vote on KUJ's re-admission was taken, which was unanimous, with all the 14 delegates eligible to vote being in favour. Gabriel Baglo emphasized the need to build peace and solidarity and re-engage the Uganda Journalists Union and get it back into the EAJA fold.

Omar Faruk informed that the Executive Committee of EAJA recommended Union of Journalists of South Sudan (UJOSS) to be admitted to EAJA but the Secretary General of UJOSS Michael

Koma was unable to travel to attend the General Meeting because he was denied to obtain passport in time from the Ministry of Interior of South Sudan.

VIII. FINANCIAL REPORT

Presenter: Safari Gaspard, EAJA Treasurer

Moderator: William Oloo, Chair, Kenya Correspondents Association

The Treasurer of EAJA Safari Gaspard introduced the financial report of EAJA including a summarized income and expenditure statement highlighting the areas of income and expenditure over the last three years. Gaspard said in his report:

“The financial position of our organisation has been constant occupation and a centre of discussions in all EAJA constitutional meetings.

“This small amount of dues paid by members, delays of payment of dues, great dependence on donor funding was a challenge to the very existence of our organisation EAJA.

“In spite of the actual efforts that EAJA made through our executive committee meetings to handle this issue, and in spite of engaging members who failed to meet their obligations and pay their dues and contributions, and in spite of appeals to member organisations to make further contributions to EAJA, we struggled to maintain the financial situation of EAJA.

“We appeal once more to our affiliates to do their best to pay their dues in order for them to honour their commitments to EAJA.

“As you are all aware we took over the leadership of EAJA from empty coffer and numerous challenges. I want to report to you that we are in a very serious financial situation struggling even to pay the salaries, running cost for the office in Djibouti, allowances for elected officials and staff, struggling to ensure operational activities aiming for the betterment of EAJA, its affiliates and Eastern Africa Journalists.

“We all strongly agree that EAJA made major progress since its rebirth to carry out programmatic activities and to conduct our constitutional meetings regularly. Today EAJA exists and survives because of the sacrifices paid by our affiliates who beyond dues made significant contributions namely SJU (Sudan), KCA (Kenya), RJA (Rwanda), NUSOJ (Somalia), Burundi (UBJ) and ENJU (Ethiopia) as well as by the assistance and collaboration of the International federation of Journalists (IFJ), support made by true friends and partners of EAJA.

“As treasurer I want to say all members gathered in this general meeting: let us do our best to secure the existence and success of EAJA.

“EAJA would like to thank and highly appreciate all the affiliates which have paid their dues fully and regularly. We express our gratitude to affiliates and countries which hosted and proposed to host our Executive Committee meetings, workshops, conferences and seminars who had financial bearing.

The Treasurer presented the summary of the Financial Statements of EAJA for 2010, 2011 and 2012 saying that EAJA received an income of \$85,000 for 2010, \$93,000 for 2011 and \$74,500 for 2012.

Gaspar talked about the fees paid by the members in line with the decision of the Executive Committee of December 2009. Affiliation Fees for 2010, 2011 and 2012 were as follows:

Fees Paid by Affiliates in USD			
Affiliate	2010	2011	2012
Burundi – UBJ	200	200	200
Djibouti – AJD	0	200	200
Ethiopia- ENJU	200	200	200
Kenya- KCA	200	200	200
Rwanda- RJA	200	200	200
Seychelles-SMA	200	0	400
Somalia- NUSOJ	200	200	200
Sudan – SJU	200	200	200
Tanzania – TUJ	0	0	0
Uganda – UJU	200	0	0
Total Fees Paid	1600	1400	1800

During the General Meeting period, Eastern Africa Journalists Association received contributions from its affiliates mainly SJU, KCA, RJA, UBJ, ENJU and NUSOJ in holding statutory meetings and running the EAJA Secretariat.

The Treasurer made following remarks:

1. The challenge EAJA had was lack of diversity of funding from donors and heavy dependency on donor funding.
2. EAJA was unable to secure full time professional accountant due to lack of proper funding from partners in this area.
3. EAJA has very progressive financial policy but struggled to implement because donors were asking EAJA to use their reporting formats.
4. Fees paid by members are very inadequate and the incoming executive committee needs to reflect and decide ways to increase the fees and make sure regular payments while considering the financial situation of our affiliates and their member journalists.
5. We could not carry out regular external auditing due to limited financial resources but our respective donors made audits for their programmatic activities with EAJA and audit reports were all approved.
6. We face the challenge of fundraising and setting up proper financial system in the regional secretariat.
7. The capacity of our members in fund raising is a major challenge and needs to be addressed as well in order EAJA to be strong.
8. EAJA went through institutional audit by an independent audit hired by ACBF in this reporting period. EAJA leaders, members and donors took part in this exercise. We are very pleased to note that professional, objective assessment to our association was done and we took it as part of institutional support that EAJA needed.

9. Among the conclusion of this institutional audit, the report stated that allegations of corruption and misappropriation of funds were found to be baseless, malicious and driven by personal animosity.
10. I ask the General meeting to instruct the incoming Executive Committee to exactly implement the recommendations on finance from ACBF institutional audit.
11. EAJA must negotiate with its partners in recruiting professional, competent Administrative and Finance Officer who is paid with decent salary.
12. As treasurer, no particular donor reported to me any problem for lack of proper financial reports or some thing they are unsatisfied with as far as activities with EAJA is concerned.

The Treasurer urged delegates to endorse ant-corruption and fraud policy adopted by the executive committee and ethical conduct policy of EAJA, and to implement it locally and nationally.

Samson Kamalamo of Tanzania raised the issue of why no copy of the budget was circulated early for them to peruse and why it was not as detailed as is normally the standard practice.

The treasurer said the copies were prepared early but due to problem of photocopying machine it was not possible to print and Omar Faruk Osman, as head of the secretariat said copies would be made available to members in the course of the meeting. The copies subsequently were distributed.

The Treasurer noted that EAJA had over the period benefitted from donor funds that were largely for project work and this had made it difficult to meet administration costs at the secretariat including paying staff salaries. He said senior Program Officer Moustapha Farah Daher had not been paid his salaries for many months due to lack of funds.

This led to the discussion about the need to relocate the EAJA Secretariat as it was acknowledged that rent and other administration costs were significantly higher in Djibouti than other countries. The meeting was informed various options of relocation were being looked at by the Executive Committee.

It was noted that EAJA needs to strengthen its financial management systems. Treasurer explained that EAJA had no substantive Finance manager or related personnel to offer the requisite oversight on financial matters.

The financial report was adopted after some debate with a call to the Executive Committee and the treasurer to mobilize resource to establish proper financial management system and to look into the option of where the Secretariat will be locating.

IX. GOODWILL MESSAGE FROM EMBASSY OF SWEDEN

Mr Anton Johnston, Director for Regional Cooperation at the Embassy of Sweden in Addis Ababa also attended the meeting briefly and underscored the need for greater media freedom in the region.

He expressed how pleased they are to support the EAJA General Meeting and Strategy

Conference. He stressed the important work that EAJA and its members are doing in defense of media freedom and journalist rights.

He reiterated his government's commitment to helping expand the media freedom and freedom of expression space in the region and support initiatives meant to achieve this.

Mr Johnston stated that they would have liked to attend all the sessions of the meeting but they have been busy with celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the African Union. He wished delegates a successful Congress.

X. CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

Presenter:

Alexandre Niyungeko
EAJA Vice President on behalf of the Constitutional Commission

Moderator:

Gabriel Baglo
Africa Director
International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)

Mr Niyungeko presented a raft of recommendations for amendment on behalf of the Constitutional Commission. The participants went through each of the recommendations, approving some and amending others. After a lengthy debate the amended constitution was adopted by the Congress (See the amended copy of the constitution for details).

XI. ELECTIONS OF OFFICER BEARERS

The process of electing EAJA officials was conducted by a 3 member Electoral Commission chaired by William Oloo (Kenya) and Prince Charles (*Rwanda*) and Ahmed Elsharif Osman Eltahir (Sudan).

The delegated elected following office bearer in line with amended constitution:

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE		
Name	Title	Affiliate
Dr. Muheldin Ahmed Idris	President	Sudan Journalists Union
Mr. Alexandre Niyungeko	First Vice President	Union Burundaise des Journalistes (UBJ)
Mr. Anteneh Abraham	Vice President	Ethiopia National Journalists Union (ENJU)
Mr. Omar Faruk Osman	Secretary General	National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ)
Ms. Jane Uwimana	Treasurer	Rwanda Journalists Association (RJA)
Ms. Maureen Mudi	Member	Kenya Correspondents Association (KCA)
Mr. Kenedid Ibrahim Hussein	Member	Association des Journalistes Djiboutiens (AJD)
INTERNAL AUDIT COMMITTEE		
Name	Affiliate	
Ms. Annick Ndayiragije	Union Burundaise des Journalistes (UBJ)	
Mr. Gaspard Safari	Rwanda Journalists Association (RJA)	

Mr. Samson Kamalamo	Tanzania Union of Journalists (TUJ)
REGIONAL GENDER COMMITTEE	
Name	Affiliate
Ms. Saida Himmet Saleh	Sudan Journalists Union
Ms. Saphia Ajmy Ngalapi	Tanzania Union of Journalists (TUJ)
Ms. Judith Basutama	Union Burundaise des Journalistes (UBJ)
Mr. Ahmed Mohamed	National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ)
Mr. John Oprong	Uganda Media Union (UMU)



The new team of EAJA officials poses for a group photograph after the Elections

XII. MAINSTREAMING GENDER: THE FIGHT FOR EQUALITY CONTINUES

Speakers:

Judith Basutama
Regional Gender Coordinator
Eastern Africa Journalists Association (EAJA)

Luckson Chipare (on behalf of Zoe Titus, Regional Director, Media Institute for Southern Africa (MISA) - Sharing Southern Africa prospective

Moderator: Maureen Mudi, Gender Coordinator, Kenya Correspondents Association (KCA)

The Gender Coordinator Judith Basutama presented a report on efforts at gender mainstreaming within EAJA. She said Gender Coordinators in different unions affiliated to EAJA had been slow in responding to her calls for situational reports.

She said there was need for fundamental changes in addressing the gender question in unions. Lack of gender parity and inclusion into union leadership stemmed from a mindset and resistance from various quarters and in some cases, discrimination of women, which made most give up making efforts to take up positions in the unions.

She reported that in KCA, only about 30% of females' occupied positions in union leadership while Rwanda had about 34 per cent while Burundi had about 26 per cent.

The overall picture in the media indicated that women remained reluctant to contest union/association seats and few held senior editorial positions in all the Eastern African countries.

The working environment remained unfavourable for women with many cases of marginalized, lack of roles in decision-making, discrimination in recruitment, lack of choice of assignment and sexual harassment. Most women did not maternity leave not paid, had long working hours and had late night shifts which exposed women to dangers.

She called for more investigations into the way women are treated and a fight for better portrayal of women in the media. She urged women in the media and leadership positions to also help the society change view of women.

Luckson Chipare said the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) wishes to state clearly that gender equality is intrinsic to a pluralistic and diverse media; giving voice to all members of the community; realizing human aspirations as well as freedom of association. It is therefore one of the important indicators for measuring whether each of these is being achieved.

MISA fell into the trap that many organisations fall into when they declare themselves "gender neutral" and in MISA's case it is easy to see why this happened. For one, there was a strong fear of mainstreaming gender into media coverage that arose out of the historically entrenched commitment of MISA to the promotion of "independent media". This implied a strong neutrality

and freedom from influencing the media coverage with any particular ideology. This perception is perhaps undoubtedly justified in itself but cannot be applied, to gender mainstreaming without distorting its very purpose.

The question that arose was to how MISA could be fighting to safeguard and promote media freedom when in reality this was being enjoyed by a few and mainly by the media.

However after extensive soul searching and serious internal debate, MISA realized that these perceptions could not be justified. The idea of mainstreaming gender within MISA activities and media coverage would aim to ensure that the democratic and pluralistic values to which MISA had committed itself would be applied to their full extent. This would entail taking the necessary measures to ensure that women and men had access to information, could contribute to news coverage and have an equal chance to access, control and monitoring of resources within the media institutions in southern Africa. It also entailed that the media coverage would not be confined to a male perspective only but would include as many perspectives as a given society could offer.

Beyond reaching and promoting a gender balance, MISA has a more significant role to play in terms of enhancing gender equality, not only within its mission, mandate and activities, but in the media sector and the southern African region as a whole. MISA's mandate is to advocate for change in gender relations so as to ensure more meaningful participation by both men and women.

Chipare said MISA had organized initiated a number of projects over the years to help journalists in Southern Africa. He said MISA organized a gender-training workshop and also made gender representation at constitutional representation.

MISA Developed a Gender Protocol in SADCC – providing for 50 per cent representation in organizations. MISA had been led by 2 women and 3 men in the last 21 years. However, some countries, some MISA chapters have not had women leaders but they are being encouraged adopt more gender sensitive policies.

Gender Baseline study, a report by MISA, had revealed that only 17 per cent of news sources were women in Southern Africa. Chipare suggested that EAJA make adequate constitutional guarantees for gender mainstreaming.

In reacting to the two presentations, Gaspard Safari suggested that EAJA adopts more proactive policies towards gender mainstreaming adding that there was room to do more to address the gender gap. Baglo said IFJ would have a Gender Council meeting in Dublin on June as part of efforts to address the gender question. He said only two women, one from West Africa and another from Central Africa.

Baglo said EAJA should have mobilized adequate resources to support the Gender Coordinator, Judith Basutama, to attend the Gender Conference in Dublin in June. He pointed out that unions in Africa needed to mobilize resources to promote gender equity and representation at regional and international conferences to avoid the current situation where most only sent men as delegates to such meetings.

Joel Odigie of ITUC urged both IFJ and EAJA to enforce its constitution by insisting on bigger gender representation or delegation is rejected. EAJA should also look for resources to mainstream gender. He said attaining adequate gender representation in the unions and in top leadership positions required more activism than had been shown by the journalist unions.

Several other participants including Oprong of Uganda, Sophia Ngalipi of Tanzania and Kenedid Ibrahim of Djibouti called for a more aggressive campaign to not only get the women on board in leadership positions but to also help change societal attitude that contributed to discouraging women participation in leadership positions and public life generally.

In her response to the discussions the Gender Coordinator said EAJA General Meeting, which this time had, more women representation, was a good start on which to build on adding that each union was called upon to do more to integrate women into activities and leadership positions.

XIII. MAKING JOURNALISM SAFE: OUR COLLECTIVE CHALLENGE

Speakers:

Mr. William Oloo, Chair, Kenya Correspondents Association (KCA)

Mr. Stanis Nkundiye, President, Union of Central Africa Press Syndicates (USYPAC) – Sharing Central Africa prospective

Moderator:

Prince Charles, Treasurer, Rwanda Journalists Association (RJA)

Oloo said the question of making journalism safe in Eastern Africa and indeed the whole of Africa remained a big challenge due to unstable political environments in different countries.

He said most governments and leaders remained hostile to journalists and the media. Some governments had enacted oppressive laws and continuously intimidated journalists with some being arrested and detained. The social and economic environment and lack of adequate training on safety for journalists also contributed to lack of safety, making journalists very vulnerable.

To address the challenges and create a better working environment, unions must get more involved in advocacy for the repeal of oppressive laws, participate in policy formulation and engage the authorities more aggressively, he said.

He added that safety training and advocacy targeting media owners needed pursued as a matter of priority and in a sustained manner.

Mr. Nkundiye explained the various challenges facing journalist in DRC Congo and other Central African Africa. He said war torn countries including DRC Congo presented very difficult situations for journalists. He said either there were no laws or what was in place was oppressive and inadequate.

He said the salvation for journalists lay in serious mobilization and strengthening of journalists unions which could then engage the governments and other players. In DRC, there were other powerful players including militia groups and multi-national companies mining minerals whose activities posed challenge to journalism.

He said sharing of information and networking among different journalists unions was important as well as with Civil Society Organizations, regional and global bodies such as Federation of African Journalists (FAJ) and the International Federation of Journalists.

Nkundiye called on EAJA affiliate unions and the regional body to work towards strengthening their capacity to mobilize and engage with the authorities and with media enterprise to address the safety challenges facing journalists.

XIV. MOTIONS AND POLICIES

Moderator:

Safari Gaspard, Rwanda Journalists Association

Resolution 1: Calling for the Release of Imprisoned Journalists in Eritrea

Meeting at their General Meeting and Strategy Conference on 25-27 May 2013 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, EAJA members unanimously adopted a resolution calling on the government of Eritrea to release immediately all journalists currently in detention.

Since 2001, dozens of journalists and political reformers were imprisoned without a fair trial and are detained incommunicado. While number of journalists died in prison, others have been detained, subjected to cruel conditions and in some cases psychological and physical torture.

The EAJA members resolved that the imprisonment of journalists for their work or opinions is contrary to basic human rights, including the right of free expression and a free press.

The EAJA members further resolved that detention of journalists also violates the rights of access of ordinary Eritrean citizens to information that affects them and to varied perspectives on the news.

The EAJA members calls on the government of Eritrea to state whereabouts of journalists who disappeared and release immediately all journalists in its custody, and allow them to practice their profession without fear of imprisonment.

Unanimously adopted

Resolution 2: Calling on the Somali Authorities to end Impunity and media attacks

Meeting at their General Meeting and Strategy Conference on 25-27 May 2013 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, EAJA members unanimously adopted a resolution calling on the Federal Government of Somalia to end attacks on journalists and ensure that the media is free to operate without interference.

The media situation in Somalia has seriously deteriorated in the past three years. There has been a spate of attacks against journalists. Killings of journalists increased. Media houses were illegally taken over.

EAJA members called on the Federal Government of Somalia to investigate thoroughly the circumstances of the killings of journalists and ensure that those responsible are brought to justice. They must also end impunity for those who attack journalists.

Unanimously adopted

Resolution 3: Calling on Government of Sudan to end media repression

Meeting at their General Meeting on 25-26 May 2013 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the EAJA members unanimously adopted a resolution condemning attacks by Security forces of Sudan on the media, particularly newspapers.

Despite the Sudanese government's proclaimed commitment to press freedom to EAJA, developments in the country indicate that the security authorities are reluctant to accept the consequences of a free press which include criticism and telling untold stories.

EAJA members are calling on the Government of Sudan to end security forces' suppression of the media by shutting down media houses.

Unanimously adopted

Resolution 4: Calling on the Ethiopia Authorities To Release Imprisoned Journalists

Meeting at their General Meeting and Strategy Conference on 25-27 May 2013 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, EAJA members unanimously denounced the continued imprisonment in Ethiopia of journalists and called on the Ethiopian authorities to release all journalists jailed because of their work.

Journalists are currently in prison because of their reports or columns under specific articles in the anti-terror law.

EAJA further calls on the Ethiopian authorities to ensure that no journalist must face the threat of imprisonment because of their professional work.

EAJA urges the Ethiopian authorities to abolish articles in the Penal Code, Press Law and Anti-Terror Law, which threaten imprisonment and disproportionate penalties for journalists.

Unanimously adopted

Resolution 5: Infringement of Trade Union Rights

Meeting at their General Meeting and Strategy Conference on 25-27 May 2013 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, EAJA members condemn continued repression of the legitimate exercise of trade union rights by governments, judicial authorities, employers and other non-state forces in Eastern Africa that manifest in the forms of assault & murder, arrest and detention over fabricated cases, wrongful dismissal, confiscation of union property, deprivation of the rights to freely associate and interference in trade union activities and administration.

EAJA members note that these attacks continue to escalate despite the efforts of EAJA affiliates to strengthen their fight for trade union rights, including the right to freedom of association.

EAJA notes that such oppression is a serious infringement of fundamental trade union rights, especially workers' rights to organise, which workers across the world have gained by fighting at the risk of their lives. Members recognise that such oppression is a severe attack to deprive journalists of their right to live.

The General Meeting calls on EAJA affiliates to build, uphold and strengthen a strong framework of regional solidarity to provide support for journalists and unions under attack, and to ensure the protection of their trade union rights.

Unanimously adopted

Resolution 6: State of Press freedom in Burundi

Meeting at their General Meeting and Strategy Conference on 25-27 May 2013 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, EAJA members to deliberate on sundry issues, but took time to debate passionately the disturbing situations of threats and attacks on press freedom and journalists' right in Burundi.

The meeting expressed deep concern over the adoption of a draft law on the press by the Burundian parliament. It was noted that the adoption of the bill is a direct threat to freedom of expression as guaranteed by the Burundian constitution, which is the supreme law of the land. This concern is further grave because Burundi is signatory to regional and international instruments that make provisions for the protection and promotion of human rights, including the right to free expression.

The meeting also recalled that the intentions behind amendment of laws is done usually to improve gaps and deficiencies of existing ones that will further the continuation of the enjoyment and respect of such rights. EAJA was therefore alarmed that the on-going amendment is geared towards undermining the existing legal and constitutional provisions to protect and promote freedom of expression.

This proposed bill contains several items that would impede the ability of Burundian journalists to work independently, in full freedom and may expose them to a range of penalties for offenses not defined. The task to inform, educate and entertain the public is a sacred responsibility that journalists are ethically bound to uphold. Furthermore, we wish to reiterate the importance of information as the necessary input for decision-making towards nation building.

Particularly, we recall that the Human Rights Council of the United Nations, which provides the final interpretation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Burundi is a state party, states in its General Comment No. 34 on Freedom of expression as general registration or licensing of journalists by the state systems are incompatible with freedom of expression.

We note with strong sense of commendation and pride that Burundi has a vibrant independent media sector that has continued to strive to contribute to nation-building despite ceaseless verbal, legal, administrative, psychological and physical attacks. We reject these actions to intimidate and harass Burundian journalists simply for articles and programs deemed critical of the government. This adopted bill on free freedom is an attempt to further the attacks to freedom of the media.

EAJA considers this amendment as anti-constitution, anti-freedom and anti-people. It is a bill driven in bad faith to undermine civil liberties, encroach and erode the democratic spaces as well as stifle alternative and divergent thoughts necessary for deepening democracy and the promotion of civil liberties.

EAJA therefore calls on the Burundian government to refrain from signing and implementing this bill. Particularly, we call on the President to abstain from assent to this bill, which is capable of reserving the gains of democracy the nation has gained besides undermining media freedom.

EAJA will continue to monitor developments around this anti-media freedom bill as well as continue to campaign for the safety and protection of journalists and the promotion of media freedom.

Unanimously adopted

Resolution 7: Media Repression in Uganda

Meeting at their General Meeting and Strategy Conference on 25-27 May 2013 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, EAJA members unanimously adopted a resolution calling on the government of Uganda to end politically motivated police intimidation of newspapers and radio stations and ensure that the media can operate freely.

On 20 May about 50 police in uniform traveling in two pickup trucks arrived at Daily Monitor newspaper headquarters in Namuwongo, Kampala, and closed off the building. The compound is also the headquarters of KFM radio and Dembe FM radio, all owned by the Nation Media Group. The police entered the premises with a search warrant and then ordered staff to stop working. Plainclothes police then entered.

Attacks on two newspapers and two radio stations are linked to an alleged plot of President Yoweri Museveni to hand over power to his son.

The General Meeting condemns government's heavy handed actions and shutting down of the newspapers and radio stations which show blatant disregard for freedom of the press."

EAJA calls on the government to Uganda to remove the police from the headquarters of the Monitor and allow the four media houses to operate.

Unanimously adopted

XV. FORMAL CLOSURE OF THE GENERAL MEETING

The formal closing was presided over by the President of EAJA, Dr. Muheldin Idris Titawi who thanked all the delegates for attending the General Meeting and giving useful input during the deliberations. He thanked the delegates for conducting the elections peacefully and renewing the mandate of some of the officials and bringing in fresh blood.

Titawi said the new team had been given a mandate which called for dedication from all of them to succeed. He called for support from all affiliates to ensure EAJA overcame its challenges.

STRATEGY CONFERENCE

27 May 2013

XVI. OPENING REMARKS OF STRATEGIC CONFERENCE

Omar Faruk Osman, EAJA Secretary General, welcomed delegates and guests to the conference. He introduced the speakers Gabriel Baglo from IFJ, Camilla Bengtsson from Embassy of Sweden and Luckson Chipare, the lead consultant.

Gabriel Baglo briefed Camilla Bengtsson on the progress so far on what had been done over the past two days. The Embassy funded the congress.

He briefed her on the discussions on governance, constitution, consensus, reports and elections. He also said the discussions had focused on the internal strengthening of the affiliate unions and EAJA.

Camilla Bengtsson, the Program Manager at the Embassy of Sweden in Addis Ababa, said the Embassy was happy that consensus had been achieved in a number of areas by the delegates on a number of key issues. She said the Swedish Embassy was committed to supporting press freedom and freedom of expression. She said she had a background in trade unionism and therefore fully appreciated the issues under discussion at the conference.

She said the Swedish International Development Agency offices, both from Addis and Sweden were keen on what EAJA was doing and would continue to offer support even though no concrete promises could be made at that stage.



XVII. REVIEW OF STRATEGIC PLAN: 2007 – 2012: SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

Lead Consultant: Luckson Chipare, Freedom of Expression and Media Development Expert

The strategy meeting began with the laying down of ground rules under the guidance of the consultant, Luckson Chipare who called for greater participation of all delegates.

Omar Faruk, the EAJA Secretary General outlined the strategic issues and activities in the association's working document before the conference. He gave the background to the efforts making the Strategic Plan saying this was important to take EAJA to a new level and give it

improved capacity to discharge its mandate and enhance its management structures to serve its members effectively.

He outlined EAJA's key activities, successes and challenges:

- Systematic Press Freedom Monitoring work;
- Engagement with Government – Ethiopia, Sudan, Djibouti, Burundi, African Union, IGAD, African Commission on People's Rights
- Trade Union Development; there had been efforts towards supporting freedom of association campaign and transformation of journalists associations into unions in Burundi, Rwanda, Djibouti and Ethiopia. There had also been efforts to support the revival of TUJ in Tanzania or the registration of a new union.
- Capacity Building for journalists had been done in the Eastern African Region through training on safety, human rights and conflict and manuals on the two areas had been produced.
- The strategic Plan was developed and revised regularly. It was recognized that it was ambitious and achieving its objectives had proved difficult.
- Gender Equality initiatives: Efforts had been made through conferences and meetings, including one in Khartoum. Surveys on Gender within the media and journalists trade unions had been done in 4 countries in East Africa.
- Surveys on the working conditions on journalists in the region had been done in Tanzania and Uganda
- A Regional Meeting had been held in Burundi focusing on freelance journalists in the region. Another Regional Workshop on precarious working conditions had been held in Addis Ababa
- EAJA had consistently held statutory meetings in time over the years.
- There had been significant challenges with sustaining secretariat due to lack of adequate resources to retain qualified staff.

Highlights by Chipare:

In reaction to Omar's presentation, Chipare noted that the strategic plan was unrealistic and inadequate. He said fund delays or lack of it, significantly hampered any chances of implementing the document in its current form. There were also serious human resources gaps in the organization that would make it difficult to achieve most of what was in the document.

He also noted that the Strategic Plan had no budget, making it difficult to make it workable.

Further briefing on EAJA's activities and key areas:

Press Freedom:

- Journalists imprisoned
- Campaign for safety of journalists and against impunity
- Monitoring – investigative reporting of press freedom violations
- Advocacy focused on particular countries Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, Djibouti, Kenya, AU/IGAD

Trade Union Development:

- Freedom of Association
- Labour rights
- Professional Issues/workers issues
- Assisted in mobilizing workers

Capacity Building:

- Training of journalists
- Unionization
- Assistance to Members / mission to members
- Gender
- Survey of working journalists
- Plan not clear/unrealistic,
- Gender survey
- Funding
- Establishment of secretariat – had been affected by lack of resources

Strategies to Meet Challenges Facing Journalists and their Organizations

Mr. Chipare guided the participants in looking at the key areas in the document and what was important that required consideration. He outlined them as below:

1. **Economic, Social and Technological**
2. **Press Freedom**
3. **Capacity Building**
4. **Trade Union Development**

Lessons learnt:

It was pointed out that there was need for more effective monitoring and evaluation, and a proper analysis of challenges faced by journalists in their organizations at the national levels. At the Pan African level, there had been non implementation of collectively agreed protocols on the protection of journalists

Situation at the National level:

Ethiopia: Access to Information; detention of journalists, anti terrorist laws

Rwanda: Criminal laws; legal threats and harassment

Burundi: Restrictive laws –leading to arrests, imprisonment of journalists; Media Council appointed by govt,

Somalia: threats from political militia; anti terror laws, safety and security of journalists

Uganda: no industrial court, closure of media houses and harassment of journalists

Tanzania: Bad laws –Media Act, Security Act, Criminal laws –interference by police.

Kenya: Criminal laws; libel and secrecy laws; Lack of freedom of information laws, safety and security of journalists.

Djibouti: Criminal Law, repressive media law

XVIII. STRATEGIES TO DEAL WITH THE CHALLENGES

Emphasis was put on Joint action –at regional level. It was noted that there had been failure by EAJA to get credible information about the situation of journalists in Eritrea. EAJA was urged to utilize a number of contacts including journalists and government officials fleeing to Europe and other African countries.

XIX. DISCUSSIONS AND ADOPTION OF FRAMEWORK OF STRATEGIC PLAN: 2013 – 2018

The participants were divided into three groups to generate ideas on the three critical challenges identified earlier: **Economic, social and technological**. The group reported back after their deliberations and presented the following summaries:

1. Economical Challenges:

1. Low wages for journalists/media workers
2. Taxes on media equipment including: printing costs, communication equipment.
3. Advertisers have a negative influence on journalists’ professionalism because of their sponsorship.
4. Corruption in the public sector impacted on media work.

Solutions:

1. Strong and organized trade unions for collective bargaining with employers.
2. Call for governments to reduce taxes for media equipments.
3. Synergy of media houses is also a strong weapon in publishing stories affecting the strong advertisers. Code of ethics for media houses. Engagement between advertisers and media professionals to make them understand media as a public good.
4. Advocacy, sustained campaigns against corruption.

Social Challenges:

ISSUES	CHALLENGES	STRATEGIES	ACTIVITIES
Education	Lack of training	Customize on the training you want to get (on job training) Scholarships	In house trainings Workshops Institutions Trainings
Job security	Job Insecurity (No contracts, casual labor, low productivity, No benefits)	Workers must join associations/unions to fight for their rights Invest in further learning	Organizing into Unions/Associations (Signing of CBAs/recognition with the media owners) Lobbying and advocacy
Communication	Language Barrier	Promotion of language programs	Inclusion of language dynamism in all

			programs Translation of different language
Gender	Lack of maternity leaves, Job discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Stereotyping,	Mainstreaming Gender in the Unions Having a gender policy	Training and empowerment Enforcement of gender laws/policies
Cultural Practices	Harmful Cultural Practices (Religion, FGM, Early Marriages),	Highlighting on the dangers posed by some of the cultural practices	Awareness Raising Advocacy
Social Media	Growth of social media is posing a challenge to conventional journalism	Invest in learning and coping up with the changing trends	Training in ICT (Use of twitter, Facebook, blogs, You Tube, linked etc.)
Media Image	Journalists are seen as bearers of bad news, extortionists, and rumormongers, unprofessional, liars!	Media Ethics and professionalism Training	Sensitization on professionalism Unionization
Corruption	Biased Reporting / taking sides, Misreporting, Inaccessibility to Information,	Changing Mindset Exposure of moral evils in society	Avoiding the brown envelope

Technology Challenges:

Challenges:

1. Inadequate infrastructure, especially in rural areas.
2. High cost of equipment (External taxation, transport costs).
3. Lack of IT skills and inadequate trainings.
4. It is hard to control social media professional ways of ethics (Bloggers, face bookers, twitters...)

Solutions:

1. More aggressive media reports about the situation
2. Engage governments to facilitate access of equipments.
3. Partnership with IT organizations to train journalists.
4. More education for responsible use of social media.
5. Policy and legislation to address emerging cases of irresponsible use of social media.

Mr. Chipare led the plenary in discussing the group presentations and consolidating the input that he said he would incorporate in the Strategic Plan document which he would develop and present to EAJA at a later stage.

XX. CLOSURE OF THE STRATEGY CONFERENCE

In his closing address the re-elected EAJA Secretary General Omar Faruk Osman thanked the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) for its help in organizing the huge General Meeting and Strategy Conference, and said: “This has been the biggest, most effective and representative General Meeting in EAJA history. The ten organizations represented here want EAJA to be an even more action-oriented organization”.

The president of EAJA Dr Mudeldin Ahmed Idris thanked delegates for the renewed confidence and support, and said, “We must now intensify our efforts to build strong organisations both at regional and national levels. At the end of this period, we must be able to report back to the next General Meeting about what we have done, not only why we didn’t do it. EAJA must invest a lot more into that struggle and members must play necessary role”.

I. Annex 1: List of Participants

No	Name	Organisation
1.	Ahmed Elsharif Osman Eltahir	Sudan Journalists Union (SJU)
2.	Abdirahman Barre	Eastern Africa Journalists Association (EAJA)
3.	Ahmed Mohamud Mohamed	National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ)
4.	Alexandre Niyungeko	Union of Burundian Journalists (UBJ)
5.	Annick Ndayiragije	Union of Burundian Journalists (UBJ)
6.	Anteneh Abraham	Ethiopia National Journalists Union (ENJU)
7.	Anton Johnston	Embassy of Sweden
8.	Camilla Bengtsson	Embassy of Sweden
9.	Charles Kwizera	Rwanda Journalists Association (RJA)
10.	Gabriel Baglo	International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)
11.	Gustavo Granero	International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)
12.	Jane Uwimana	Rwanda Journalists Association (RJA)
13.	Jared Obuya	Kenya Union of Journalists (KUJ)
14.	Joel Afolabi Odigie	International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa)
15.	John Oprong	Uganda Media Union (UMU)
16.	Judith Basutama	Union of Burundian Journalists (UBJ)
17.	Kamil Houmed Mahamade	Association of Djibouti Journalists (ADJ)
18.	Kenedid Ibrahim Hussein	Association of Djibouti Journalists (ADJ)
19.	Luckson Chipare	Media Institute for Southern Africa (MISA)
20.	Maureen Mudi	Kenya Correspondents Association (KCA)
21.	Melaku Berhanu Tesfaye	Ethiopia National Journalists Union (ENJU)
22.	Moduo Mamoune Sene	International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)
23.	Moustapha Farah Daher	Eastern Africa Journalists Association (EAJA)
24.	Muheldin Ahmed Idris	Sudan Journalists Union (SJU)
25.	Omar Faruk Osman	National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ)
26.	Roger Atindéhou	African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF)
27.	Safari Gaspard	Rwanda Journalists Association
28.	Samson Kamalamo	Tanzania Union of Journalists (TUJ)
29.	Saphia Ngalapi	Tanzania Union of Journalists (TUJ)
30.	Stanis Nkundiye	Union des Syndicats des Professionnels de la Presse d'Afrique Centrale (USYPAC)
31.	William Oloo	Kenya Correspondents Association (KCA)